

Stakeholders laud technological options for water supply but caution the cost and quality of service delivery

Stakeholders within the water sector laud the various technological options available for water supply in Ghana but caution the cost and quality of the service delivery. This is one of the most important findings of the third NLLAP meeting on *Technological Options for Water Supply in Ghana*.

The third National Level Learning Alliance platform (NLLAP) took place on Thursday January 28, 2010 on the theme, “*Technological Options for Water Supply in Ghana*”. Presentations centered on three technologies namely: the Rope Pump, the Mwacafe and the UV technology, presented by WaterAid Ghana, CWSA and WaterHealth Ghana respectively. This communiqué is intended to share with the wider WASH community the most burning issues brought up during the meeting.

During the well attended meeting, chaired by Mr Van Ess, of the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA), experts and practitioners from Ghana's WASH sector were introduced to a number of technological options for water supply and were given the opportunity to discuss these options.

The Rope Pump was presented as a low cost, simple and easy to maintain hand pump, which can be made from locally available materials. The Rope Pump, which mainly operates on hand dug-wells, is being implemented in the three northern regions. Mr Jesse Danku, Head of Programmes at Water Aid Ghana, noted that even though the technology is relatively cheap and can last for more than four years, it is struggling for recognition and acceptance from the wider sector. The technology was highly commended by

stakeholders. A concern that was raised though was the fact that in the process of using the rope pump, the rope collects sand and rolls it back into the well, which was thought to have a negative impact on water quality.

The Ultra –Violet (UV) technology was presented as an option for providing high quality water to communities in Ghana. The system is introduced prior to Alum sedimentation, Media and Activated Carbon Filtration to ensure maximum disinfection of the water. The facility uses surface water which can be sourced from rivers, lakes, ponds as well as ground water from shallow wells. The facility has comparatively low average per capita installation costs of \$30 and low operations and maintenance cost. The facility has a minimum shelf life of 30 years and comes in two sizes. One produces

65,000 liters of water a day, serving populations of 3,000 and above, and the other produces 21,000 liters, serving populations below 3,000.

Water is sold at 10 pesewas per 20 litres (one bucket), which is equivalent to 5 Ghana cedis per m³. The technology, which currently operates in Pokuase, a peri-urban area near Accra and Afuaman, a rural community in the Greater Accra Region, serves a total of about 300 households from Pokuase and 100 households from Afuaman.

Stakeholders lauded the technology but expressed concern about the cost of water supply using the technology, which was considered to be too high for those in the rural areas, especially as compared to the cost of water supplied by the Ghana Water Company Limited (0.66 Ghana cedis per m³). It was however noted that it is difficult to compare heavily subsidized water supply services with services provided on full cost recovery basis. Participants further stressed the need for active involvement of people who make use of the service in

decision making. Mrs Mawunyo Pupilampu, General Manager of Water Health Ghana, who gave the presentation on this technology, explained that Water Health consults the people who patronize the services before fixing the fee.

The technology named Mwacafe is able to remove iron and manganese from groundwater. Mr Worlanyo Kwadjo Siabi, Upper West Regional Director of the Community Water and Sanitation Agency, who designed this technology, said groundwater always has quality issues in terms of the presence of iron and manganese. He mentioned that an overdose of iron can cause impotence, hence the need to remove iron and manganese.

Whilst commending the three presented technological options for water supply, the platform was of the opinion there is the need for continued dialogue to further explore new ways of improving the technologies and the services they help provide and to discuss possibilities for replicating pilot schemes on a wider scale.

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 are organized and facilitated by the Ghana WASH Resource Centre Network (RCN), and take place on the last Thursday of every month. They are open to all interested parties. The discussions of each NLLAP meeting are summarized and shared with the wider WASH community in the form of a communiqué after the meeting. 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.ghana.watsan.net.

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