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Mwacafe Plants Rescue 250 Boreholes by Removing Iron and Manganese



A completed MWACAFE plant

Many boreholes have been abandoned in Ghana as a result of the high levels of some metals (iron and manganese) in groundwater sources and the high health risk associated with high concentrations of these ions. Since 2003, 250 Mwacafe plants have been constructed on boreholes abandoned because of high iron and manganese concentrations in four (4) regions in Ghana: namely Greater Accra, Eastern, Central and Ashanti Regions.

Mwacafe Plants are easy to construct using polythene materials or reinforced concrete. The plant is covered with aluminium sheets maintain a limited oxygen supply. Involvement of the private sector in implementation ensures efficiency in delivery. The long filter run of between three (3) to twelve (12) months provided by the plant ensures little

maintenance. In most communities where revenue generated is managed well, money is always available in the accounts of the Water and Sanitation Committee for maintenance and the provision of additional facilities. Caretakers from the various communities now spend less time on filter rejuvenation and therefore have ample time for other income generation activities.

Groundwater constitutes the most important source of water supplies to rural communities, accounting for more than 95% extraction through drilled wells for hand pumps or mechanised piped systems in Ghana. However, the occurrence of minerals, including metallic compounds in the groundwater reserves has been identified as a new challenge limiting the extent to which this resource can be

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exploited. Drilling records have revealed that on the average, 20% of wells drilled for domestic water supplies contain high levels of manganese and iron, above the Ghana Standards Board permissible limits of 0-0.1mg/l (manganese) and 0.3mg/l (iron) in six regions in Ghana namely Ashanti, Western, Central, Eastern, Volta and Greater Accra.

Low pH levels are also associated with groundwater in most of the geological formations in these regions. About 40% of drilled wells with high iron or manganese levels have been abandoned by user communities while some 60% are used only marginally for purposes other than drinking, cooking and laundry. This places 20% or more of our investment in groundwater exploitation for supply to small communities under threat of being wasted. Other constituents that pose a serious challenge to groundwater supply to communities are fluoride, arsenic and some heavy metals such as lead.

Local Innovation

Research conducted by Worlanyo Kwadjo Siabi, an engineer of the CWSA between 2000 and 2003 on gas transfer processes, water quality variations in geological formations and adsorption of metals using carbon from wood was successful in overcoming the challenges faced on the plants used previously. A new water treatment plant called Mwacafe was designed by Ing. Siabi to remove these metals. The new water treatment plant for point sources named MWACAFE was therefore developed using granular activated carbon. The design of Mwacafe plant was based on absorption properties of carbon from wood, applied under limited oxygen supply. The first Mwacafe Plant was constructed in 2003, and thereafter, over 250 boreholes abandoned by user communities have been fitted with the Plant and are being used by the beneficiaries.

The development of Mwacafe plant provided opportunity for the rehabilitation

of at least 20% of boreholes that were either abandoned or would have been abandoned by communities as a result of high levels of iron and manganese.

The attributes of the MWACAFE Plant is as follows:

- Achieves a long filter run of three to twelve months depending on the raw water quality
- Removes iron and manganese from raw water with high concentrations of these elements
- Stabilizes the pH of acidic groundwater between 6 and 8
- Removes other impurities and pathogens
- Removes turbidity, colour and odour from raw water
- The long filter run provided by the plant ensures little maintenance

Benefits and Impact on Communities

Every year in Ghana, about one thousand boreholes are drilled in rural communities. A total of one million US Dollars (\$1 million) investment fund is required to cover the drilling cost of two hundred boreholes. This amount is wasted if the boreholes are abandoned due to high levels of iron and manganese. Two hundred Mwacafe plants needed to be constructed on the abandoned boreholes and this would cost an average of 600,000 US Dollars including training of the communities in operation and maintenance. A saving of about 400,000 US Dollars is made. The health and socio-economic benefits derived at the community level are significant and directly related to poverty reduction. For example, small scale enterprises such as hair dressing saloons, food processing and agro processing businesses, which depend on clean water, have started in these communities. This innovation has positively impacted on the health and living standards of rural communities.

Source: Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA)

Minister of Environment launches EFFA 2009

This year's Environmental Film Festival of Accra (EFFA) was launched by Ms. Sherry Ayittey, Minister for Environment, Science & Technology at the British Council on June 4, 2009. Speakers included the Directors of The British Council and Environmental Protection Agency, representatives from UNICEF, Wienco, and Ambassadors from the US, Canada, Australia and European Commission among others. There were film previews, a presentation on EFFA and screening of Agbobloshie, the new film by the Young Film Makers Workshop. One of the evening's surprises was a plastic waste clothes fashion show with some exciting designs from Tei Huagie, Trashy Bags and Art Michael.

The Age of Stupid, the great film about climate change was screened at the British Council auditorium as part of activities making the event. Also children's workshops were organised on how to get rid of waste in Ghana. Furthermore there were expert led discussions on climate change, Ghana's waste crisis, Accra's traffic blues and city agriculture, and the essential elements that can help us build sustainable environments. The festival was brought to a close on June 12 with a short theatre performance by *Theatre Factory Production* about waste, followed by the films, *Addicted to Plastic*, *Ghana's Plastic Waste Menace*, *Charcoal Traffic*, *Accra's Traffic Blues* and +1C.

Ghanaians march to demand water rights in Accra



The End *Water Poverty* Campaign Coalition has organised a march through some principal streets of Accra to demand water rights. The march was part of activities marking the 2009 World Water Day. Placards with different messages calling on government and global leaders to take action were displayed by the over Three Hundred people who took part in the match. Some of these read,

"Clean Water, My Right,"

"Water + Soap = Clean Hands"

"Water + Sanitation+ Hygiene = 65% Less People Dying From Diarrhoeal Diseases."

As part of the programme, the EWP Campaign Coalition also launched a signature campaign in support of the call for sanitation and water for all within the Global Framework for Action of the EWP global campaign.

As part of this framework, people are urged to sign a petition calling for the following:

- Developing countries should create national plans that deliver sanitation and water to all
- Donor countries should ensure that no credible plans fail for lack of finance
- International systems should be established to monitor and drive progress including an annual review, a global task force and an annual high-level meeting

The EWP Coalition aims to collect thousands of signatures across Ghana between now and September 2009. 738 signatures were collected over a period of three hours during the street procession.

According to the Country Representative of WaterAid Ghana, Mr. Stephen Ntow, the response so far indicates how serious people truly identify with the need to improve access to water, sanitation and hygiene for all. He said "for WaterAid in Ghana, the signature campaign is our humble way of getting as many people as to identify with the need to End Water Poverty in the world."

Source: WaterAid, Ghana

Ghana's MDGs for drinking water achievable

Ghana made significant progress in the provision of improved drinking water between 1990 and 2006. If the current rate of progress is sustained, the country can achieve its target of 78% for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for drinking water supply by 2015.

Analyses of available data by the Water and Sanitation Sector Monitoring Platform (WSMP) show that there was a significant increase in the proportion of the population that used improved drinking water sources from 56% in 1990 to 74% in 2006.

The WSMP analyses were based on official statistical data from the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) between 1990 and 2006 and interpretation of various MDG definitions. The GSS reports analyzed include the Ghana Demographic and Health Surveys (GDHS 1993, 1998, 2003), and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS 2006).

Given the fact that 44% of the population did not use improved drinking water sources as at 1990, which is the base year for MDG performance monitoring, Ghana's MDG target for 2015 is 78%. This target is calculated based on the interpretation of MDG target 7.c which is "to halve by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation." The indicator used to measure progress toward the target for drinking water, according to the Official MDG List (2008), is expressed as the 'proportion of the population using an improved drinking water source.'

In 1990, the United Nations mandated the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to monitor and report on global progress on drinking water and basic sanitation. These United Nations (UN) agencies subsequently established the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) to implement this monitoring assignment.

The JMP has worked very closely with various national statistics offices in a bid to harmonize survey data collection tools globally and also apply data that these offices generate in global reporting. This has made it easier to compare nations in terms of performance in the provision of drinking water and basic sanitation.

To effectively monitor the sector, the JMP and the national statistics offices consider the following water delivery points as improved sources: household connection, public tap or standpipe, tube well or borehole, protected dug well and protected spring, as well as rainwater collection. It is assumed that water from these delivery sources is safe for drinking. All other sources are considered unimproved.

In rural areas of Ghana, the use of improved drinking water sources increased from 39% in 1990 to 68% in 2006. Several factors might have contributed to this remarkable performance. Institutional reforms leading to the separation of rural and small town water supply from the functions of the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) and the subsequent establishment of the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) may be a significant contributing factor.

Other factors may be increased donor and NGO interest in rural and small town interventions, which might have led to more supply of point sources. Decentralization with District Assemblies playing principal roles in the drinking water supply sector may also have contributed to the success.

The percentage increase may also have been induced by the rapid rural-urban migration rates. The United Nations Population Division (2006 revision) has estimated that the proportion of Ghana's rural population reduced from 64% in 1990 to 51% in 2006. The 2000 Population Census Report had indicated 56.2% as at 2000. With increased drinking water supply rates and declining rural population growth rates, access rates will likely show higher percentage figures.

The proportion of the urban population using improved drinking water on the other hand, suffered a decline from 86% in 1990 to 79% in 2006. A few factors may have contributed to this: rapid urban population growth rates may have outstripped drinking water supply rates. According to the United Nations Population Division (2006 revision), urban population estimates for 1990 for Ghana was about 36% as against 49% in 2006.

Facility maintenance and expansion work for urban water supply was also not adequate to meet the rising demand for drinking water. According to the National Water Policy document published in 2008, the rate of urbanization outstrips current levels of urban water supply, leaving a daily supply gap of more than 500,000 m³.

According to the MICS 2006 report from the GSS, though 90% of the urban population is reported to be using improved drinking water sources, more than 11% relied on bottled or sachet water for drinking purposes mainly due to the lack of safe drinking water at home.

A trend analysis made by the WSMP indicates that Ghana is likely to exceed its MDG target for drinking water by six percent if current efforts are sustained. According to the JMP (2008), this achievement has placed Ghana seventh among countries making the most rapid progress between 1990 and 2006 after Burkina Faso, Namibia, Malawi, Vietnam, Jordan, and Guatemala.

Source: WSMP Ghana, March 2009

Ghana at 5th World Water Forum

Ghana was well represented at the 5th World Water Forum, which took place in the historical city of Istanbul, Turkey. According to the Secretary General of the 5th World Water Forum, Prof. Dr. Oktay Tabasaran, the forum attracted 33,058 participants from 192 countries, making it the world's largest water event ever held. The Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing (MWRWH), Water Resources Commission (WRC) and Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) participated in the forum. Also present were Projects and Initiatives like the SWITCH and the Resource Centre Network Ghana (RCNG); as well as Ghanaian water and sanitation professionals working with international organisations, journalists and students. WASHnews caught up with some of the Ghanaian participants for their views on this year's event.

Mr. Minta Aboagye, the Director of Water, MWRWH had this to say about the event: "I think this year's forum was well organised and the sessions were really very informative and useful; one which readily comes to mind was the one on cross boundary water. I participated in a number of sessions and would say that I enjoyed every bit of it and met lots of people from the WASH community around the world. I hope we would be able to replicate a smaller version at the Ghana Annual Water Forum scheduled for September/October this year"

Kwame Frempah-Yeboah, MWRWH: "... the forum was well organised and the content very useful. I wish I participated in all the sessions but that was not possible, as such I sat in as many as I could possibly do and was a panel member at one of the sessions on Multiple User

Services. However, I think it would have been more useful to sit throughout the period in just one or two of the sessions so as to follow through to the end on specific thematic discussions. The event was indeed a great opportunity to network, make friends, share ideas and learn from one another. In fact, I have started receiving communications, referrals and even guests from friends I made during the event."

Bertha Darteh, SWITCH (Accra City Facilitator): "I participated in a session which deliberated on participatory research with inputs from various stakeholders. There was joint reflection and learning with examples from various projects and a number of other initiatives. On the whole, the forum was well organised and Istanbul as the host city was simply excellent with very receptive people. As to what difference the experience will make in my practice, areas of networking, capacity building and facilitation were very useful and I think it will positively impact on my practice."

The Forum ended with recommendations for the future, which included among others the need to reduce the inequality of access to water and sanitation.

The 5th World Water Forum was indeed a place to listen and to dialogue. It is hoped that the dialogue will continue in each of our organisations, to listen to the demands of the populations for whom we work in order to better meet their needs in a sustainable manner. The next World Water Forum will take place in three years time, either in Durban (RSA) or Marseille (France).

CWSA to Meet the Challenges of the Decentralisation Process

The Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) agreed to reposition the Agency to meet the challenges of the decentralisation process at the 2008 Annual Review Conference held in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region. The theme of this year's conference was "*Facilitation of National Community Water and Sanitation Programme (NCWSP): Emerging Challenges and the Way Forward.*"

The objective of the Conference was to bring stakeholders together to examine the role of CWSA in the decentralisation process; determine the way forward in the change process; identify issues for the enactment of the necessary legislative instruments; identify other sources of income within the mandate of Act 564; and establish strategic integration of ICT within the operation of National Community Water and Sanitation Programme (NCWSP).

After four days of deliberations and discussions, participants agreed that, to position the Agency to meet the challenges of the decentralisation process, the following, in addition to the functions in the CWSA Act, Act 564, should be given consideration:

- The Agency should take the necessary steps to exercise some Regulatory Functions such as Certification and Licensing of Sector Operators and Enforcement of its Standards and Guidelines and Quality Assurance in the Sub-Sector.
- The Agency should undertake Research & Development on emerging issues in the sector to acquire more knowledge to be more relevant to all stakeholders in the sector, both locally and internationally.
- The Agency must expedite action on the passing of relevant Legislative Instruments to enable it function efficiently and effectively. This shall include exercising some regulatory functions.
- The Agency must conduct advocacy on key sector issues.
- The Agency must fully utilise ICT for its operations.
- The Agency should explore the possibility of generating income from some of its activities.

Finally, that the Agency should use all available means to ensure that the relevant Legislative Instruments are enacted by the end of the year to strengthen the mandate of the Agency.

Government to expand coverage of water and sanitation facilities-MWRWH

The Minister for Water Resources, Works and Housing, Honourable Albert Abongo, has assured the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) that expansion of coverage of water and sanitation facilities to rural communities and small towns are critical pillars of the government's development agenda. This was contained in a keynote address he delivered during the opening ceremony of CWSA's Annual Review Conference, which was held from the 23rd to 27th March 2009, in Kumasi, Ashanti Region.

Mr. Abongo stated that the CWSA has been given specific functions which are clearly spelt out in Act 564, and the Agency is expected to perform these functions within the decentralization programme. He added that the CWSA change process should take cognizance of all developments in the sector as well as the government's programme to

accelerate coverage of water supply to rural people. The minister also cautioned the agency to adhere to the President's commitment to cut down the cost of protocol, workshops and seminars by adopting new strategies that will enable the agency achieve its goals at a reduced cost.

The Honourable Ashanti Regional Minister, Mr. Kofi Opoku Manu, highlighted the achievements of the Agency with the support of various donors to provide potable water and related sanitation facilities to the rural communities and small towns in the Ashanti Region under the NCWSP. He expressed the fervent wish that the 2008 Annual Review Conference will lead to a fruitful cross-fertilisation of ideas to enable the Agency evolve strategies that will ensure an efficient and effective implementation of projects under the NCWSP.

The Chief Executive of CWSA, Dr. Ing. Philip Gyau-Boakye, gave an overview of the performance of the Agency. The Ashanti Regional Director welcomed participants to the Conference. The opening ceremony was chaired by Nana Darko Montwi II, Paramount Chief of the Maabang Traditional Area who represented the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei-Tutu II.

Participants were drawn from CWSA office in all ten (10) regions of Ghana, the Head Office and stakeholders including, the Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS), Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, State Enterprises Commission, UNICEF, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and District Assemblies.

Source: CWSA

CONIWAS, others to monitor World Bank's water and sanitation projects in Ghana

The World Bank is to provide up to US\$ 1.2 billion (€ 887 million) in interest-free loans to Ghana over the next three years, and has launched a landmark initiative that challenges civil society organizations and other citizens' groups to help deepen transparency and accountability by monitoring the implementation of Bank-funded projects in the country.

The target sectors for this future lending, according to the Bank's Country Director for Ghana, Ishac Diwan, are water and sanitation, agriculture and fisheries, energy, natural resource management, transport and budget support.

Three umbrella organizations have decided to monitor the projects: The National

Coalition of NGOs in Waste Management (NACONWAM) will monitor the Second Urban Environmental Sanitation Project; the Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation CONIWAS will monitor the Urban Water Project; and the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC) will monitor the Poverty Reduction Support Credits.

World Bank's Vice President for Africa, Ms Obiageli Ezekwesili reiterated the importance of citizens' participation in the development processes in complementing government efforts in finding solutions to Ghana's macroeconomic challenges.

Source: World Bank
[<http://www.irc.nl/url/31844>], 11 Mar 2009

Ghana marks World Water Day



UNESCO Director delivering the UN Sec Gen Statement

Ghana dedicated three days to celebrate the 2009 World Water Day under the theme: "Shared Waters, Shared Opportunities".

A symposium, street procession and quiz contest were organised as part of activities marking the day.

The celebrations in Ghana were aimed at drawing attention to the use of integrated water resource management tools to promote cooperation among nations with shared water basins. The issue of

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transboundary waters is particularly important since Ghana shares the Volta River Basin with five other West African countries including Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin and Mali. As a result, Ghana stands to gain from collaborating with the other five countries within its shared water basin.

The Minister for Water Resources, Works and Housing, Mr. Albert Abongo reiterated the proper management of transboundary water to development at a flag hoisting event held as part of the World Water Day celebrations. Mr Abongo said the way transboundary waters are protected, sustainably managed and used will affect the successful achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as safeguard human security and development. Mr. Abongo drew a close link between access to water and poverty reduction.

He said *"Indeed, access to water for domestic use and productive agricultural and other economic activities has a direct impact on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger in our country."*

Speaking at the symposium to commemorate the day, Mrs. Bernadette Araba Adjei of the Water Resource Commission said a holistic approach to harnessing water on a sustained basis is required in addressing Ghana's transboundary water management. Her paper on the topic, *"Shared Waters, Shared Opportunities, in the context of transboundary administration*, called for specific attention to be placed on promoting the implementation of the National Water Policy with emphasis on international waters. Mrs Adjei also encouraged the involvement of all actors including

civil society and the private sector in the management of shared waters.

As part of the celebrations, a procession, dubbed *"the End Water Poverty Street Procession"* was held on Saturday March 21, 2009 through some principal streets of Accra. Over three hundred people from both private and public sector joined in the eight kilometer match to demand their water rights.

The World Water Day celebration was climaxed with a quiz contest on Ghana Television, the national broadcaster. Six participants answered questions on World Water Day, transboundary waters within Ghana and on the continent as well as questions on general knowledge. After exhibiting in-depth knowledge on water, through three rounds of gruelling questioning, Mr. Legend Al-hassan Abdul-Hannan, emerged the overall winner followed by Victor Amartey in the second place and Israel Yao Dzantor third place. Each contestant received a plaque and certificate of participation.



Photo Credit: Lamisi Dabire

Mrs Adwoa Munkua Dako presenting a plaque to one of the quiz contestants

Ghana benefits from another IRC project, Triple-S

Ghana is one of the two countries to benefit from a six-year Sustainable Services at Scale (or Triple-S) project. The project is headed by IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre with the involvement of the UK based firm Aguaconsult. The initiative is to improve sustainability of rural water supply for some of the world's poorest people, by reshaping the way these services are provided.

Rural water supply continues to be a significant problem. Of the about 884 million people (JMP 2008) globally who live without reliable access to safe water, nine out of ten live in rural areas. While the UN Millennium Development Goals aim to halve

that number by 2015, there is a growing concern that the drive to increase the number of new taps and pumps neglects the need to maintain water systems and to raise finances for replacement costs. In the last 20 years between 600-800,000 hand pumps have been installed in sub-Saharan Africa, of which some 30% are known to fail prematurely, representing a total investment of between \$1.2 and \$1.5 billion. Since different donors and government agencies promote different systems, there is no comprehensive approach to water supply coverage or equipment and no economies of scale to follow up to ensure that boreholes, pumps and wells survive for their designed life spans.

The Sustainable Services at Scale (Triple-S) project seeks to contribute to ending the cycle of failure that causes wells, pumps and piped systems in rural areas to require replacement every few years because they have not been maintained. Triple-S aims to end this cycle of despair by developing scalable business models that will ensure ongoing maintenance and repair of water systems. With a US \$22 million (€16.1 million) grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the project will apply these models in rural districts and small towns in Ghana and Uganda. For these models to be effective Triple-S will work with government, planners, donors and water service providers and promote joint development, joint funding and joint implementation of the models.

Triple-S, like the WASHCost, SWITCH and the TPP projects, will establish a Learning Alliance (LA) made up of representatives of water agencies, academic institutions, governmental agencies at national and district level, civil society, consumers and the private sector. The LA will oversee research into existing experiences with rural water supply to learn what works and identify the existing constraints. Pilot district activities will be initiated to develop and test new models for rural water supply.

Triple-S will promote the replication of successful models in other districts in Ghana and Uganda and in other countries where there is demand. It will also seek to strengthen the capacity of service providers and especially of decentralised local government to regulate and monitor services. The project will link up with other IRC initiatives in the selected countries to make the most effective use of resources and to increase outcomes and impact. In Ghana, it will cooperate with the WASHCost project, which seeks to disaggregate the full life cycle costs of water and sanitation schemes including all the support and maintenance costs. WASHCost is also run by IRC in collaboration with the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology with financial support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Full press release is available on:
<http://www.irc.nl/page/48048>

AWIS launches Pilot Phase

The launching workshop of the pilot phase of the African Water Information System (AWIS) took place in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso recently. The workshop was organised by the consortium of the AWIS project and financed by the European Commission, the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs and the

Department of International Development (UK). The aim is to increase access to information in the water sector on the African continent; and to promote exchanges and relations between various African stakeholders in the sector, to share experiences and improve practices.

The workshop brought together about 31 partner institutions across Africa. TREND Group, the focal point for Ghana in the network, participated and presented a paper on the position of KM in Ghana; how TREND could be an effective and active member of AWIS; challenges and the way forward.

What does it cost to provide sustainable WASH services in Ghana?



In Ghana, the information that exists relates almost exclusively to the costs of providing new water supply and sanitation systems. Even when people feel that they may have an idea of how much it costs to provide new systems, this typically relates to the cost of building new systems. WASHCost is seeking to identify information on life-cycle unit costs by going to the source: to

the planners, providers and users of WASH services in Ghana. WASHCost has a particular focus on identifying information and developing approaches that will allow the poor to access acceptable levels of service.

'...in order to give adequate support to water supply in rural communities, we need to budget adequately and sustainably....' Dr. Mrs. Amoakoh-Nuamah (Deputy Minister, MWRWH)

Action research

As an action research project, WASHCost seeks to gather cost information on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) service delivery. The project is developing tools and skills to use this information for better governance and planning by working wherever possible with service providers, planners and policy makers

(<http://www.washcost.info>). Since April

2009, there has been active field testing of research methodologies in the Greater Accra Region (Oyibi District) and Ashanti Region (Bosomtwe-Atwima-Kwanwoma District)

'...Understanding the cost of providing sustainable WASH services is important for us...' - Mr. Minta Aboagye (Director of Water, Water Directorate, MWRWH)

Other research areas

This research activity has been scaled up to two other regions in Ghana, that is the Northern and Volta Regions. Learning alliances a series of facilitated multi-stakeholder platforms at different levels start exploring the use of cost information for improved decision making parallel to the research activities. The focus is on joint action and research to develop appropriate solutions. Practitioners and research set priorities jointly and work in close collaboration.

MOLE XX Conference takes place in Ho



Dignitaries at the opening ceremony

The twentieth edition of the Mole Conference series took place in the Volta Regional Capital of Ghana, Ho, from July 14-18, 2009. This year's conference was under the theme, "20 years of multi-stakeholder dialogue in Ghana: The State of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Sector". In his opening address, the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana, HE John Mahama, called on civil society to create and promote the needed awareness that would change the behaviour and attitude of Ghanaians towards their environment, especially with regards to open defecation of which "Ghana has an unenviable position among the countries of sub-Saharan Africa."

The call was contained in a speech read on behalf of the Vice President by Hon. Albert Abongo, Minister of Water Resources, Works and Housing (MWRWH) at the opening ceremony. "Government will continue to be open to suggestions from civil society on ways to ensure that water and sanitation is no longer a major cause of our poverty" HE John Mahama added.

Solidarity messages were delivered by development partners, CWSA, WRC, GWCL/AVRL and WaterAid Ghana. In his solidarity message, Dr Philip Gyau-Boakye, the Chief Executive of CWSA, indicated that they are working towards the passage of

relevant legislative instruments to enable CWSA carry out its facilitating and regulatory functions. The Chairman of CONIWAS, Mr Thomas Sayibu Imoro, noted that the prevailing conditions in the WASH sector call for swift action and that CONIWAS will pursue what he calls a 3C agenda: using *Cooperation, Collaboration and Confrontation* to hasten the process of pushing the WASH sector forward.

As part of activities marking the 20th anniversary of the Mole Series, CONIWAS awarded 21 personalities and institutions for playing various roles to support the organisation of the Mole Series and the establishment of CONIWAS over the past twenty years at an impressive ceremony.

Hon. Joseph Yieleh Chireh, the Minister for Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), officially closed the conference after three days of useful presentations, deliberations and discussions. About 167 participants took part in this year's conference. These included local and international institutions/actors including, the MWRWH, MLGRD, CWSA, GWCL/AVRL, WRC, NGOs, Networks, Civil Society Organisations, and Development Partners among others. See the Conference Communiqué at the back page.

Minister for Local Government inaugurates Ghana WATSAN Journalist Network

Hon. Albert Abongo, Minister of Water Resource Works Housing launched the Ghana WATSAN Journalist Network (WJN) in Accra, in March 2009. The formation of the network of journalists interested in reporting on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) issues, known as the WJN, was facilitated by WaterAid Ghana. WJN duly registered as a network in late 2008 and as part of its inauguration; a sensitization workshop was organised to orient WJN members and other media practitioners on WASH sector issues in order to improve reportage. The inauguration and sensitization workshop was under the theme: "The role of the media in Ghana's WASH agenda".

Regional sanitation and hygiene symposium in Ghana

The Resource Centre Network Ghana (RCN Ghana), UNICEF, West Africa Water Initiative (WAWI), WaterAid, and IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre are jointly organising the first **West Africa Regional Sanitation and Hygiene Symposium in Accra, Ghana, 10-12 November 2009**, as part of a longer term regional sharing and learning process. The Symposium will be a bilingual event (French and English). It will seek to identify proven good practices in the sanitation and hygiene sector, as well as drawing lessons from failures to enter into the policy dialogue.

The Symposium aims to build upon the profile and momentum achieved by the UN International Year of Sanitation (IYS 2008), AfricaSan 2008, regional Learning and Sharing workshops on sanitation and hygiene in South Asia and East Africa, the Mole conference on Sanitation held in Koforidua, Ghana in 2008, and the IRC symposium Sanitation for the Urban Poor held in the Netherlands, in November 2008. Registration is open to all and currently ongoing. For further enquiries contact RCN Ghana (see contact details on back page).

Minister for Local Government launches Safi Sana Ghana Limited

Mr. Joseph Yieleh Chireh, Minister of Local Government and Rural Development officially launched Safi Sana (Ghana) Limited in Accra. In his address Hon. Chireh called on Ghanaians to see sanitation as a business serving the bottom of the pyramid, which required a smart mix of financial instruments from equity funders as well as the government, NGOs and banks that needed cooperation from consumers, small-scale service entrepreneurs and large scale processing business partners.

Safi Sana (Ghana) Limited (SSGL) is an environmental organisation based in Accra. The company is funded by Aqua for All, a Dutch NGO in the WASH sector. Safi Sana intends to provide water and sanitation facilities for densely populated urban slums and using the excreta for the production of biogas and organic fertilizer.

Frederick Tetey-Lowor the Programme Manager of Safi Sana Ghana Limited, stated that the aim of Safi Sana is three-fold: to increase access to safe and affordable drinking water; increase access to affordable and adequate sanitation and hygiene services; and to promote environmental sustainability and resource recovery.

Participants included NGOs, Community leaders, Parliamentarians, Assembly members, partner institutions of Safi Sana Ghana including the Managing Director of Aqua4All, Sjeff Ernes. Nii Nortey Duah, Member of Parliament for Ledzokuku, expressed delight on behalf of his constituency for being selected as the starting point for the project and gave the assurance that they would cooperate fully to ensure the success of the project.

Use of water & sanitation data

-Stakeholder education necessary: Mole 20 agrees

Practitioners in the drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector have expressed need for more stakeholder education on data use at the recent 2009 Mole Conference held in Ho.

In response to this call, the Water and Sanitation Monitoring Platform (WSMP) has observed that some WASH sector practitioners, politicians, the media and other data users have been using data without considering the source of the data and the objectives for which those data are collected and the methodologies applied for data collection and analyses. There are two main types of data available to the water and sanitation sector in Ghana; these are User-based and Provider-based data.

User-based data are generated through representative household surveys and censuses, where users of drinking water and sanitation facilities tell data collectors which type of water and sanitation facilities they use, in what quantities and within what distance among others. Through these surveys and censuses, information on the use of the drinking water and sanitation (toilet) facility is indirectly obtained irrespective of who provided them.

Provider-based data are generated by the major water and sanitation service providers (Ghana Water Company (GWCL) and Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA). Generally, these service providers set their own monitoring criteria, where analyses are usually based on the number of people a facility can best serve within a community

or geographical area.

When critically analyzed, these two types of data will hardly provide the same figures. This is because on one hand the user cannot be controlled for telling the data collector what type of facility he/she uses and in what quantities, while on the other hand the provider can indeed prescribe a limit to which a facility should adequately supply. When these two methodologies are applied within the same community, there are usually some (sometimes very wide) disparities between the data that are generated. This is evidenced in the fact that data generated by the Ghana Statistical Service, which applies user-based methodologies, are usually very different from figures generated by CWSA and GWCL for rural, small towns and urban respectively.

The WSMP wishes to advise WASH sector stakeholders in particular, academic researchers, the media and politicians to make efforts at understanding how some of these data are generated and for which purpose in order to be informed on where and how it may be used more appropriately. Failure to do this implies, planning and decision-making may not be accurate, resources could be unfairly allocated, investment needed may be wrongly calculated and there could be national embarrassment! Imagine an international conference where two different personalities present different figures to represent the same country for the same period (and this does happen sometimes!)

Source: Water and Sanitation Monitoring Platform (WSMP) Ghana, July 2009.

Sector learning talk show at Mole 20



The first Mole WASH talk Show on Knowledge Management anchored by Kwaku Sakyi Addo

Although gradual progress is being made in the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sector, we are still far from providing all people with sustainable quality WASH services. The question, which keeps coming up is “Do we learn in the sector and does this translate in better sector performance?” This was the focus of session 2 of day 2, at the recent Mole conference in Ho, dubbed, “Sector Learning Talk Show”, which was moderated by popular television and radio talk-show host, Kwaku Sakyi Addo of the Front Page/ Kwaku One-On-One fame. The session attempted to address the above question by introducing the concept of sector learning and discussing some of the initiatives in Ghana that uses the learning alliance approach.

Mr. Kwame Frempa-Yeboah of the Ministry of Water Resource Works and Housing (MWRWH), the chairman of the session gave a brief outline of the session and introduced Marieke Adank of IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre, who gave the global perspective of sector learning, learning alliances and resource centre networks. Marieke stated that Sector learning involves double loop learning, learning for change, challenging underlying norms, policies and objectives, rather than, a single loop error-detection-and-correction process. The sector learning cycle emphasises the linkages between learning, knowledge and

information development and use of new knowledge. Learning Alliances are groups of stakeholders, organised into platforms at key institutional levels, supported by facilitation, working together to learn, innovate and scale-up. Resource Centre Networks consist of a core group of organizations, committed to improving knowledge management in the sector.

The talk show featured the Resource Centre Network (RCN) and its member projects represented by Abu Wumbui, RCN; Eugene Larbi, Tripartite Partnership (TPP) project; Alex Obuobisa Dako, WASHCost project; Bertha Darteh, SWITCH project; Tania Verdemato, Triple-S project; Frederick Tettey-Lowor, Safi Sana project; and Emmanuel Addai, Water and Sanitation Monitoring Platform (WSMP). Kwaku Sakyi Addo, in his usual fashion took the representatives through a number of questions which centred on initiative's/projects' main objectives, current status, challenges and the way forward for sector learning in Ghana.

Mr. Frempa-Yeboah, in his closing remarks called on the various projects to feed into the RCN, so that outputs and new insights generated would be accessible even after the projects lifespan. He appealed to all to do more by being reflective and innovative in contributing to sector learning.

Upper West spends US\$ 5.8 million on sanitation-related diseases

Almost USD 6 million can be saved if the people changed their behaviour and attitude to sanitation, says Alhaji Abu Yahaya, Chairman of the Upper West Regional Health Committee. The costs for water and sanitation related diseases such as acute respiratory infections and diarrhoea were about US\$ 5.85 million in 2008 which strains the finances of the various Mutual Health Insurance Schemes. Improved hygiene and sanitation behaviour can prevent 90% of these diseases, said Abu Yahaya at the closing session of a one-week course for Sanitation Guards drawn from the Wa Municipality, Wa East, Wa West and Sissala East Districts.

The Guards are expected to assist Environmental Health Officers in hygiene education and promotion, premise inspection, dissemination of sanitary information, supervision and monitoring of sanitation services. Ninety Sanitation Guards have been trained so far in the region, according to Mr. Emmanuel Volsuri, Regional Operations Supervisor of waste management company Zoom Lion Ghana Limited.

Source: Zoom Lion Ghana Ltd

MOLE XX Communiqué

We, the participants of Mole XX Conference, held in Ho, Volta Region, from 14-18th July, 2009, on the theme "Twenty years of multi-stakeholder dialogue in Ghana: the state of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene"

Reaffirming our commitment to fulfilling the needs of the poor and the fight against poverty in the knowledge that the provision of sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services in a coherent and properly coordinated environment is a prudent and essential step towards poverty alleviation and socio-economic development,

Noting that the Mole Series has, over the past 20 years, contributed a great deal to sector dialogue, knowledge and the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene services to the people of Ghana and has thus been acknowledged as a very useful platform,

Recognising that a number of pertinent issues still have to be vigorously addressed if Ghana is to attain the goals set for water, sanitation and hygiene,

Do hereby agree to the conclusions of the conference and issue this communiqué as follows:

1. Moving Mole Forward

We will sustain and improve on the Mole Conference Series through financial contributions from civil society, sector actors and partners to ensure even better planning and raise the standard of organization by including innovative activities such as field trips, inclusion of more voices from those that we serve, as well as political authorities at the local level and parliament.

2. Sector coordination

We pledge to consolidate the gains made through improved sector coordination, and to collectively work towards improving it through compliance with and respect for sector policies, regulations and standards;

3. Tracking the achievement of water and sanitation: Country Status Overviews

We have taken note of the requirement for African countries to report their water and sanitation actions to the Summit of the African Union (AU) through the African Ministers Council on Water (AMCOW) and urge Government, civil society and all water and sanitation actors to fully participate in the country dialogues that will lead to the finalisation of Ghana's Country Sector Overview report on water and sanitation to be submitted to the AU in 2010;

4. Improving efficiency of water use

We recognise the significant impact that savings in water use can make on the lives of the poor and the unserved population and express support for the development and implementation of appropriate policies and programmes and the enactment of requisite legislation to promote water-saving devices and practices;

5. International commitments

We reaffirm our commitment to constantly engage in dialogue with Government to ensure that Government fulfils its international commitments to water, sanitation and hygiene;

6. Data harmonization

We have taken note of the fact that there are different types and sources of sector data to meet the specific requirements of the user which demands that there should be intensified stakeholder education on the efficient selection and use of data;

We further request that all sector stakeholders - including provider agencies and data gatherers agree and/or comply with common definitions on sector parameters to reduce the current disparity in numbers so as to inform better sector planning and investments;

7. Private community partnerships

We have taken note of the laudable private initiatives aimed at improving access

to water and sanitation services to low income communities and urge Government and its agencies to evaluate and draw lessons from them; We further urge proponents and managers of these initiatives to seek dialogue with the appropriate agencies and ensure that their processes and practices are in line with existing policies, strategies and standards;

8. Management of small town water supply facilities

We urge the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development to speed up the establishment of the District Works Department as stipulated under the Local Government Services Secretariat Act to ensure proper monitoring and supervision of the activities of Water and Sanitation Development Boards by Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), among others;

We have further taken note of the several challenges facing the operation and maintenance of small town water systems, including the negative impact of the high cost of power in the determination of tariffs, non-payment of utility bills by Government institutions and external interferences in the operations of water boards, and propose the following for the consideration of Government and its agencies:

- Provide a special rate of tariffs for power used in the operations of small town water systems;
- Pay utility bills promptly, failing which Water Boards shall have authority to disconnect service to defaulting institutions, with the exception of essential facilities such as hospitals and schools;
- Reduce undue interference in the operations of small towns water systems through the enforcement of the bye-laws governing the establishment of Water Boards;

We further request Government agencies, District Assemblies, CONIWAS members and academic institutions to support the development of the capacity of the Association of Water and Sanitation Boards and its members;

9. Knowledge Management

We urge various institutions and projects promoting knowledge management to develop capacity for effective knowledge sharing to enable the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene sector make the required impact at the local level.

We further encourage all sector institutions to set aside a budget for knowledge management in their operations;

10. Commitment to Hygiene

We have taken note of the low level of commitment towards Hygiene, and propose the development of a comprehensive Hygiene Education strategy by the Environmental Health and Sanitation Directorate;

11. Commitment to Gender

We have observed that Gender is not given adequate priority and attention and urge the encouragement of gender disaggregation in data analyses, planning and decision making by all sector institutions;

12. Urban Water Delivery

We request Ghana Water Company Ltd (GWCL) and Aqua Viten Rand Ltd (AVRL) to ensure customer satisfaction by making services reliable, affordable, and of good quality and respond promptly to customer complaints;

We further request Government, GWCL and the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURC) to ensure financial sustainability of the sub-sector through the reduction of non-revenue water, increase in collection ratio, and value-for-money audits and impose or demand stiffer punishment for people involved in mal-practices;

We also call upon government and development partners, as well as non-traditional actors, to increase investments in the urban water sub-sector so as to meet the needs of the poor and un-served communities.

Issued in Ho, Volta Region, 18th July 2009

Sector Events Calendar '09 (September-December)

The Resource Centre Network (RCN) has launched the Sector Events Calendar. Below is the September - December 2009 edition. This is also available online at www.watsan.ghana.net

EVENT	DATE	VENUE
Training Workshop on Strengthening Transparency, Integrity & Accountability	September 21 - 23, 2009	IRC, The Hague Netherlands
SWITCH Global City Water Futures Summit	October 7 - 10, 2009	UNESCO-IHE, Delft, The Netherlands
Global Hand Washing Day	October 15, 2009	Cape Coast
Annual Water Forum	October 20 - 22, 2009	Accra
WA Regional Sanitation Conference	November 3 - 5, 2009	Accra
Annual Sanitation Week	November 4 - 14, 2009	Accra
African Water Week	November 9 - 13, 2009	Johannesburg, RSA
World Toilet Day	November 19, 2009	Accra

Compiled by RCN Ghana

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