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SPECIAL MOLE EDITION

# WASH NEWS

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## Highlights



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# Mole 21 takes place in Accra

*A cross section of Mole 21 Participants*

The Deputy Minister of Water Resources, Works and Housing, Dr. Hanna Louisa Bisiw opened the Mole 21st edition of the Conference with a call on participants to make tangible recommendations to inform government on its policies on climate change in Ghana. She observed that if nothing was done to curb the growing phenomenon of climate change the availability of fresh water would be significantly reduced in the coming years there by affecting access to clean water in Ghana.

In his welcome statement, the then Chairman of Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation, Mr. Thomas Imoro Sayibu said that the decision to focus on climate change for this year's conference was very strategic since climate change had become a global issue and required immediate action. Mr. Sayibu was very optimistic about the outcome of the conference. He said,"policy discussions during the conference will culminate in the development of a framework to guide and support the efficient adaptation to climate change within the WASH sector for appropriate interventions".

The Director of Water, Ministry of Water Resources Works and Housing (MWRWH), Mr. Aboagye Mintah officially closed the three-day conference on 23rd July, 2010 with an appeal to civil society to continue with the multi-stakeholder collaboration to further consolidate the gains of the sector. He added that, "the gains of the WASH sector can be attributed to the fact that civil society has moved largely away from confrontation to collaboration". The outcomes of deliberations were documented and presented in the form of a conference communiqué see page 11 of this edition.

# EDITORIAL

The WASH sector in Ghana is making steady progress in sector engagements and documentation geared towards attaining improved service delivery even after 2015 (MDG deadline). This year has already seen: the approval of the Environmental Sanitation Policy, the launch of the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) compact, definition of a roadmap for the development of the SWAP and regular sector engagements like the Water and Sanitation Sector Group (WSSG) and the National Level Learning Alliance Platform (NLLAP). The launch of the first Environmental Sanitation Conference (NESCON), the outdooring of the National Environmental Sanitation Strategy and Action Plan (NESSAP), and the 2nd Ghana Water Forum (GWF) are all billed for this year. In July 2010 the 21st edition of the Mole conference took place in Accra. It was an occasion for civil society to engage the entire WASH community, reaffirm its commitment to work towards safe water and sanitation for all as well as further highlight the urgent need to address the needs of about 4 million Ghanaians who do not have access to water and the over 19 million without sanitation. This year's occasion focused on climate change and as usual there were presentations, speeches, exhibitions, media stories, and other events. However, what is most important is the need to continue this momentum throughout the year and beyond. Whilst we celebrate the Mole conference, GWF and the NESCON among others, let us document and reflect on the outcomes of these engagements, not forgetting to also monitor and learn from the process.

This is a special Mole conference edition of the WASH News, bringing out some of the issues that were presented and discussed during Mole XXI. Enjoy reading and look out for the special edition on the 2nd Ghana Water Forum and NESCON 2010.

- Abu Wumbei, RCN Secretariat

# Sector Learning focuses on sustainability at Mole

## Triple-S leads the discussion

There is indication that the Sustainable Services at Scale (Triple-S) project will continue to have the full support of stakeholders in the WASH sector following overwhelming acknowledgement by participants at the 21st Mole Conference (Mole XXI) that the sustainability of facilities provided by Government, Civil Society and other stakeholders is paramount.

At least, participants were impressed at the objectives behind the Triple-S project when the project was discussed extensively at a sector learning on water, sanitation and climate change session of Mole XXI.

*Vida Duti of Triple-S on sustainability*

Introducing the project, Vida Duti of Triple-S said the project was intended to reverse a trend of system failures. Estimates, according to her, have it that 30 percent of all rural water systems (including boreholes, pumps and wells) in Ghana are not functioning. "We are not even talking of those that are delivering below minimum capacity."

This situation is attributable to the drive to increase the number of new water delivery systems without paying attention to maintenance. Usually, there is failure to raise finances for replacement costs. These developments are frustrating host communities for these projects.

Participants and discussants unanimously endorsed approaches like the Triple-S. They drew attention to the need to document such approaches used in water and sanitation interventions to foster sector-wide learning and replication.

*Mr. Van Ess of CWSA chairs the sustainability session.*

"There is the need to document approaches used in water and sanitation interventions by various actors at all levels to ensure that best practices can be shared and utilised in project interventions," the participants stated in a communiqué issued at the end of the conference.

They also noted that to achieve sustainability of systems, government should ensure that project designs make adequate funding for post construction support and management. In addition, funding should be put in place for project learning, capacity building and refresher training for district water and sanitation boards and WATSAN committees.

Furthermore, the Community Ownership and Management (COM) concept should not be compromised in project interventions in the rural sub-sector and should be devoid of undue influences from traditional authorities, donors and politicians etc., to ensure sustainability of services provided.

On their part, Civil Society Organisations should work with their partners to ensure that project proposals are done in line with national systems, fitting in national programmes as a priority.

Ghana is one of two countries to benefit from the six-year Triple-S project. The project is headed by IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre with the involvement of UK based firm Aguaconsult. The initiative is to improve sustainability of rural water supply for some of the poorest people in the world, by reshaping the way such services are provided. The Triple-S is hosted by the Community Water and Sanitation Agency.

# Mole XXI examines climate impacts on water quality

"Water, in its various occurrences, management and uses, is an essential component of human development and is a crosscutting factor in current development priorities driving Ghana's goal of achieving sustainable development" – Ghana National Water Policy, 2007 (p.6).


*Mrs. Adjoa Paintsil, Water Resources Commission*

The availability of this indispensable resource, however, now depends heavily on climate change. In fact, experts predict that by the Year 2100 there would be increased water availability in moist tropics and high latitudes, with decreasing water availability and increasing drought in mid-latitudes and semi-arid low latitudes.

Affirming the above assertion in a paper on Water Safety, Climate Change and Integrated Water Resources Management that was presented at Mole XXI, Mrs. Adwoa Paintsil of the Water Resources Commission (WRC) Mrs. Paintsil observed that "the changes in global climate that are occurring as a result of the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere will affect patterns of freshwater availability and will alter the frequencies of floods and droughts."

The attention of the organizers of Mole XXI was engaged not only by the mere availability of water in future. The quality of water that will be available was very much of concern too. This was because climate model simulations and other analyses suggest that total flows, probabilities of extreme high or low flow conditions, seasonal runoff regimes, groundwater-surface water interactions and water quality characteristics could all be significantly affected by climate change over the course of the coming decades.

## Ways in which water quality is impacted

In 2008, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which is a scientific intergovernmental body tasked with evaluating the risk of climate change caused by human activity, stated that "observational records and climate projections provide abundant evidence that freshwater resources are vulnerable and have the potential to be strongly impacted by climate change, with wide ranging consequences for human societies and eco-systems."

Heavy rainfall and flooding are direct results of climate change; of course, catalysed by human actions. Rising temperatures, facilitated by $CO_2$ concentrations in the atmosphere, are also warming the globe leading to the melting of ice and glaciers.

The ultimate effect of these climatic conditions is the contamination of water sources – both surface and groundwater. According to Mrs. Paintsil, flooding can affect water quality, as large volumes of water can transport contaminants – such as chemicals, heavy metals or other hazardous substances, either from landfills, or from chemicals already in the environment like pesticides – into water bodies and also overload storm and wastewater systems. And, where stream flow and lake levels fall, there will be less dilution of the pollutants.

*Stephen Ntow of WASHealth on harnessing local talents.*

For the full text of presentation please visit *www.ghana.watsan.net*

# Meeting the MDG targets on WASH: The role of the SWA compact

Year 2010 is the tenth year since world leaders, gathering under the banner of the United Nations, adopted the Millennium Declarations at the turn of the century. The declarations were hinged on eight major commitments tagged as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were to serve as the fulcrum for development interventions that would lift the world's poorest out of their misery.

The MDGs touch on various aspects of human development; from human rights to corruption to climate change. With five more years to the 2015 deadline, the power brokers of the world are assessing progress towards the attainment of the goals, focusing particularly on actions, policies and strategies to support those developing countries that are lagging most behind and those goals that are most off track, thus improving the lives of the poorest people.

MDG Target 7c calls on countries to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation and sets the proportion of people in 1990 without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation as the baseline to be halved by 2015.

The 2010 WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) report on sanitation and drinking water says the global community is seriously off-track on sanitation and if current rates continue, the goal will be met 30 years too late – that's a billion people too late. Presently, 2.6 billion people are still without access to a safe place to go to the toilet.

Ghana is one of the developing countries that are lagging behind. And, of course, the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector is about the most off track goal area. Indeed, progress towards the sanitation MDG leaves much to be desired.

In response, a new global partnership for working together to achieve universal access to sanitation and water has emerged. It is referred to as Sanitation and Water for All (SWA). What the new framework does is to place more emphasis on sanitation by switching the positions of the key words in the popular sector terminology "water and sanitation" to "sanitation and water". The partnership is made up of developing countries, donors, multi-lateral agencies, civil society and other development partners.


*Michael Forson of UNICEF on Emergency Cluster Initiative*

SWA was at the centre of discussions at the first ever high level meeting on water and sanitation which was hosted by UNICEF in April 2010 in Washington DC. Ghana was in attendance with a strong delegation led by the Ministers of Finance, Local Government and Rural Development, and Water Resources, Works and Housing.

## *The situation today*

A look at current trends will enable one to better understand the importance of the SWA compact. The 2010 JMP report, which was launched in March, provides detailed estimates of progress towards the MDG and breaks down figures for access to sanitation and water by country, region and rural/urban.

Presently, 82% of the Ghanaian population has access to improved drinking water supply, meaning that Ghana is on-track to achieve the MDG drinking water target. However, Ghana is said to be seriously off-track on sanitation and will miss the MDG on sanitation by more than 200 years while the whole of sub-Saharan Africa will miss the target by an average 198 years if current trend of progress continues.

The report estimates that only 13 out of every 100 Ghanaians (13%) have access to improved sanitation; while on average, 31 out of every hundred people in sub-Saharan Africa have access to improved sanitation.

For Ghana, the JMP reports that coverage has improved from 7% in 1990 when the population was approximately 15 million to 13% in 2008 when the population was about 23 million. Urban access to improved sanitation has risen from 11-18% while rural access to improved sanitation went up from 4-7% over the same period.

The global objective is to secure access to improved sanitation (defined as decent household toilets) for 64 out of every hundred people (64%) by 2015. Coverage in sub-Saharan Africa is currently 31%, representing a three percent improvement over 1990 levels of 28%. The majority of the regions people – 567 million – still do not have access to improved sanitation.

The increase, according to analysts, represents an annual average improvement of 0.17% since 1990. Granted that the trend continues, the earliest time the sub-Saharan African region will reach the MDG target will be the year 2206.

## THE MDG'S VS. SWA *Solutions SWA offers*

The Sanitation and Water for All framework is informed by the estimation that if universal coverage for

# Meeting the MDG targets on WASH: The role of the SWA compact

sanitation and drinking water is achieved, the economic benefits would rise to $171 billion yearly. Following from the global SWA framework, Ghana has developed its own SWA compact. Highlights of this compact were presented at Mole XXI in July by Naa Demedeme, Director, Environmental Health and Sanitation Directorate (EHSD) of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD).

In the simplest language, Naa Demedeme explains that the SWA Compact is addressing basic sanitation needs. That is, how to safely dispose human waste.

The compact assesses that the following key gaps in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector are hindering progress:

- low political prioritization, leading to insufficient resource allocation;
- lack of cohesive national planning frameworks for addressing sanitation and drinking water;
- poor targeting and unpredictability of financing, resulting in resources failing to reach those most in need.

The other hindrances are lack of evidence, data and analysis to inform decision-makers, and lack of mutual accountability and sector-specific monitoring mechanisms.

According to Naa Demedeme, "meeting the MDG targets with just five years to go is impossible but we know that we can make some progress." Therefore, the SWA framework aims, among other things, to "Increase political prioritisation for sanitation and water through high level discussion and public focus" as well as "generate advocacy for strong international, regional and national commitments to sanitation and water goals."

Another aim of SWA is to provide technical support and capacity building for developing countries to create strong national sanitation and water planning frameworks including detailed planning, budgeting, and monitoring procedures.

Furthermore, SWA aims at the mobilisation of resources and prioritisation of support for sanitation and water by linking existing aid mechanisms to national sanitation and water plans; channelling funding to where it is most needed, and monitoring results.

*Naa Demedeme on the SWA Compact.*

Against this backdrop, the themes for the Ghana SWA Compact are Enhancing Political Prioritization and Commitment; linking policies to plans, programmes and projects; improving investments to meet priority challenges; strengthening ownership and leadership and achieving good governance and accountability.

## *New financial commitments*

Government estimates that investments required for meeting the MDGs on sanitation and water are between US$ 200 and 300 million annually. "Based on initial calculations, GoG [Government of Ghana] commits to increase allocations in budget statements for sanitation and water, and work with Development Partners and the private sector to ensure that allocations reach US$200m annually towards sanitation and water improvements to meet MDG targets and sustain improvements" beyond the MDG period.

Also, the Ghana Compact reveals that the GoG commits to "make additional allocations of US$150m annually towards hygienic treatment and disposal of septage and faecal sludge as well as sullage and storm-water management." This particular commitment is aimed at addressing the 'crisis' situation of indiscriminate discharging of sullage, septage and faecal sludge that mostly affects residents of poor neighbourhoods, and water courses, rivers and beaches. It is also meant for the mainstreaming of environmental sanitation measures.

Philip Amanor of the Community Water and Sanitation Agency is of the view that some policies pursued over the years have been inconsistent with actions and have been inimical to progress. For instance, pan latrines are still in use because these were encouraged over the years. Today, there are efforts at banning the use of pan latrines when the number of pan latrines in use in Accra alone, according to him, is estimated at 5,000.

In a communiqué adopted at the end of Mole XXI, participants said Government should engage in consultation and encourage active participation of stakeholders at all levels in the WASH sector on the SWA Compact to get the maximum benefits and impacts and also ensure that commitments reflected in it include efforts at minimizing the negative impacts of climate change.

## Mainstreaming climate change into development planning

The need to mainstream climate change into development planning is particularly underscored by the fact that Ghana is already experiencing the adverse impacts of climate change. Recurrent drought, flood and climate induced diseases such as malaria and cerebrospinal meningitis in most parts of the country and the associated loss of property and lives can be ascribed to climate change. Relief and rehabilitation efforts have become a constant major drain on Ghana's development drive.

But much less attention has been paid to making development more resilient to climate change, its related disasters and impacts. Current efforts appear to be largely driven by emergency and hardly consider the long-term ripple implications on life and property.

It was emphasised that climate change should be considered and treated as one of the external factors that can have an intense direct or indirect consequence on WASH services delivery. And since WASH services delivery and poverty reduction were mutually dependent on each other, it was imperative to balance poverty reduction interventions with climate change adaptation strategies to maximise benefits, especially for local populations.

Presenting a paper on *Integrating Climate Change into National Development Planning*, Winfred Nelson of the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) acknowledged that national development goals could be hampered by ignoring climate change and disaster risk reduction issues.

It is a truism that Ghana needs to secure water for her people, secure water for food production, develop alternative job creation activities, protect vital ecosystems, deal with variability of water in time and space, manage risks, create popular awareness and understanding, forge political will and make traditional authority act, and ensure collaboration across sectors and boundaries. These are vital to efforts at combating climate change.

## Guinea worm eradication: Ghana almost there

Ghana may break Guinea Worm Disease (Dracunculiasis) transmission at the close of this year. Should that happen the nation can begin the mandatory three-year pre-Certification activities required for final certification of eradication of guinea worm.

The development is seen as a major achievement for the West African nation which was ranked as the second guinea worm endemic destination in the world at the end of 2006. At the time, war torn Sudan was at the head of the rankings.

A massive drive to improve water supply is a major factor for the achievement but the most important catalyst has been the acceptance of ownership of the Ghana Guinea Worm Eradication Programme (GWEP) by local actors, according to a presentation made by the GWEP at Mole XXI.

### *Hard facts*

During January-June 2010, eight cases were reported compared to 228 cases reported over the same period last year. This represents a 96% reduction. A total of 242 cases were recorded at the close of 2009 in 13 districts in the Northern, Brong Ahafo, Ashanti and Eastern regions. Central Gonja, Tamale, Yendi, Tolon-Kumbungu, Kwahu North, Chereponi, East Gonja, Savelugu Nanton, West Gonja, Ejura-Sekyedumasi, Kintampo North and Karaga were the districts in which cases were recorded.

But this year's cases were limited to only four villages in three districts in the Northern Region. Diare's four cases make it the most endemic village. There were two cases in Dipali and a case each in Karaga Town and Dipali. The last case was reported on May 11 while the last containment was done on June 2, 2010. As of the time Mole XXI took place, no further cases had been reported, raising hopes that Ghana can break transmission this year.

The most significant change occurred in the Central Gonja District where no case had been recorded as of June. In fact, the district was the most endemic in 2009, recording 148 (about 60%) of the 242 cases recorded for 2009.

The statistics show that six (75%) of this year's cases were reported by males while two (25%) were reported by females. Two cases affected persons who were 15 years or younger whereas four cases affected those within the age bracket of 30-44 years. A case each was reported for persons between 16-29 years and those above 45 years.

The massive reduction represents 99.8% since the biggest outbreak in recent years in 2006 (4,136 cases) and 99.99% reduction since the inception of the GWEP in I989.

For full text visit *www.ghana.watsan.net*

# CSO networking can enhance WASH sector capacity

A major recommendation made at Mole XXI was that a climate change thematic network within the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sector should be established.

Mr Ben Ampomah, Executive Secretary, Water Resources Commission, who made the proposal, observed that in the wake of climate change the fundamental challenge would be the development of water governance systems to ensure that strategies are based on a solid understanding of the impacts of climate change on WASH services delivery systems.

One of the key roles of civil society is advocacy but that may prove fruitless in an environment of hostile competition. Of course, how does civil society advocate for collaboration between sector governance institutions when they are divided because each wants to be acknowledged as the 'first to do it'?

*Mr. Ben Ampomah of WRC on impact of climate change.*

Therefore, shared learning (including research) and joint interventions may be the way out for WASH sector actors. On the other hand, scattered efforts and competition among NGOs and civil society will not augur well for Ghana's climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

According to Mr Ampomah, the long-term impacts of climate change regarding the demands of and threats to water resources should be of great concern to the WASH sector. And, WASH sector and all water practitioners should be keenly involved in climate change research and consider it as a manageable issue.

## Climate Change & Water Resources

### *The stark reality*

Water management cannot satisfactorily cope with current climate variability; large flood and drought damages may occur. Water demand is also anticipated to grow in the coming decades.

Dr Barnabas Amisigo of the CSIR-Water Research Institute, stated in Climate Change Impacts on the Water Resources of Ghana that climate change would have adverse impacts on the country's water resources. Specifically, climate change has impacts on surface water availability; groundwater recharge; flooding, drought and water pollution and sea water intrusion into inland water bodies. Thus, knowledge of the direction and magnitude of these impacts would be vital in developing the necessary responses to the challenges posed.

There are two main ways for responding to these impacts; mitigation and adaptation, according to Dr Amisigo. Specific actions may include rainwater harvesting techniques for both potable and non-portable use; water recycling techniques for both industrial and non-potable domestic use and in-field rainwater and runoff harvesting techniques for soil moisture augmentation and conservation for agricultural production.

Also, streambed and groundwater storage systems, to make water available in the dry periods with little loss to evaporation, can be part of the interventions.

According to Dr Amisigo, the promotion of cross-sectoral water resources development in order to avoid the dominance of a single water use sector can also be a direct response measure.

*Dr. Barnabas Amisigo of the Water Research Institute*

## Collaboration: effective strategy in responding to climate change

Raising the awareness of the general population on the impacts of climate change and building the capacity of all sectors of the populace to participate in the formulation and implementation of sustainable water resources management are required responses.

These mechanisms cannot be effective when they are carried out by actors operating in solitude. The need for the integration of water governance institutions into existing governmental/decentralised institutions and a clear definition of roles and responsibilities cannot be overemphasized. This will definitely prevent duplication of efforts and improve efficiency.

Likewise, civil society actors can make more impact by working

# CSO networking can enhance WASH sector capacity

together. Responding to climate change will require effective collaboration and networking will be important. Improving harmonisation and alignment will lead to strong learning and enhancement of adaptive capacity of the water sector.

Networking can make interventions more effective and reduce the effects of climate change on all persons, especially the vulnerable, including women, children and the disabled.

### *The Way Forward*

In the communiqué issued at the end of Mole XXI, participants urged all stakeholders to continue to partner with each other with the aim of providing sustainable and affordable services for the Ghanaian populace.

*Martin Dery of Pronet making a point at Mole 21*

To wit, they tasked CONIWAS, RCN and knowledge institutions to document approaches used in water and sanitation interventions by various actors at all levels to ensure that best practices can be shared and utilised in project interventions.

It was also recommended that civil society organisations should work with their partners to ensure that project proposals are done in consonance with national systems to fit into National Programmes.

Participants further encouraged civil society to include education on climate change in their activities to improve knowledge and to change attitudes and practices that go to exacerbate the effects of climate change. Mitigation and adaptation measures pertaining to climate change should be disseminated, in addition to applying indigenous ways of dealing with climate change.

# Interrogating the whereabouts of drainage master plans

Environmental sanitation is among the powerful drivers of human development as it affects quality of life; it can improve health and wealth. It cuts across all sectors of the economy including those that concern health, environmental protection, improvement of human settlements and services, tourism, and general economic productivity.

*CWSA, Eastern Region takes their turn.*

There are diverse effects of climate change on environmental sanitation. But efficient drainage systems can mitigate some of the impacts. This is why Ghana's revised Environmental Sanitation Policy, which was approved by Cabinet in March this year, has storm water drainage as a cardinal component.

The other components are collection and sanitary disposal of wastes, including solid wastes, liquid wastes, excreta, industrial wastes, health-care and other hazardous wastes; cleansing of thoroughfares, markets and other public spaces; control of pests and vectors of disease and food hygiene. The rest of the components are environmental sanitation education; inspection and enforcement of sanitary regulations; disposal of the dead; control of rearing and straying of animals and monitoring the observance of environmental standards.

Presently, an area of concern is the future performance of storm water drainage systems. In regions affected by increasingly intense storms, the capacity of these systems will need to be increased to prevent local flooding and the resulting damage to buildings and other infrastructure.

### *What we know*

At Mole XXI, participants learned that the drainage situations in five of the metropolitan areas have improved with the provision of drainage infrastructure as part of the Urban Environmental Sanitation Project (UESP) series under the World Bank.

However, the situation in smaller towns is serious, and increased urbanization and non-adherence

# Interrogating the whereabouts of drainage master plans

to planning schemes and un-authorized construction have aggravated the situation further, according to the Director of Environmental Health and Sanitation at the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Demedeme Naa Lenason.

This is aggravated by the non-existence of Drainage Master Plans for some of the major cities of Ghana. For Ho (Volta Region), Cape Coast (Central Region), Koforidua (Eastern Region), Bolgatanga (Upper East Region) and Wa (Upper West Region) no master plans have been prepared though these master plans are urgently needed.

It is heartwarming, however, that drainage master plans exist for Accra (Greater Accra Region), Tema (Greater Accra Region), Kumasi (Ashanti Region), Sekondi/Takoradi (Western Region) and Tamale (Northern Region).

Even so, Accra is notorious for deaths arising from floods and city officials are quick to blame the situation on the haphazard development of housing in water ways. The June 2010 flooding affected Accra more than other areas including the Central Region. About 30 lives were lost, making that particular flooding the worst in recent memory.

The deluge, caused by heavy rains, also swept away vehicles and destroyed homes, displacing hundreds of people.

## *The Consequences of Floods*

The science behind flooding shows that besides deaths, flooding can result in the inundation of land fills with water, resulting in breakdown of leachate collection systems and control systems for greenhouse gases. And this is where the climate question arises because the main factor for climate change is the emission of greenhouse gases.

*Theodora Adomako-Adjei of CWSA clarifies a point.*

Again, flooding and heavy rainfall may lead to contamination of water with chemicals, heavy metals or other hazardous substances, either from land fills, or from chemicals already in the environment such as pesticides.

Often, a solution can be found in full-proof drainage mechanisms, bearing in mind that drainage and storm water management is important in low income urban communities because blocked drains can cause flooding and increased transmission of vector-borne diseases. Cities with combined sewer overflows can experience increased sewage contamination during flood events.

Furthermore, flooding and severe storms pose the greatest risks for damage to buildings in both developed and developing countries. This is because housing and other assets are increasingly located in coastal areas, on slopes, in ravines and other risk-prone sites. Of course, Ghana is no exception.

## *Required interventions*

There is an urgent need to implement the master plans for drainage for towns lacking proper drainage systems and reinforce the maintenance of existing drainage systems. Furthermore, for major towns not having master plans they should be prepared.

Much as the development of Master Plans is important, it is also imperative to improve the status of environmental sanitation through strengthening of institutions and enforcement of laws. For instance, the enforcement of building regulations is a requisite.

Naa Demedeme concurs that there is also a need to improve the management of existing waste disposal sites to control greenhouse gas emissions and groundwater contamination and take into account possible effects of climate change in design and construction of new ones.

There is a need to review local bye-laws in relation to spatial distribution of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational areas and improve them in order to take into account possible effects of climate change.

# Mole confab recommends promotion of rainwater harvesting

The 21st Mole Conference (Mole XXI) among other things, urged government and civil society to actively promote rainwater harvesting as one of the practical adaptation options in the water supply, agriculture and construction industries, among others.


According to participants, "this can support in minimizing over-reliance on ground and surface water resources."

They specifically tasked CONIWAS, the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing (MWRWH) and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture (MOFA) to take responsibility for this proposal.

UN Secretary General, Mr Ban Ki-moon, is on record to have stated that, "climate change is a serious threat to development everywhere; indeed, the adverse impacts of climate change could undo much of the investment made to achieve the Millennium Development Goals."

Climate change threatens to erode human freedoms and limit choices. This negative impact is clearly of global concern but the adverse consequence is felt across the entire geographic and political divide, from mega-cities through small towns to grassroots rural communities.

CONIWAS and its partners cite the above as compelling reasons why joint concerted actions at all levels are needed. For example extreme water related events like floods, droughts, melting glaciers and rising sea levels are becoming more frequent due to climate change. Globally, no less than 1.7 billion people are suffering from water scarcity, and if climate change continues the figure will rise to 5 billion by 2025.

*District Assemblies case stated on sustainability.*

The world's poorest people are hardest hit by climate change although they have contributed least to causing it. In Ghana, it is predicted that reduction in precipitation (which is already being observed and is expected to continue as a result of climate change) will negatively impact surface and groundwater sources, potentially limiting availability. Floods may also impact water availability as sources may be contaminated. Dwindling availability of water will also affect agricultural and livelihoods activities and access to energy.

As part of efforts at adapting and mitigating impact, the communiqué issued at the end of Mole XXI proposed that "there should be intensified awareness creation campaigns to bring to the general populace, including children, the opportunities, dangers and challenges of climate change and the need for behavioural and attitudinal changes."

The Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), the National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE) and Civil Society were tasked with the responsibility of creating awareness.

Another recommendation was that government and civil society should incorporate and implement climate change adaptation strategies and action plans in various policies, strategies and projects to insulate Ghana from the threats of climate change.

Earlier, at the official opening, chaired by the member of Parliament for South Dayi Hon. Edem Asimah, Dr Bisiw encouraged CONIWAS to use its medium to sensitize communities on the impact of climate change.

***Special thanks to CONIWAS, the organizers of the Mole series for making the information available to the RCN Secretariat for the compilation of this edition of the WASH News*-RCN Secretariat**

# MOLE XXI CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE

## DECISION POINTS

**Decision Point 1**

There should be intensified awareness creation campaigns to bring to the general populace, including children, the opportunities, dangers and challenges of climate change and the need for behavioural and attitudinal changes.

**Responsibility – Ministry of Education/MLGRD/Civil Society/NCCE**

**Decision Point 2**

Government and civil society should actively promote rainwater harvesting as one of the practical adaptation options in the water supply, agriculture and construction industries, among others. This can help in minimizing over-reliance on ground and surface water resources.

**Responsibility – CONIWAS/MWRWH/MOFA**

**Decision Point 3**

Government and civil society should incorporate and implement climate change adaptation strategies and action plans in various policies, strategies and projects to insulate Ghana from the threats of climate change.

**Responsibility – Civil Society / Government of Ghana**

**Decision Point 4**

There should be improved collaboration and regular dialogue among Water and Sanitation service providers and the Meteorological Services Agency, as well as the Water Resources Commission, Hydrological Services Department, Universities, Development Partners, etc in researching, investing and responding to climate change and adaptability issues, research and indigenous knowledge sharing among others.

**Responsibility – Civil Society/Knowledge Management Institutions**

**Decision Point 5**

Government should demonstrate more commitment both locally and internationally to the Sharm El-Sheikh declaration made by the Heads of State and Government on Water and Sanitation Goals in Africa especially the commitment to the Africa Water Vision 2025; the Sirte Declaration on Agriculture and Water in Africa; the Declaration on Climate Change in Africa; and the Millennium Development Goal on Water Supply and Sanitation.

**Responsibility – MoFEP/MLGRD/MWRWH**

**Decision Point 6**

Government should engage in consultation and encourage active participation of stakeholders at all levels in the WASH sector on the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) Compact to get the maximum benefits and impacts and also ensure that commitments reflected in it include efforts at minimizing the negative impacts of climate change.

**Responsibility – MoFEP/MLGRD/MWRWH**

**Decision Point 7**

The Community Ownership and Management (COM) concept should not be compromised in project interventions in the rural sub-sector and should be devoid of undue influences from traditional authorities, donors and politicians etc., to ensure sustainability of services provided.

**Responsibility – MLGRD/CWSA**

**Decision Point 8**

Government should ensure that a comprehensive national disaster management strategy with adequate funding be put in place, with an effective emergency response system, to ensure citizens are not overtaken by extreme events due to climate change, particularly in areas concerning water safety and sanitation.

**Responsibility – Ministry of Interior/NADMO/MLGRD/MWRWH**

**Decision Point 9**

Civil Society Organisations should include education on climate change in their activities to improve the knowledge and to change attitudes and practices that go to exacerbate the effects of climate change. Mitigation and adaptation measures pertaining to climate change should be disseminated, in addition to applying indigenous ways of dealing with climate change.

**Responsibility – CONIWAS**

**Decision Point 10**

There is the need to document approaches used in water and sanitation interventions by various actors at all levels to ensure that best practices can be shared and utilised in project interventions.

**Responsibility – CONIWAS/RCN/Knowledge Institutions**

**Decision Point 11**

To achieve sustainability of systems, government should ensure that project designs make adequate funding for post construction support and management. Funding should also be put in place for project learning, capacity building and refresher training for WSDBs and WATSANs.

**Responsibility – MoFEP/MWRWH/CWSA/DAs**

**Decision Point 12**

Civil Society Organisations should work with their partners to ensure that project proposals are done in line with national systems to fit in the National Programmes as a priority before other considerations are made.

**Responsibility – CONIWAS**

REPUBLIC OF GHANA

## *Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing*

# WASH Sector Events Calendar – Dec. 2010-2011

| Event | Date | Venue |
|---|---|---|
| China Sustainable Sanitation Development Forum 2010 | December 2-5, 2010 | Beijing, China |
| National Environmental Sanitation Conference (NESCON) - The First Edition (organised by EHSD, MLGRD) | December 8-10, 2010 | Golden Tulip Hotel, Kumasi |
| Learning Retreat of Triple-S Ghana (organised by Triple-S/CWSA) | January 5-7, 2011 | StoneLodge Hotel, Asutsuare, GAR |
| National Level Learning Alliance Meeting: *Life-Cycle Costs Approach to WASH service delivery in Ghana* | January 27, 2011 | Accra |
| Training workshop: *Project Proposal Formulation & Grant Management for CSOs in WA* (organised by WACSI Secretariat – website: www.wacsi.org; email: cvandyck@wacsi.org) | February 16-18, 2011 | WACSI Secretariat, East Legon - Accra |
| 2nd Istanbul International Water Forum | May 3-5, 2011 | Istanbul, Turkey |
| 2nd International Marine Conservation Congress: Making Marine Science Matter (http://www.conbio.org/IMCC2011/) | May 14-18, 2011 | Victoria Convention Centre, British Columbia, Canada |
| World Water Summit IV (Organised by Water & Sanitation Rotarian Action Group – WASRAG) | May 20, 2011 | New Orleans, USA |
| 6th International Conference on Sustainable Water Resources Management (http://www.wessex.ac.uk/11-conferences/waterresources-management-2011.html) | May 23-25, 2011 | Riverside, California, USA |
| Singapore International Water Week (www.siww.com.sg) | July 4-8, 2011 | Singapore |
| 35th WEDC International Conference | July 6-8, 2011 | Loughborough Univ, UK |
| 2011 World Water Week in Stockholm: (http://www.worldwaterweek.org/) | September, 2011 | Stockholm, Sweden |
| Ghana Water Forum (organised by WD, MWRWH) | October, 2011 | Ghana |
| Global Hand Washing Day | October 15, 2011 | Ghana |
| Water and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) Global Forum on Sanitation and Hygiene (www.wsscc.org) | October 9-14, 2011 | Mumbai, India |
| Annual Sanitation Week: Theme: *Clean your environment for better Ghana* (organised by EHSD, MLGRD) | November, 2011 | Ghana |
| World Toilet Day (organised by EHSD, MLGRD) | November 19, 2011 | Ghana |
| National Environmental Sanitation Conference (NESCON) - (organised by EHSD, MLGRD) | November, 2011 | Ghana |

***Compiled by the WASH Resource Centre Network (RCN) Ghana, www.ghana.watsan.net Email: rcnghana@gmail.com***