

THIRD GHANA WATER FORUM (GWF-3)

5th - 7th September, 2011



**"Water and Sanitation Services Delivery in a Rapidly
Changing Urban Environment"**

**Ghana Water Forum: Ministerial & Development
Partners Roundtable (M&DPR)**

Draft Statement

Preamble

The Government of Ghana and its Development Partners met at the Ministerial and Development Partners Round Table on the 7th of September 2011 deliberated on a number of strategic issues confronting the WASH sector, in their efforts to make progress towards meeting national development goals and international commitments. In attendance were **Ministers and senior officials of four Ministries, namely the Ministry for Water Resources, Works and Housing, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Women and Childrens' Affairs.** **About 10 development partners,** represented by heads of various Bilateral and Multilateral agencies were also represented. In attendance were also representatives of Civil Society and other key sector professionals. Participants deliberated on issues across all four thematic areas of the conference and other critical emerging issues that were of key concern to representatives of Ministries, Development Partners and Organised Civil Society.

Background

The third Ghana Water Forum was held in Accra from the 5th – 7th September 2011, under the theme **“Water and Sanitation Services Delivery in a Rapidly Changing Urban Environment”**. The theme is informed by the rapid rate of urbanization in Ghana, expected to increase with the discovery and exploitation of oil and gas, against a backdrop of a challenging environment for WASH services delivery to meet the pace of urbanization. The forum focused on four thematic areas, namely:

- Urbanisation and Development of Sustainable Water and Sanitation Services
- Peri-urban and Community Water Supply
- Sanitation
- Institutional Issues and Creation of Enabling Environment

Overarching Objectives:

Broadly, the Forum aimed to achieve the following:

- Create a platform for all the relevant sector stakeholders in Ghana to discuss and review strategies, for sustainable urban and peri-urban water supply and sanitation services;
- Ensure that gains made in the rural and small towns sub-sector are maintained and improved upon
- Review and analyse sector policies and strategies to identify the key issues that need to be tackled for effective implementation
- Increase understanding of role of all stakeholders including municipal authorities, civil society and the citizenry at large in urban water supply and sanitation;

- Take stock of the status of achievement of the MDGs in Ghana,

The following represents the major conclusions of the Ministerial and Development Partners Round Table, which are expected to be pursued in the coming year, and progress to be reported on during the Round Table Meeting to be organised in 2012.

Progress in the WASH Sector

The meeting acknowledged some achievement in the WASH sector between 2010 and 2011. However, much of this achievement was mainly in the area of policy and strategy development, with only marginal improvement in access to services. Urban water coverage increased from 59% to 62% whilst rural water coverage increased from 59% to 61%. Sanitation coverage remains unchanged at 18% for urban areas and 7% for rural areas. The Government has invested significantly just as most development partners including the private sector. This calls for drastic action and doubling of efforts. The main constraint to achieving service delivery was finance.

Urban Water

For the purpose of this statement, it is understood that the term “urban” is used within the national development context which includes all communities with populations of 5,000 and above. This means that “Urban Water” in this context is not limited to only GWCL supply, but also includes the Small Towns Water Supply Schemes under the Jurisdiction of CWSA, involving towns of 5,000 – 50,000 population. Water security challenges were noted however, there is ongoing reform in the urban sub-sector which will culminate in a stronger and more results-oriented arrangement to provide expected steer to the sub-sector.

Recommendations on Urgent Actions:

- Given the fast pace of urbanization, and the need to meet the growing demand for water for consumption, industry and commerce, the meeting called for more drastic reforms in urban water delivery currently under the Jurisdiction of GWCL. Reform options for consideration may include efforts to break the monopoly of GWCL such as “**Regionalisation**”, separating the roles of Water production and Distribution or complete **decentralisation** up to municipal levels.
- A more concrete role for communities in the management and delivery of urban water within the GWCL supply areas can substantially improve governance and increase access to Water and Sanitation Services, especially to poor and peri-urban areas.

Peri-urban and Community Water Supply

Recommendation on Urgent Action:

- A deliberate strategy/approach for Peri-urban and Pro-poor service delivery is required to address the unique characteristics of peri-urban and low income areas. While the approach should ensure a lead role for Local governments with clear logistical support from Government; a measure of responsibility needs to be identified for communities in the delivery of services.

Sanitation

Whereas CLTS has a great potential for improving sanitation coverage in rural areas, this strategy is less effective in urban setting. Recognizing that improvement in rural sanitation alone is not sufficient to achieve Ghana's MDG targets for Sanitation, bolder and stricter measures must be explored to tackle urban sanitation. Measures currently pursued by the Ministry of Local Government were identified in policy development and ensuring implementation frameworks are in place to accelerate action on sanitation service delivery.

Recommendations on Urgent Actions:

- In line with priorities for Sanitation identified by MDG Accelerated Framework (MAF), the Ministry of Finance should fulfill Government's part of the commitments of the Ghana Compact in the 2012 budget, and subsequent budgets up to 2015
- The meeting also calls on Cabinet to approve the Strategic Environmental Sanitation Investment Plan (SESIP) as a matter of urgency towards financing priority actions on Sanitation
- Development Partners and Government should further meet to explore additional funding mechanisms to address the priorities of MAF.
- Budgetary allocations for sanitation is dwindling hence the call for Ministry of Finance and economic Planning to urgently consider increasing funding to this sub-sector. A cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach is required to deliver on the sanitation targets – or at least bring the country back on track to achieving the sanitation targets.

Institutional Issues and Creation of Enabling Environment

Impressive strides have been made in creating and enabling environment for accelerating sector progress. Strategic frameworks are in place to ensure aid effectiveness, Strategic Sector Development Plan, SWAp, MDG Accelerated Framework; commitment and progress on SWA Compact, among others. However, there are disparities in access (inequities); cost-related challenges with especially high

negative impact on the urban poor who pay more. In addition, urban sanitation, coordination across sectors and timely budget releases remain a challenge.

Recommendations on Urgent Actions:

- Capacity of the two lead Ministries to be strengthened to deliver sector commitments. For the two Directorates, this is even more urgent in the short term and a long term well-tailored capacity strengthening programme should be developed;
- Effective public oversight for implementation of MDG targets is critical hence the urgency required to complete appointments of CEOs for GWCL, CWSA, and
- Strengthen regulatory bodies to be able to hold service providers to account;
- A comprehensive plan needs to be developed with clear budget lines for implementing the Ghana SWA compact which represents a worthwhile example to other countries. Demonstration of commitment in budgetary allocations – current and in the future, will re-deepen confidence of citizens in relevant Government Ministries.
- With the SSDP almost finalised, and having moved towards the end of the road map for the implementation of SWAp, it is essential for the scope and core deliverables to be clarified in order to enhance implementation. Key areas to be considered should include urban sanitation while recognizing institutional mandates for operationalising the plans.
- Further discussions should be held between the Ministry of Water resources, Works and Housing, Development Partners and the Ministry of Finance to discuss realistic financing modalities.
- The Water Directorate and the Environmental Health and Sanitation Directorate that are expected to coordinate the implementation of SWAp need strengthening to be able to deliver upon their mandate. Donor projects and funding aligned with SWAp arrangement will have tremendous impact in the sector. Of particular concern is the continued use of project staff in the Water Directorate and the slow progress towards mainstreaming them within the civil service.
- A detailed and comprehensive analysis of the 2011 budget should be carried out before the end of the year to establish the extent of achievement (incl Government's contribution) with regard to the fulfillment of the Ghana Compact. This will not only inform the Ministry of Finance on budgetary allocations for the WASH sector during 2012, but will also be shared with the international community, given the high level of interest and enthusiasm in the Ghana Compact within the International Community.
- It is critical for a sector re-think and consideration for the creation of two Ministries – One responsible for Water and the other, responsible for Urban and Housing Planning. Rationale is to both give visibility to the sector and improve focused-planning and implementation of commitments re: basic urban sanitation.

Cross-cutting Issues:

1. **SWA Compact:** Unpacking the \$350million commitment in the compact to determine what it should cover and who is expected to contribute to this. (Clarity: GoG, DP, Private Sector). Common understanding to be achieved. In addition, there is a deficit in Ministerial level understanding on their roles. On budgeting, there is need for an interface between the lead sector Ministries and Ministry of Finance. Ministerial level responsiveness to Compact discussions and common ownership is essential.
2. **SSDP and SWAp:** Need to bring the plans together under a comprehensive Document – National Water and Sanitation Strategic Development Plan (NWSSDP);
3. **Capacity building:** Ongoing efforts include strengthening of key institutions such as Schools of Hygiene, skills development of key staff of MLGRD to complement sector efforts.
4. **MDF Accelerated Framework:** Finalization and further consultation on the MAF
5. **Decentralisation:** Support to the decentralisation process will have enormous benefits: Need to focus on LG level capacity building
6. **Response to Water Security Challenges:** In view of Water security challenges, water resource development is essential. Innovative approaches such as RWH will be useful incl. role of decentralized structures, and ensuring new buildings have RWH systems attached (building codes).
7. **Gender:** Gender issues mainstreamed in planning and programming for services at sectoral and decentralized levels; practical involvement of voices of marginalized or vulnerable groups in decision making.