

## Mainstreaming Human Capacity Development in Ghana's Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Sector

Participants at the 71<sup>st</sup> edition of the National Level Learning Alliance Platform (NLLAP) in Accra have welcomed the idea on mainstreaming human capacity development in the Water and Sanitation Sector in Ghana. Participants subsequently offered various suggestions on training needs for young professionals and technicians, roles, resources needed, implementation framework, monitoring and evaluation to mainstream, formalize and coordinate human capacity development in the WASH sector.

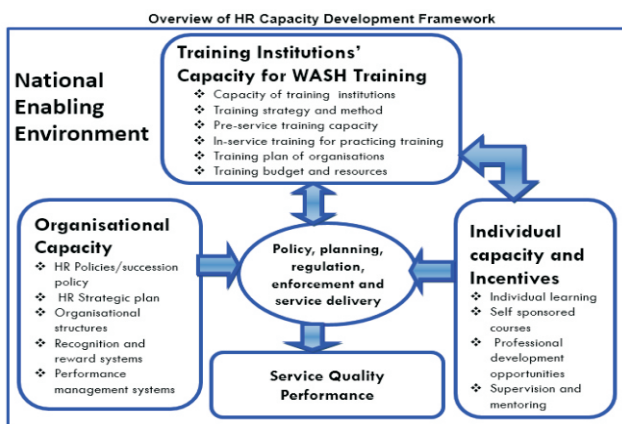
*The UNESCO International Hydrological Programme (UNESCO-IHP) is supporting the implementation of the African Water Ministers' declaration urging the African Union Commission (AUC) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Water Centres of Excellence to develop a Human Capacity Development Programme for junior professionals and technicians. The Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) is one of the said Centres of Excellence. The NEPAD Centre of Excellence in partnership with national UNESCO-IHP Ghana Team is coordinating the preparation and implementation of the national level programme in Ghana. NLLAP 71 was organized on Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2018 to reflect on WASH human capacity development in Ghana, validate results of a human capacity study and also reflect on the commitment of WASH sector organizations and development partners to support capacity building.*

### Address by the Chairman

The Chief Director of the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, Mr. Obeng Poku, who chaired the workshop, acknowledged in his opening address, that human capacity development continued to be a major challenge in the WASH sector in Ghana in spite of previous efforts. He said he wondered if the challenges were not as a result of weaknesses in the various training institutions. He therefore welcomed the role of KNUST as one of the five NEPAD Centres of Excellence in West Africa and hoped that there would be improvement in human capacity development for the sector through the UNESCO-IHP intervention.

On her part, Hajia Safuratu Muhammed Andani, Greater Accra Regional Director of the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA), on behalf of her Chief Executive Officer, said the project had come at the right time for the agency since it had a plan for young graduates. She said the plan had also identified some skill gaps with some of the young graduates which the agency believed support from the Centre of Excellence would be useful in filling them. On his part, Mr. Emmanuel Aboagye of the National Board for Professional and Technician Examinations (NABPTEx), said the Board was ready to help close the skills gap through support to the capacity building

process. The Head of People and Organizational Development of WaterAid Ghana, Antoinette Shor, also said increase in population and human needs required constant capacity development. She also drew attention to the dwindling donor support to the WASH sector in Ghana, which could affect human capacity development. This, she said, called for a reflection on innovative financing in a Ghana beyond aid, as well as sustainability of the human capacity development programmes.



### Study findings

#### Skill gaps in water resources

Skill gaps identified include hydrological investigations, water resources management, operations, planning and design of dams/water structures. Other gaps include water resources modelling and GIS application, water quality modelling, management and surveillance skills.

#### Skill gaps water supply

Skill gaps identified include construction and borehole drilling, community

### Study methods and approach

The study, according to Prof. Oduro Kwarteng, involved a survey of 20 organizations, 316 respondents, a national dialogue workshop and a validation workshop. The focus was identification of skill gaps in water and sanitation, and training courses needed by sector professionals. It also solicited ideas of respondents for roles and resources for human capacity development, the implementation framework and monitoring and evaluation.

mobilization and engagement skills, managerial and leadership skills, business development and electro-mechanical equipment installation. Others include groundwater treatment, water loss management, and water quality analysis skills.

#### Skill gaps in environmental sanitation

Gaps identified include facility management/operational management skills, waste-to-energy engineering skills, landfill design and capping. Others include waste treatment technologies and innovation, social and psychology of waste management, waste value chain development skills,

and waste sorting.

### Skill gaps in environmental health

Gaps identified include rural and urban sanitation technologies, (occupational) health and safety management, infrastructure planning, environmental hygiene, and sanitation facility construction skills.

### Cross-cutting skill gaps

The following skill gaps are cross-cutting: (behaviour change) communication skills, report writing and development of decision-support

Government and Ministries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement human resources components of the national policies</li> <li>• Provide adequate funding for WASH sector capacity building</li> </ul>
Agencies and organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define a clear career development plan</li> <li>• Identify training needs and provide dedicated budget for training</li> <li>• Undertake performance appraisal including training and incentives</li> </ul>
Training institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and develop new curriculum that are responsive to the needs of the country</li> <li>• Offer training and re-training of sector employees</li> </ul>
Individual employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take up new challenges to enable them identify their skill gaps</li> <li>• Use new skills and knowledge from training</li> </ul>

### Suggestions for the implementation framework

Respondents in the study suggested that training institutions should develop new relevant and critical training courses. Agencies and organizations also need to acquire the new facilities and equipment needed to support the application of the new skills acquired. Government and organizations also need to make budget allocations to skills development of employees while individual self-funded courses should be recognized by employers. Organizations also need to revise job descriptions or re-assignments wherever necessary for staff with new skills.

### Suggestions for monitoring and evaluation

To track the progress of human resource capacity development in the WASH sector, respondents suggested the setting up of a sector human resource monitoring and valuation information system and database, establish a coordinating platform and appoint an M&E focal person at the sector ministry. There was also a suggestion for the establishment of employer trainee surveys to provide data, the M&E Focal and the ministry shall be supported by focal persons at the training institutions to undertake data collection and management.

### Participants suggestions at NLLAP 71

#### Water resources

- Short-term training needs for young graduates should include Water Resources modelling, GIS and remote sensing, water quality assessment and modelling and principles of integrated water resources management.
- A critical long-term training programme for young graduates should focus on IWRM and climate change.
- Critical short-term training courses for technicians with non-tertiary certificates should include stream gauging and hygrometry, water quality assessment, monitoring and analyses, and rainwater harvesting techniques.
- A critical long-term course for technicians should focus on hydrological investigations.
- Government ministries, agencies and departments should provide funding for human capacity development through budgetary allocations, internally generated funds, dedicated training funds and donor funding.
- Training institutions should attract funding from industry, lead in curriculum development with inputs from industry, constant interaction with industry and bridge the gap between academia and industry.

#### Water supply

- Short-term training courses for young graduates include low-cost groundwater treatment and drilling technology, water loss detection and management; and innovations in water supply.

tools, business development and entrepreneurial skills, research and advocacy skills, monitoring and evaluation skills, community mobilization and engagement skills.

The study suggested that these identified skills gaps be used to develop training courses for technicians and artisans with non-tertiary certificates.

### Roles and resources for human capacity development

The following roles were suggested by respondents during the study to be played by key identified institutions:

- A post-graduate programme in operation and maintenance in water supply systems was also recommended.
- For short-term non-tertiary technician training certificates, courses in sustainability of handpumps, water safety and management and financial management were recommended, while M&E, water treatment and record-keeping were recommended for long-term training.
- In terms of funding, training plans and budgeting, donor support and government allocations were suggested, while training institutions are expected to design programmes that meets the needs of users/employers to attract funding.

### Environmental sanitation

- Top priority training needs for young graduates should be on behaviour change communication, social and psychology of waste management, business development in WASH, waste value chain and entrepreneurship, waste treatment and innovations.
- A critical long-term course should involve facility and operational management skills, waste to energy engineering, landfill design and capping.
- Training for technicians with non-tertiary certificates should include customer service, community mobilization and engagement skills, equipment handling, data collection, health and safety management skills.
- A prescribed long-term course for technicians could focus on facility construction.
- Training could be funded by government ministries, agencies and departments through pooled funds and a sanitation fund.

### Environmental health and hygiene

- Young professionals should be trained in environmental laws and policies; behaviour change communication in WASH; and entrepreneurial skills in WASH as short-term courses. A long-term course may focus on construction technology of sanitation facilities.
- Non-tertiary technicians may be trained in rural and urban sanitation technologies; business development in WASH; and environmental laws and policies. A long-term course may focus on infrastructure planning.
- Government should provide funding through budget allocations and specialized projects; training institutions may attract funding through proposal development, marketing, partnerships and other innovative fundraising strategies.

In his concluding remarks, Mr Obeng Poku suggested that the schools of hygiene be considered in the training plans, while liquid waste management also needs to be considered critically.

**NLLAP is a WASH sector multi stakeholder platform with the overall goal of improving sector learning and dialogue. It is hosted by the Ghana WASH Resource Centre Network (RCN). The platform offers learning and sharing opportunity for sector players as one of the practical approaches to improving sector engagements/sharing with the long term aim of achieving a knowledge driven WASH sector that delivers quality and sustainable services in Ghana. NLLAP meetings take place on the last Thursday of every month and are open to all interested parties. The discussions of each NLLAP meetings can be found on the RCN website [www.washghana.net](http://www.washghana.net).**

If you are interested to propose a topic for a meeting please contact us on,  
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