

REPORT ON KINTAMPO SOUTH DISTRICT LEARNING ALLIANCE PLATFORM

Activity: Start-up meeting
Venue: District Assembly Hall/Court, Jema
Date: October 29, 2015

Meeting agenda

- Opening remarks from the Kintampo South District Chief Executive
- Presentation of the Learning Alliance Concept
- Formation of DLAP in the Kintampo South District
- Any other business
- Closing

The meeting commenced at 01:35 pm with an opening prayer from Mr. Daniel Nnebini, a Planning Officer with the Kintampo South District Assembly. This was followed by self-introduction by participants. The District Coordinating Director, Mr. Baba Iddi welcomed those who were present and indicated the District Assembly's readiness to learn more about Learning Alliances, and hope that members would find the concept useful and eventually replicate similar process in the district.

The floor was then given to two officers from the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) Brong Ahafo Region, to introduce participants to the Learning Alliance concept. First, Mr. Benjamin Agbemor, a Regional Learning Facilitator with CWSA gave a power point presentation on the concept. He begun by asking participants to discuss the following questions in buzz groups and report back at plenary:

1. Do we learn in a structured or systematic manner from mistakes in the past?
2. Do existing experiences and lessons feedback and result in better capacities?
3. Are innovative and successful solutions to local problems being brought to the limelight and are these scaled-up?

Most of the participants generally agreed that they learnt from their day-to-day activities, especially in engagements with communities. Some of these learning experiences, they claimed, helped in improving their performance on the job, but were largely undocumented and rarely shared outside the circles of informal conversations.

Following this initial interactions with participants, Mr. Agbemor continued his presentation by unpacking what Learning Alliances do. He indicated that learning platforms are opportunities that are created to bring people together to jointly analyse and address problems, and learn how to arrive at solutions collectively. He added that Learning Alliances bridge the gap between people on the ground, organisations at district level with responsibility for service provision and support, and national policy

makers. The final part of his presentations touched on the levels at which they could be organised; the thematic issues that could be best addressed/discussed at each level; and people/institutions who could join learning platforms.

Mr. George Amartei, a Senior Extension Services Specialist of CWSA, Brong Ahafo Region also gave a background presentation on how Learning Alliance platforms could be formed. He noted that, fundamentally, key stakeholders ought to agree that there are problems in certain areas, and that they must all have their reasons (mandates, potential benefits, and interest) to seek resolutions of the problem. He narrowed the discussion to the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sub-sector of the district and guided participants to identify some challenges which were being faced. Some of these were identified as poorly constituted Water and Sanitation Management Teams (WSMTs), unsatisfactory performance of WSMTs, non-payment for water, high number of broken-down boreholes, under-funding of WASH activities by the District Assembly, and inadequate monitoring visit by the WASH Unit of the District to communities. He elaborated on the need and roles of a host institution for the Learning Alliance platform which would serve as secretariat; the roles of a focal person at the secretariat who would see to routine administrative issues, the functions of a Core Group, and the roles of dedicated institutions/persons whose priority would be to learn and contribute to dialogue aimed at improving the WASH landscape of the district. He concluded his presentations by outlining some cost centres that would be necessary in establishing and running a District Learning Alliance Platform (DLAP).

Having listened to the presentations and participated in the discussions on the learning alliance concept, the facilitators posed questions on whether the participants, and indeed the district deemed the learning alliance concept worth replicating. This was unanimously answered in the affirmative. The facilitators then guided the participants to identify a secretariat for the platform. The Kintampo South District Assembly (KSDA) was chosen as the host institution and the secretariat for the platform. This decision was reached on the grounds that the KSDA was a permanent and neutral institution which attracts both private and public sector organisations/individuals. The District Planning officer was nominated and approved as the DLAP focal person. A DLAP core group was constituted with the following membership: 1) Daniel Nnebini, Planning Officer (Focal Person); 2) Gertrude Nkrumah, nominated in absentia by the World Vision Jema Area Development Programme Manager to represent their institution; 3) Evelyn Kyeremaa, representing District Management/Administration; 4) Patrick Kwakye representing the WASH Unit and 5) Mr. Turkson Zoyaar, District Environmental Health Officer.

It was agreed that for the sake of convenience and as a cost saving measure, the most appropriate venue for learning meetings would be within the premises of the District Assembly. This will obviate the need for hiring meeting venues and its associated costs. It was however agreed that, if any member of the platform wanted to host a learning meeting, that could be allowed. In line with this, the World Vision Area Development Manager, Mr. Kennedy Agyei Gyan, hinted that his organisation would host some learning events, and bear its full costs (cost of snacks/lunch) in the future. The Focal Person for the DLAP was also charged with additional responsibility of documenting minutes of learning meetings and follow-up on key action points.

Participants agreed that there would not be payment of any form of allowances when members turn up for learning meetings. This was decided on grounds that such incentives may be difficult to sustain. It was mentioned that, during the initial periods of the platforms, CWSA with support from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation would provide both technical and financial support to the DLAP until it has fully taken off. In the interim, the district was encouraged to begin to create budget lines or identify other innovative means of funding to support learning meetings. Members agreed that there should be quarterly learning activities, and any department/institution which had something interesting to share need to route it through the Core group.

Participants at the meeting proposed that the DLAP secretariat/focal person take steps to contact the following persons/institutions to join the platform: a) Mission of Hope for Society (MIHOSO); b) the District Health Directorate; c) Local Media Groups; d) Ghana Education Service; and e) Assembly members, especially those in close proximity with the District Capital, Jema.

The Core group was tasked to convene and plan for the next DLAP meeting. The meeting ended at 4:00pm.

Attendance

1. Baba Iddi, District Coordinating Director, KSDA
2. Donkor Busi, Community Development Officer, KSDA
3. Zoyaar Turkson, District Environmental Health Officer, KSDA
4. Manfred Appiah, District Budget Analyst, KSDA
5. Thomas Korsah, Head, Works Department, KSDA
6. Hickmato Abdulai, District Finance Officer, KSDA
7. Kwakye Patrick, Engineer, Water Section, KSDA
8. Farida Rauph, District Water and Sanitation Team member, KSDA
9. Evelyn Ataa Kyeremaa, Assistant Director IIB, KSDA
10. Babalangna Francisca, District Water and Sanitation Team member, KSDA
11. Kennedy Agyei Gyan, ADP Manager, World Vision Ghana, Jema
12. Daniel Nnebini, Assistant Development Planning Officer, KSDA
13. Mohammed A.C, Assistant Director IIB, KSDA
14. George Amartei, Senior Extension Services Specialist, CWSA BAR
15. Benjamin Agbemor, Regional Learning Facilitator, CWSA BAR

Absentees

1. Ghana Education Service, SHEP Unit
2. Adaas FM