

Concept Note

WASH and 2016 Elections

1. Background

Ghana like many Sub-Saharan African countries has committed to providing universal access to sustainable water and sanitation services by 2030. Subsequent to this Government of Ghana (GoG) has committed to a long term vision of a universal access to safe drinking water by 2025 and to eliminate open defecation by 2030. This has been reflected into national strategies such as the Sector Strategic Development Plan (WSSP-2012-2025) and other national documents such as the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGD-2014-2017)

This commitment was built on the results of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals which ended on 31st December 2015. Ghana during the period witnessed impressive progress in access to water coverage, however recorded abysmally low coverage on sanitation specific target. The 2015 JMP progress coverage estimate only 15% of Ghanaians with access to improved sanitation and 19% of the population practicing open defecation. Sanitation coverage at the local level is woefully inadequate with only 9% coverage and 34% of the rural folks practising open defecation

1.1 WASH Context

Although the Government of Ghana has always been one of the first Sub-Saharan Countries to sign up to a number of declarations and conventions aimed at accelerating sanitation coverage in the continent. Declarations and commitments such as the eThekwini declaration, the SWA and many more have not translated into investment in the sub-sector in Ghana. The proportion of Ghanaians with access to improved sanitation has increased by merely 11% since 1990.

Successive Governments have failed to keep the promise on funding sanitation thereby denying millions of Ghanaian access to sanitation which has been evident in the JMP progress update on sanitation and drinking water 2015 as well as many other reports. Between 2008 and 2011, the GoG spent an average of 0.3% of the country's GDP, equivalent of GH¢116.45 million on water and sanitation combined. The 0.3% expenditure was far short of the 0.5% of GDP GOG committed in spending on sanitation alone as per the eThekwini African Union declaration.

2. WASH and Elections 2016 Campaigns

The 2016 Presidential and Parliamentary elections provide an opportune moment to examine the spaces for political parties to articulate what they perceive as priority issues in the country. Thus based on its work in the sector, WaterAid Ghana believes that creating space for reflections by political actors during this year's national level elections can provide

opportunity for and citizens communities to secure political party commitments to place emphasis on WASH policies and interventions.

2.1 Campaign Goal

The WASH and election 2016 campaign is aimed at making WASH a key political/campaign issue in the 2016 national elections.

Specific objectives

- To influence the campaign agenda of five major political parties manifestos/policies to clearly highlight WASH
- To enable WAG partner communities to engage Political Parties and Parliamentary candidates regarding prioritization of WASH
- To lobby 3 MPs to commit to spend 1/5 of their MPs development fund for WASH in health care facilities
- To influence 5 major political parties to make WASH a strategic priority in their manifestos
- To collect 1 million signatures in support of WASH prioritization

Key among the activities include

National level

- Engage with IEA to incorporate sanitation specific related question in
 - the National Presidential debate
 - Evening Political Parties encounter
- Engage the two main major Political Parties to reflect on their past and current manifestos
- Engage CDD to use its District Level Parliamentary debates to promote the discourse on WASH
- Liaise with prominent media houses (Multimedia, GBC) to specifically create the space such discourse on media panel discussions

District and regional level

- Lobby and influence aspiring MPs to commit at least 1/5 of their MP's common fund allocation to support sanitation service delivery in public health care facilities
- Lobby the five targeted political parties' campaign teams in Akropong, Okere and Gushegu constituencies to recognise and integrate sanitation (public space and household) as political campaign issue
- Solicit one million signatures/thump prints

- Facilitate awareness raising among target regions, constituencies/communities using radio, street drama and community sensitisation