

A monthly review of the National Level Learning Alliance Platform

There is value in wastewater-take it serious-Executive Secretary of WRC

The Executive Secretary of the Water Resources Commission, Mr. Ben Ampomah, has said the poor sanitation and waste management was Ghana's biggest challenge and that, he further noted, had led to most of the country's fresh water bodies being contaminated leading to diseases and needless deaths. He said for instance about 80-90% of waste generated in Ghana end up in surface water bodies without treatment and therefore urged stakeholders in the WASH sector to take wastewater management seriously since there was value in wastewater. Mr. Ampomah further explained that, for Ghana to achieve the SDG 6, wastewater must be given the needed attention.

The Ghana Netherlands WASH Programme (GNWP) in collaboration with the Resource Centre Network (RCN) hosted the 62nd edition of the National Level Learning Alliance Platform (NLLAP 62) which took place on Thursday, March 23, 2017 at the Coconut Grove Regency Hotel in Accra. Mr. Ben Ampomah, the Executive Secretary of Water Resources Commission (WRC) chaired this edition of NLLAP which was on the theme: "Wastewater Treatment and Re-Use in Ghana: Prospects for Sustainable Development." Mr. Fred Smiet, the First Secretary of Water and Climate Change, GNWP, gave an overview of the GNWP. The Country Manager of Safi Sana Ghana Limited Mr. Raymond Ategbi Okrofu took participants through a presentation dubbed "A Business Approach for Improved Sanitation in Ghana – Organic Fertilisers and Energy as Drivers." Mr. Philip Amoah of International Water Management Institute (IWMI) shared lessons from the CAP VAL project on the theme "Wastewater Aquaculture," while Mr. Frederick Sunesson, the Founder of the Bola Bondeh at Lavender Hill, shared experience on how GPS tracking and cameras were being used to track the movement of waste trucks.

Giving an overview of the Ghana Netherlands WASH Programme, the First Secretary of Water and Climate, Ghana Netherlands WASH Programme, Mr. Fred Smiet said waste water management in Ghana leaves much to be desired and attributed the country's challenge in that regard to the rapid urbanization, explaining that giving value to wastewater was of priority to the GNWP and that the initiative would continue to support the private sector to fill in the gap for government. He advised the private sector to see wastewater management and waste management in general as a business model and invest in it.

Ongoing Projects of the Ghana Netherlands WASH Programme

Taking WASH sector stakeholders through the GNWP, the Policy Officer on Water and Sanitation at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Ms. Janet Dufie Arthur explained that GNWP was focused on urban large Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) Programme, the cost of which currently stands at € 142 million of which 82 million was borne by the Netherlands government. Ms. Arthur said the focus of the GNWP was on sustainability of the interventions, through sustained behavior change communication & capacity building, sustainable financing models, more private sector engagement and market based approach, adding that the programme wants to see an increased private sector involvement and local entrepreneurship for sustainable WASH service delivery in the country. The Policy Officer mentioned, Ghana WASH Window – PPP facility, SpaansBabcock Waste, Energy, and Environment Project (SWEEP), Private and Social toilets (PRISTO), Safe Water Network Project, Water Health Project, Sustainable Rural Water Service Delivery in Wassa East and Football for WASH

as some of the projects the GNWP was currently implementing with private sector partners in Ghana.



Experience and Lessons Sharing

The Country Manager of Safi Sana Ghana Limited Mr. Raymond Ategbi Okrofu, sharing experience on waste management on the theme: "A Business Approach for Improved Sanitation in Ghana – Organic Fertilisers and Energy as Drivers" explained the need for the Government of Ghana to institute policies that would ensure that waste was segregated to make waste recycling easier. He said the public should be educated on how to segregate their waste, adding that the surest way of achieving that was to incentivize Ghanaians. Mr. Okrofu said the Safi Sana Ghana project was to showcase sanitation to Ghanaians as a firm business model that was capable of driving human development in terms of improving health and increasing wealth. Additionally, the project he explained had provided

environmental sanitation for slum dwellers and had complemented the efforts of MMDAS to tackle sanitation. The Safi Sana Ghana Country Director said waste was a valuable resource which must be tapped and utilized to the benefit the country adding that, Safi Sana Ghana Limited had so far used organic and fecal waste to produce organic fertilizer which was used in the production of vegetables and seedlings. Aside, Safi Sana was also using treated wastewater in the irrigation of vegetables and seedlings at an installed greenhouse for vegetable seedlings. Safi Sana, Mr. Okrofu explained has so far generated 100kw of power into Ghana's power grid. To ensure a sustainable waste management sector in Ghana, Mr. Okrofu said required tangible political commitment, increased funding options and increased community engagement Impacts.

The CAP VAL project is a Public Private Partnership (PPP) between the Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly (KMA) and a private entrepreneur. Sharing their experiences on the theme; "Wastewater Aquaculture" Mr. Philip Amoah said the aim of the CAP VAL project was to create and capture value by supporting enterprises for urban liquid and solid wastes recycling for food, energy and clean environment. He said treated wastewater aquaculture business was viable especially when operational standards such as; maintaining good quality water, appropriate stocking densities, and feeding practices were religiously followed and practiced. Mr. Amoah said Ghana's Environmental Sanitation Policy supports safe resource recovery and reuse of waste (describes solid/liquid wastes as MINT) and therefore advised the private sector to take advantage of the opportunity to invest in wastewater aquaculture.

Recommendations

Stakeholders at the end of the 62nd NLLAP session recommended that:

- WASH sector stakeholders' especially private businesses, should build synergies in order to attract the needed financing to scale up their interventions.
- Government should facilitate the process of promoting, use and scale-up of compost production across the country especially food producing areas.
- Government should move away from on-site waste management systems to centralized sewer waste management system to make it relevant to the economy.
- Urban Agriculture should be promoted and linked to the compost produced in the urban centres.

- Compost should be pelletized for easy transportation and to reduce cost of transportation to farming areas across the country.
- Treated wastewater use and energy should be given more attention in the urban areas.
- Stakeholders should adopt more efficient technologies in the treatment of waste and wastewater to make scalability easier.
- Stakeholders should create more awareness on the use of compost
- Outcomes of the National Level Alliance Platform meetings should be circulated widely to all sector stakeholders especially government.

Conclusion

The First Secretary of Water and Climate, Ghana Netherlands WASH Programme, Mr. Fred Smiet expressed his gratitude to all the private sector actors for sharing their rich experiences and lessons, that he said would guide future investments and investors in the waste management sector, adding that wastewater had a very huge impact on every aspect of WASH, emphasizing that, "when we talk about drinking water or sanitation issues, wastewater is there and we can have value and turn it into a useful product." The experiences shared according to Mr. Smiet showed that treated wastewater and waste generates a lot of revenue and its potential to generate more revenue can be phenomenal.

According to Mr. Smiet, there was the urgent need for Government to provide the policy direction and create the enabling environment through the provision of land and tax incentives for the private sector to invest in the waste business. He said it was important for wastewater treatment and waste treatment and management to be linked to the agriculture, energy and other sectors of the economy in order to make it sustainable and relevant.

In his closing remarks, the Executive Secretary of the Water Resources Commission (WRC) Mr. Ben Ampomah encouraged the wastewater and waste management businesses to share more experiences and lessons which are adaptable and cost efficient and advised WASH sector actors to take up the lessons shared on the NLLAP platform and scale it up in other parts of the country. Mr. Ampomah also called on government and stakeholders to shape policies to reflect the changing wastewater and waste management sector.

The 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 opened to all interested parties. The discussions of each NLLAP meetings are summarised and shared with wider WASH community. The topics of upcoming meetings are decided on by the RCN secretariat and a list of upcoming meetings can be found on the RCN website www.washghana.net

If you are interested to propose a topic for a meeting please contact us on,
 Tel. (233-0302) 797473/4
 Email: rcn@washghana.net