

REPORT ON THE SUNYANI WEST DISTRICT LEARNING ALLIANCE PLATFORM

Activity: District Learning Alliance Meeting (1st in series)

Venue: District Assembly Hall, Odumase

Date: 17th May, 2016

Meeting agenda

- Discussion of CWSA Regulations 2011 (LI 2007)
- Any other business
- Closing

Introduction

The meeting started at 10:43 am with an opening prayer from Mr. Mathew Quaye, an Accountant with the Sunyani West District Assembly. The Learning meeting was chaired by Mr. Kwesi Owusu Mintah, the District Planning Officer. Members present introduced themselves. In his introductory remarks, Mr. Mintah indicated that the District Learning Alliance Platform was established in 2013, under the Triple-S Project. He however admitted, that the platform has been dormant for some time. He was happy that the platform was being revived, and expressed optimism that learning meetings would be organised regularly at the district level. Mr. Mintah rendered apologies on behalf of the District Chief Executive and the Coordinating Director who were both called out of office at the eleventh hour to attend to some emergencies at Nsoatre. He then introduced the two officers from CWSA Brong Ahafo Region who would facilitate the presentation and discussion of the Legislative Instrument (LI) 2007.

Business of the day

Mr. Frank Tsidzi, a Senior Information and Technology Specialist with the Community Water and Sanitation Agency, Brong Ahafo Region (CWSA, BAR), gave a background of how the rural and small towns' water sector evolved in Ghana. He highlighted the sole responsibility of the then Ghana Water and

Sewerage Corporation for water provision which favoured urban water delivery, and led to facilities in the rural areas not being sustainably managed. He explained how the National Community Water and Sanitation Programme (NCWSP) came into existence in 1994, in line with Ghana's Decentralization Policy (as enshrined in Act 462 of 1993) and the eventual creation of the Community Water and Sanitation Agency with Act 564 in 1998. Mr. Tsidzi identified and explained the overall goal and specific objectives of the NCWSP as 1) providing basic WASH services to rural communities, small towns and institutions; 2) Ensuring sustainability of the WASH services through Community Ownership and Management concept, and 3) Maximizing health benefits by integrating water, sanitation and hygiene interventions at the community level.

Mr. Benjamin Agbemor, a Learning Facilitator with CWSA BAR, started his presentation by going through the six major regulations and the five schedules which made up the LI 2007. Under '**General Principles**' Mr. Agbemor explained what is required of person(s) who intend to provide water or sanitation facility in a rural community and small town in Ghana, and the corresponding roles of Metropolitan, Municipal or District Assemblies (MMDAs). Participants observed that, in most cases, individuals provide water facilities for public use without applying to the district assembly for approval. They noted the operators of private mechanised boreholes in the district as the worst culprits.

The participants however admitted that, the inability of people applying to the District before sinking boreholes for public use may be due to ignorance of what is expected from them. The participants also identified some NGOs who provide water facilities in the district without informing the Assembly. On the other hand, the house agreed that, the non-compliance with provisions in the LI 2007 as it relates to the notification of the district for approval before a community water facility is provided and/or rehabilitated could be symptoms of the district officers' ignorance of the law and guidelines or failure to enforce compliance with them or both.

During discussions, some participants were of the view that the district should take steps to educate people who engage in the provision of water facilities of all the pieces of legislation that guide water service delivery in the sectors. It was also suggested that the district, in asserting its authority could consider complete banning of people who provide public water services without following due process.

Mr. Agbemor continued his presentation by highlighting the role of MMDAs in the establishment of Water and Sanitation Management Team (WSMTs) for community water supply assets. He touched on the composition and procedures for establishing WSMTs. At plenary, the house noted that that, development

partners (NGOs) who sidestep or do not fully involve the district assembly in the provision of water facilities ended up not establishing WSMTs for such facilities, and this becomes additional responsibility for the district assembly.

Contributions were sought from the participants on the basic requirements for community water supply facilities as it relates to the service level indicators. These were identified as quality, quantity, reliability and accessibility. The facilitators used these as the entry point to explain the section of the LI 2007 which had to do with 'standards'. The basic requirements for siting and drilling a borehole were explained. The minimum distance of boreholes from possible sources of contamination and protected sites (such as sacred groves) was also established fifty metres. During discussions, participants noted the reasons why only pumps approved by CWSA are allowed to be used for community water facilities as follows:

- To guarantee availability of spare parts;
- To guarantee availability of similar pumps when replacement is required;
- To guarantee the availability of local expertise (Area Mechanics) in undertaking repair services
- The standardized pumps have proven history of usage, durability and general acceptability across Ghana

Under water safety, the facilitators emphasized the need for water quality testing at regular intervals. The harmful effects of groundwater contamination such as dental and skeletal fluorosis as well as arsenic poisoning were explained. Using a sample certificate of water quality analysis from the Ghana Water Company Limited, the facilitators explained some of the elements and parameters which have to be tested, and the acceptable limits according to the World Health Organisation and the Ghana Standards Authority. This sample water quality analyses enabled participants to appreciate the sheer number of parameters to be tested in order to certify water as potable for consumption.

The discussion on the LI 2007 was concluded with offences and penalties for contravening its various provisions. In his closing remarks, Mr. Mintah indicated that there will be further engagement with management of the district assembly on how to enforce provisions of the LI. He also indicated that there would be additional meetings with the works and other relevant district sub-committees on how to reflect regulations of the LI in their daily activities.

The meeting ended at 01:5pm with a closing prayer from Mr. Mathew Quaye.

Attendance

1. Mathew Quaye, Accountant, Sunyani West District Assembly
2. Nkansah Manu, Assistant Budget Analyst, Sunyani West District Assembly
3. Bertha Adu-Koranteng, Assistant Director, Sunyani West District Assembly
4. Rachel Pooma Darkwa, Planning Unit, Sunyani West District Assembly
5. Judith Nana Ampomah, Human Resource, Sunyani West District Assembly
6. Beatrice Afia Boatemaa, Assistant Quantity Surveyor, Sunyani West District Assembly
7. Kyei-Asare Bediako, Water Engineer, Sunyani West District Assembly
8. Owusu Mintah Kwesi, Planning Officer, Sunyani West District Assembly
9. Jiam Seth, Environmental Health Officer, Sunyani West District Assembly
10. Appiah Evans, Public Private Partnership staff
11. Belinda Diamoh, Assistant Planning Officer, Sunyani West District Assembly
12. Michael K. Gyamfi, Assistant Director, Sunyani West District Assembly
13. Daniel Antwi, Community Development Officer, Sunyani West District Assembly
14. Inkoom Adom Samuel, Internal Auditor, Sunyani West District Assembly
15. Justice O. Pobee, District Environmental Health Officer, Sunyani West District Assembly
16. Benjamin Agbemor, CWSA, BAR
17. Frank Tsidzi, CWSA, BAR
18. Abdul Mumin Sulemana, CWSA, BAR