

11TH JOINT GoG/DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS REVIEW CONFERENCE ON WATER AND SANITATION SECTOR

**“Taking Ownership: A Critical Step for Sustainable Water Resources Management and
Water and Sanitation Delivery”**

**Volta Hotel, Akosombo
15th – 18th October 2008**

CONFERENCE STATEMENT

Preamble and Overview

The 11th Annual Government of Ghana/Development Partners Review Conference on the Water and Sanitation Sector took place from 15th – 18th October 2008, at Akosombo in the Eastern Region. The theme for the conference, “Taking Ownership: A Critical Step for Sustainable Water Resources Management and Water and Sanitation Delivery” demonstrates the commitment of all stakeholders in the water and sanitation sector to work towards actualising the principles of the Paris Declaration of March 2005 and subsequently the Accra Agenda for Action of 2008 .

The main objective of the conference was to bring stakeholders together to evaluate sector performance over the period 2007-2008 and consider action proposals emerging from key issues discussed at the conference and to deepen ownership of sector activities. Deliberations covered sub-sectors - water resources management, urban water and community water supply and environmental sanitation. The Conference was attended by about 80 participants representing policy makers and legislators, development partners, facilitators, academia, regulators and service providers in the sector notably:

- Members of Parliament
- Ministries of Water Resources, Works and Housing; Local Government, Rural Development and Environment; Finance and Economic Planning;
- Departments and Agencies including Community Water and Sanitation Agency, Ghana Water Company Limited/Aqua Vitens Rand Ltd., Water Resources Commission, Ghana Statistical Service, Ghana Health Service, Ghana Education Service/School Health Education Programme, Public Utilities Regulatory Commission,
- Private Sector Operators and Consultants;
- Developing Partners including IDA, AFD, CIDA, DANIDA, Dutch Embassy, UNICEF, AfDB, and USAID.
- Civil society organisations including CONIWAS, WaterAid Ghana, World Vision and APDO, (TPP and new initiatives)
- District Assemblies
- Academia and research institutions including KNUST, IWMI, etc

The three day Conference was hosted by the Water Directorate, (Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing) through the support of the Policy Monitoring and Management Support component of DANIDA Water and Sanitation Sector Programme Support II (WSSPSII).

Opening Addresses

The Eastern Regional Minister, Mr. Kwadwo Afram Asiedu welcomed participants to the region and acknowledged progress of work on water supply to Koforidua and its environs. He underscored the importance of water and sanitation to humanity and sustainability of good governance and re-iterated the commitment of government towards improving water and sanitation delivery.

The Danish Ambassador, H. E. Mr. Stig Barlyng noted the low water supply and sanitation coverage rates and urged government to provide the required ownership of activities and initiatives in the sector. He called on DPs to adhere to the principles of harmonisation and alignment to which DPs in the sector had signed up to. The Deputy Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Environment, **Alhaji Yerima**, also addressed participants on the state of sanitation in the country. He acknowledged the fact that the subsidy approach for sanitation promotion had proven unsustainable. He indicated that the ministry is now focusing on building institutional capacity for hygiene education and enforcing laws on sanitation.

The Minister of State for Water Resources, Works and Housing, Hon. Cecilia Abena Dapaah, in her keynote address underscored the appropriateness of the theme for the conference in relation to the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action and acknowledged progress being made in the establishment of the Sanitation Directorate (SD) at the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment. She was hopeful that the SD would collaborate with the WD to enhance water and sanitation delivery. She indicated that investment in the sector over the past 7 years amounted to about \$700 million and re-iterated government's commitment to water and sanitation delivery. She also acknowledged DANIIDA's support in organising the conference over the past years and was hopeful other DPs would step in for future events.

Sub themes (See Conference Programme)

The following sub-themes were discussed namely:

- Ownership of sector activities
- Multi Donor Budget Support
- Status of water and sanitation sector
- Studies and Reports on sector activities (Knowledge Management)

After three days of deliberations and discussions under the sub themes of the conference, participants made the following proposals for developing the performance matrix for the coming year:

1. Ownership of Sector Activities

The conference noted that the National Water Policy had been launched and copies distributed to all stakeholders. The policy however requires a strong implementation plan to provide the needed potency to strategies in the policy. The Project Implementation Manual (PIM) of CWSA had been approved by the Board of Directors of CWSA and was awaiting printing and circulation. There was therefore the need for Development Partners to align and harmonise their implementation arrangements with that of the PIM. The preparation of the Buffer Zone policy was also at its final stages. The Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for CWSA is yet to be approved by government while preparation of the urban water SIP is at its

final stage. Implementation of the road map towards a Sector Wide Approach (SWAp) for the water sector was at a slow pace.

It was further noted that DPs contribute about 90% of investments in the community water and sanitation sub-sector. The current leveraging of DPs and Government of Ghana (GoG) funds had created an imbalance and a heavy dependence on funds from the DPs, creating doubts as to GoG's commitment to meeting the targets for the CWS sub-sector and to sustain investments therein. Inadequate financing to the Water Directorate and Environmental Health and Sanitation Directorate leading to weak ownership and implementation of investments. This poses a challenge to sustainability of interventions in the sector.

Key Recommendations

The conference recommended that;

- the Water Directorate should finalise the Policy Implementation Plan for the National Water Policy
- the sector agencies should facilitate the preparation and implementation of guidelines in the following areas in response to the requirements of the National Water Policy:
 - Management of buffer zone for all water bodies;
 - Rainwater harvesting;
 - Framework for water quality monitoring;
 - Compliance with the timely preparation and delivery of Annual Reports by sector agencies;
 - Development of guidelines for the participation of the private sector;
 - Development of Emergency Water Supply Action Plan
- the Water Directorate should request all state and non-state actors, through appropriate consultative processes, to align their policies and strategies to conform to the National Water Policy and agree on time frames for such compliance;
- the Water Directorate should provide the necessary leadership for implementing the road map towards a SWAp for the water sector.
- Ghana Water Company Limited should vigorously pursue the completion of the Urban Water Strategic Investment Plan by March 2009.
- the Water Directorate, as a matter of urgency, should continue to pursue the establishment of the Water Fund, including identification of possible sources of funds for water and sanitation delivery;
- the Water Directorate and Environmental Sanitation Directorate should take ownership of the water and sanitation sector group.

2. Multi Donor Budget Support

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MoFEP) affirmed the commitment of government to engage DPs through the MDDBS framework. The MDDBS provides a platform for channeling funding for general budget support and to directly invest in the thematic areas of the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy II.

Key Recommendations

The participants recommended that;

- the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing in consultation with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, should provide leadership in pursuing the pooling of donor funds to the sector; where such funds are provided through the MDBS, a system is put in place to ensure that the sector continues to enjoy the same if not higher levels of support.

3. Status of the Water and Sanitation Sector

Rural Water

CWSA estimates rural water coverage rate for 2007 to be 54.86%. For sanitation, CWSA had facilitated 1,897 household latrines and 148 institutional latrines as at the second quarter of 2008. It was reported that CWSA needs about \$505 million to implement the medium term SIP. About \$170 million has already been committed by Development Partners over 2008-2012 with \$330 million deficit outstanding. CWSA is in the process of marketing the SIP to all stakeholders to secure investments to implement the medium term SIP. The proposed water safety framework for the community water sub sector was also discussed.

Urban Water

GWCL estimates urban water coverage to be 59%. GWCL reported that 81 systems are currently being managed by Aqua Vitens Rand Ltd. Preparation of the SIP for the urban water sector was at its final stages and required an estimated investment of about \$1.8 billion to meet 100% coverage by 2025. Currently demand for urban water supply far exceeded supply and had resulted in shortages. There were also challenges with illegal connections and accompanying revenue losses to the urban water sector. There are also challenges with identifying and reaching the urban poor with water and sanitation delivery.

Environmental Sanitation

With respect to sanitation, progress towards attainment of the MDG targets had been slow. There was a strong commitment among stakeholders to pursue the social marketing approach to sanitation delivery. The National Environmental Sanitation Policy had been finalised and was awaiting approval by government. However, an Interim National Environmental Sanitation Strategic Action Plan (NESSAP) had been prepared. The non –availability of an implementation and investment plans for sanitation promotion was a hindrance towards attracting investments to the sub sector. Challenges with solid waste management especially in urban areas were discussed at the conference.

Key Recommendations

The participants recommended that:

- the Ministries of Water Resources, Works and Housing and Local Government, Rural Development and Environment should undertake greater advocacy for financing the water and sanitation sector, targeting government, development partners and non-traditional sources including the private sector;
- the Water Directorate, working in partnership with the CWSA and GWCL should vigorously market the sub-sector SIPs to solicit funds to support the investments identified;
- the sub-sector agencies should be more pro-active in publicising the benefits of their services and thereby position themselves to obtain budgetary and users' support to meet their core costs;
- the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing should in line with the National Water Policy, pursue collaboration with the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission in achieving economic tariffs for urban water supply

and extend supply to peri-urban areas, mindful of the need to provide affordable service delivery for the vulnerable;

- the Water Directorate and CWSA should continue their active collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government Rural Development and Environment/Environmental Health and Sanitation Directorate, to develop and promote the concept of social marketing, community-led total sanitation and low-cost sanitation technologies;
- CWSA, working in collaboration with the EHSD and CONIWAS should undertake more work on micro-financing of sanitation delivery to respond to the drive towards household-driven sanitation;
- the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment should vigorously pursue the approval of the Revised Environmental Sanitation Policy (ESP) by government. An elaborate programme should be drawn to disseminate the ESP to all stakeholders in the sector;
- the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment should vigorously pursue the adoption of the “polluter-pay-principle” by all Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies in order to address challenges with solid waste management in the country mindful of the need to subsidise for the poor and vulnerable;
- CWSA in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders should expedite action towards finalising the proposed water safety framework.

4. Studies and Reports on Sector Activities

There is a strong commitment on the part of the sector institutions and external collaborators, particularly the Ghana Statistical Service and UNICEF/WHO’s Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) and Development Partners (DPs) in establishing a platform for data harmonisation, storage and dissemination. A Working Group comprising representatives from CWSA, GWCL and GSS has been constituted to work towards harmonising and aligning definitions, especially in relation to access and coverage which will allow for common interpretation and avoid the incidence of conflicting figures.

Participants at the conference also discussed on-going initiatives to generate and disseminate information for sector activities notably the WSMP, WASHCOST, Resource Centre Network, SWITCH and Tripartite Partnerships. The majority of these initiatives were addressing relatively similar concerns in the water and sanitation sector and had the tendency to create fatigue among stakeholders on such initiatives.

Key Recommendations

The participants recommended that:

- the Water Directorate/Ministry of Water Resources Works and Housing should continue working towards harmonising definitions especially in relation to access and coverage.
- A steering committee should be established under the leadership of the Water Directorate/Ministry of Water Resources Works and Housing to harmonise on-going initiatives to generate and disseminate information on sector activities.
- CWSA should initiate the process towards scaling up the application of the DiMES and WATSAN Mapping model as a tool for decentralized data collection especially to the district and sub district level.

5. Institutionalising Annual Joint Review Conferences

The Annual Government of Ghana (GoG)/Development Partners (DP) Review Conference on the water and sanitation sector has become part of the calendar of events every year. Participation in the conference had been widened to include representatives from the urban water sector and environmental sanitation.

Key Recommendations

The participants recommended that:

- A planning committee should be established under the leadership of the Water Directorate/Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing to undertake the following;
 - review the level of participation across the various stakeholders
 - explore the possibility of raising funds to finance the conference.
 - review level of engagement of political leadership in the deliberations at the conference.
 - review the content of presentations and discussions at the conference to include presentations on appropriate technology; research in water and sanitation; private sector/business opportunities that exists in water and sanitation sector;
 - explore possibility of having more parallel sessions for presentations at the conference

Akosombo– Eastern Region, October 18, 2008