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Potable Water: About 3.8 million Ghanaians denied access



Dr. Freda Akosua Prempeh, former Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources

Despite government interventions to provide safe water to the population, approximately 3.8 million Ghanaians still lack access to basic water services. Dr. Freda Prempeh, the then Minister of Sanitation and Water Resources, stated that the country is making progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal Six, with about 87.7 percent of Ghanaians having access to clean water.

Dr. Prempeh emphasized the importance of addressing water quality issues to maximize the benefits of water usage. She mentioned that illegal mining poses a significant threat to safe water delivery in Ghana, citing the 2018 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, which indicated high levels of E-coli contamination in water sources and household water.

As a WASH stakeholder, she called for active participation in ensuring access to contaminant-free water for all and in ongoing discussions to combat illegal mining activities. Dr. Prempeh highlighted the financial burden on urban water utility companies caused by the need to treat water for consumption.

She urged innovative support from everyone to help the government in providing resilient and sustainable WASH infrastructure. Dr. Prempeh emphasized the essential role of such infrastructure in public health, sustainable development, environmental protection, and community resilience.

Source: GNA

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Collaborative Efforts Key to Overcoming WASH System Challenges

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The 34th MOLE WASH Conference opens in Jirapa



A section of participants at the Conference

On 30th October 2023, the 34th annual MOLE Conference on Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) opened in Jirapa in the Upper West Region. The conference, MOLE XXXIV, brought together over 150 participants from the WASH sector, including government officials, local and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working in WASH, development partners, traditional leaders, and the diplomatic community.

During the opening ceremony, the Minister called on Ghanaians to unite in the fight against illegal mining, which has significantly damaged the country's water bodies. The minister expressed concern over the high and unsustainable cost of water treatment by Ghana Water Limited, attributing it to water pollution caused by illegal mining activities.

She emphasized that persistent water pollution from illegal mining poses a threat to sustainable access to water in Ghana and undermines the country's progress in achieving the water delivery component of Sustainable Development Goal 6. Hon. Prempeh urged WASH stakeholders to actively engage in discussions aimed at curbing illegal mining, emphasizing its detrimental impact on safe water delivery in Ghana.

Additionally, she highlighted the adverse effects of climate change, such as floods, droughts, and rising sea levels, on the provision of WASH services in the country. The minister stressed the need for innovation to ensure the development of resilient and sustainable WASH infrastructure, essential for public health, sustainable development, environmental protection, and community resilience.

She also called on development partners to expand their support to include the Water Resources Commission, tasked with protecting all water bodies in the country, to enhance water protection efforts and ensure sustainable access to safe drinking water in Ghana.

The conference, organized by the Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS), carries the theme "Building Inclusive and Resilient WASH Systems to Reach the Unserved." Beata Awinpoka Akanyani, Chairperson of CONIWAS, welcomed participants and highlighted the milestone of the 20th anniversary of CSOs' active partnership and contribution to the WASH sector in Ghana, with CONIWAS playing a significant role in advancing WASH issues nationally and internationally.



Ms. Beata Akanyani speaking at the event

Ms. Akanyani emphasized that the theme of the 34th MOLE conference was carefully selected to commemorate this milestone, acknowledging the significant contributions of CONIWAS members to WASH delivery, innovation, research, equity, inclusion, monitoring, evaluation, and learning, resulting in the safe delivery of WASH services at the local level. She noted that the conference would serve as a

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The 34th MOLE WASH Conference opens in Jirapa

platform for stakeholders to exchange ideas on building resilient WASH systems to ensure access for the unserved.

Naa Pagranege Sarkoe Mornah III, Chief of Sankana and member of the Upper West Regional House of Chiefs, presided over the opening ceremony, urging both the government and non-state actors in the sector to intensify their efforts to ensure universal WASH access in Ghana by 2030.
Source: GWJN



Naa Pagranege Sarkoe Mornah III at the conference

2023 Child Sanitation Diplomat engages pupils of Ganaa Memorial JHS


Ms. Adjoa Gyakoa Appiah-Kubi

The 2023 Child Sanitation Diplomat, Ms. Adjoa Gyakoa Appiah-Kubi, held her first public engagement on October 31, 2023. She met with officials from the Jirapa Municipal Education Directorate, students, and staff of Ganaa Memorial M/A Junior Secondary School (JHS).

Ms. Appiah-Kubi's engagement with the students and staff of Ganaa Memorial M/A JHS was part of the award she won at the fourth edition of the School Sanitation Solutions (Triple S) challenge called "Child Sanitation Diplomat," held at the National Theatre in Accra.

During the event, the 2023 Child Sanitation Diplomat, a JHS student from the Efutu M/A Basic School in Cape Coast, Central Region, was joined by the Minister of Sanitation and Water Resources, Dr. Freda Prempah, along with other officials from the Sanitation Ministry, Coalition of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS), World Vision International Ghana, and Kings Hall Media.

Ms. Appiah-Kubi interacted with the students, emphasizing the importance of addressing Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) issues and becoming sanitation ambassadors of change in their communities.
The Minister of Sanitation and Water Resources, Dr. Freda Prempah, urged the students to keep their environment clean at all times to prevent diseases such as cholera, dysentery, typhoid, and other infections caused by contaminated water and poor sanitation.

In another event, the 2023 Child Sanitation Diplomat delivered a message at the 34th edition of the Annual Mole Conference Series, calling on adults and people in authority to refrain from bad sanitation practices and provide necessary sanitation facilities for their families and institutions.

Ms. Appiah-Kubi emphasized the need for adults to stop open defecation and set a good example for children. She reiterated the importance of building systems that lead to a clean and healthy environment.
Source: M-CODe

GAMA SWP constructs 59,000 household toilets in Accra and Kumasi



Gabriel Engman speaking at the conference

The GAMA Sanitation and Water Project (GAMA SWP) has built 59,000 household toilets in the Greater Accra and Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Areas. These toilets were constructed in low-income urban communities to support the government's efforts and help the nation achieve Sustainable Development Goals Six (SDGs 6).

The Sustainable Development Goals 6.1 and 6.2 aim to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water, as well as access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, and to end open defecation by 2030. In addition to the household toilets, 598 gender-friendly sanitation facilities have been provided in the two metropolitan areas.

The GAMA SWP is a World Bank-funded project that began in 2015 in Greater Accra and later expanded to Greater Kumasi. The project is focused on improving sanitation, water supply, and environmental sanitation services. The project has also supported Ghana Water Limited in extending water supply to 15,000 households in the project implementation areas.144.

Mr. Engman expressed optimism that the project would receive additional funding from the World Bank to extend its impact to other regions. In addition to physical infrastructure, the project has provided capacity training for judicial service and assembly staff, and has trained and provided artisanal workers with manuals on bio-digester toilets. The project has also constructed two sewage systems, one in Ashaiman and the other in Bankumam within the Tema Metropolitan Area for proper management of liquid waste disposal.According to him, the GAMA project enabled the expansion of water distribution infrastructure in these low-income communities to create access to safe water for all residents at subsidised costs.



He said the boost in the provision of safe water to these vulnerable communities was in line with the objectives of the GAMA project, which include the provision of safe water, access to improved Sanitation in the form of household and institutional toilets, building capacity, and also improving sanitation services in beneficiary communities.

“So far, the GAMA and the Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Area (GKMA)-SWP have so far put up 59, 000 household toilets and constructed about 598 for schools and health care facilities in the Accra and Kumasi Metropolitan areas,” Mr. Engman added.

Based on the experience from the field, Mr. Engman hinted that the GAMA/GKMA project has developed a manual to help artisans and anyone interested in constructing biodigester toilets.

According to him, developing a manual to help artisans is the project's contribution to building the capacity of artisans and technicians who would be able to construct the biodigester toilets according to standards and also efficiently maintain the facilities.

Source: M-CODe

Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources to establish SIS to help collect data on WASH activity.



Sethina Okornoe presenting at the conference

The Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources is working hard to establish a Sector Information System (SIS) to improve data collection across the country.

The Deputy Director Policy Planning Budgeting Monitoring and Evaluation officer with the Sanitation and Water Resources Mrs. Sethina Okornou made the revelation at the ongoing 2023 Mole XXXIV Conference in Jirapa of the Upper West Region on Wednesday, November 1, 2023.

According to Deputy Director Okornoe, the aim of the Sector Information System (SIS) is to collect and analyze critical data related to the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) sector. "This is to help provide real-time access to accurate data concerning the WASH services to inform policy and to address all government major national and international WASH issues".

Explaining further the need for SIS, Deputy Director Okornou said, "We don't have to wait for a census to be conducted before we know the number of people who have access to water or sanitation. As part of the processes, we have organized training for regional environmental health officers and planning health officers across all 16 regions. And that was to introduce them to the architecture of the Sector Information System (SIS)."

In her presentation, she also stated that the Ministry plans to train officers at the district level because they are the ones who will be doing the data collection. "We have developed a standard operation procedure; we have also designed a questionnaire for data collection of the SIS. So, the plan is to start the training and data collection in November this year, and by June 2024, we would have been done with the training and after each training, there will be data collection for the training".

She further revealed that in October 2024, they will have the full role out of the Sector Information System.

"The server will be hosted at the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources; data collection will be at the district and to be validated at the regional level before it comes to the national server.

The Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources is putting SIS in collaboration with the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) and we are closely working with the Ministry of Local Government and office of the Head of Local Service.

Asking whether the introduction of SIS will help promote WASH activities, she said, we are in the era of evidence-based decision-making, if you want to make a decision, you need data. The data we are quoting during a presentation is 2021. So, what happens in 2022? But the SIS is going to give us the administrative data at every point at a glance. We can know what is going on even at a specific region.

Source: GWJN



Focus a bit more on delivering comprehensive district-wide sanitation services– Sanitation Minister tasked stakeholders

The then Minister of Sanitation, Freda Prempeh, has urged WASH stakeholders to prioritize delivering comprehensive district-wide sanitation services in order to meet the set targets. She emphasized that meeting these targets will require coordinated, cost-effective, and inclusive efforts from all parties involved.

The recently launched Ghana WASH Sector Development Programme has estimated a total funding requirement of US $1.9 billion to ensure WASH for all by 2030.

Furthermore, the Minister mentioned that the process for revising the 2007 National Water Policy has been completed, and the revision of the Environmental Sanitation Policy has commenced. She also announced the launch of the Hand Hygiene for All Strategy in Cape Coast, as part of the activities to commemorate the 2023 Global Handwashing Day.

The Minister also highlighted plans to launch Water Safety campaigns nationwide, emphasizing Ghana's progress in delivering safe drinking water and its commitment to achieving the SDG targets. According to the 2021 Population and Housing Census, 87.7% of Ghanaians have access to basic safe drinking water, but approximately 3.8 million people still lack access.

Despite the progress made, the Minister stressed the need to address water quality issues, citing data from the 2018 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey which indicated contamination in drinking water sources and households. She emphasized the importance of public education and sensitization on keeping water safe from collection to consumption.

The Minister also highlighted the impact of illegal mining (galamsey) on safe water delivery in Ghana, identifying it as a significant challenge. She made these remarks at the 2023 Mole XXXIV Conference, addressing participants and stakeholders.

Source: By Ngamegbulam C. S



GAMA/GKMA boosting local capacity in biodigester construction, maintenance: official



Ing. Kwadwo Antwi Gyasi speaking at the event

The Greater Accra/Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Areas Sanitation and Water Project (GAMA/GKMA SWP) has started building a cadre of local technicians and artisans in the construction and maintenance of biodigester toilets, an official disclosed on Wednesday.

Ing. Kwadwo Antwi Gyasi, a Sanitation Engineering Specialist with the GAMA/GKMA project, stated this during the MOLE XXXIV WASH conference in Jirapa in the Upper West Region.

Gyasi said since the introduction of the potable toilets in the country and its adoption by the project to meet the needs of household toilets in low-income urban communities, the demand for the technology has gone up with many private individuals and institutions buying into the model.

He said many contractors have therefore been building the biodigester toilets for households and institutions, and so there is the need for to train artisans and technicians for the sector.

According to him, the GAMA/GKMA project foresaw this need and developed a manual to guide contractors and artisans who build biodigester toilets.

"We are currently using the manual to train students in some technical schools, including the Kumasi Technical Institute and other technical institutions, "We believe that these trained artisans and technicians will create the necessary skilled manpower base for the construction and maintenance of the toilets to the desired standards," Engineer Gyasi stated.

Since its inception, the GAMA/GKMA project has constructed potable biodigester toilets for 59,000 households in low-income urban communities in Accra and Kumasi with 598 gender-friendly for schools and health facilities in the two cities.

Source: GWJN

MOLE 34 IN PICTURES

















MOLE 34 IN PICTURES

















Mole Conference: Sanitation and Hygiene key to human survival–Sankana Naa



Naa Pagranege Sarkoe Mornah III speaking at the conference

The Paramount Chief of Sankana and a Member of the Upper West Regional House of Chiefs, Sankana Naa, Naa Pagran-Nege Saakoe Mornah III, has emphasized the importance of sanitation and hygiene for human survival, stating that they should be given the necessary importance they deserve.

Sankana Naa commended the government for its efforts in providing quality water, sanitation, and hygiene to all Ghanaians, but also stressed that the government cannot achieve this alone. He highlighted the need for institutions like CONIWAS and all Ghanaians to support the government's initiatives in making Ghana the cleanest country in Africa, if not the world.

The Chief expressed the readiness of traditional authorities and community leaders to collaborate with the government and all sector workers in ensuring quality water sanitation and hygiene for their subjects. He emphasized that a healthy population is essential for the country's desired development.

Sankana Naa urged fellow Paramount Chiefs to work together to maintain peace in their respective traditional areas, which will in turn drive development. He also described the conference as timely and beneficial, aiming to create a platform for stakeholders to review equitable and inclusive approaches towards building resilient water, sanitation, and hygiene services in the country.

Source:
Apexnewsgh.com/Ghana

Collaborative Efforts Key to Overcoming WASH System Challenges



Agenda For Change participants

Addressing Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) system challenges is a key part of the multi-pronged strategies adopted by the Ghanaian government to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal Six: "Ensure the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030."

At the Mole 34 Conference, organized by the Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation and held at the Royal Cosby Hotel in Jirapa, a side event on system strengthening took place on November 1, 2023, at the Dombo Hall. This event, convened by Agenda for Change (A4C) partners–WaterAid Ghana, Catholic Relief Services, IRC Ghana, and Path–brought together a wide range of participants, including senior staff from Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs), the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, NGOs, and the private sector.

The main purpose of the side event was to sensitize participants to the WASH system building blocks and provide an opportunity to assess their districts' performance on each block using well-defined criteria. Participants engaged in discussions about planning, institutional arrangements and coordination, finance, regulation and accountability, monitoring, service delivery and infrastructure, water resource management, and learning and adaptation.

Following the initial presentations on A4C and the WASH systems strengthening and building blocks assessment, participants engaged in an interactive assessment exercise and facilitated discussions. The eight building blocks were divided among four district groups: Yendi Municipal Assembly, Wa Municipal Assembly, Bawku-West District Assembly, and Nadowli-Kaleo District Assembly. Participants were tasked with discussing and holding their MMDAs accountable, requiring evidence for the scores given, which were provided by district leadership.

The assessment highlighted critical insights, including the need for better coordination among stakeholders and departments, continuous learning and research to enhance WASH services, and the involvement of more relevant stakeholders. Participants valued the participatory and interactive nature of the exercise, which provided practical insights into policy and implementation gaps and emphasised a coordinated approach to implementation. At the end of the assessment, one participant remarked:

"Continuous analysis of the WASH system building blocks on an ongoing basis is important to enable the government at all levels and service providers to appreciate the status quo, challenges, and strategies to use to improve WASH service delivery in their districts."

The session leveraged multi-stakeholder inclusive dialogue to create space for assessing WASH system building blocks, identifying gaps and opportunities, and facilitating the process towards joint action plans. The goal was to generate insights and recommendations that would feed into subsequent national-level analysis.

The Sustainable Development Goal 6, which aims to "Ensure availability and Sustainable Management of Water and Sanitation for All," hinges on the principle of leaving no one behind to ensure universal access. Achieving universal access to WASH services that last is possible with government leadership, political commitment, and holding policymakers and service providers accountable for responsive services that reach all communities. These are critical aspects of the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) collaborative behaviors.

It was clear that MMDAs are committed to undertaking this exercise in their districts. The findings of the assessment will feed into future reviews for improved planning, policy development, coordination, regulation, accountability, and infrastructure service delivery, among others. It was recommended that Agenda for Change partners consider supporting districts to undertake comprehensive system building blocks assessments in their districts.

This collaborative effort underscores the importance of stakeholder engagement in addressing WASH system challenges and moving towards sustainable solutions that ensure water and sanitation for all by 2030.

Source: RCN/Agenda for Change

Government is still committed to the establishment of National Sanitation Authority– Freda Prempeh assures

The then Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR), Dr. Freda Prempeh, has stated that the President Akufo-Addo led administration remains committed to establishing the National Sanitation Authority (NSA) and the National Sanitation Fund (NSF). However, due to ongoing Government of Ghana-IMF bailout negotiations for financial respite, the establishment of both NSA and NSF has been put on hold.

Dr. Prempeh made this announcement at the 34th edition of the MOLE Conference series held at the Royal Cosy Hills and Safari Resort in Jirapa in the Upper West Region. She expressed her confidence that the NSA would receive Cabinet approval once the current economic challenges have been resolved.

Additionally, the minister disclosed that her ministry has presented the revised National Water Policy to the Cabinet for consideration. Approval of this policy will facilitate broader sector reforms for the water sub-sector. These reforms will be incorporated into the development of the CWSA bill for submission to Cabinet and Parliament.

The government acknowledges the private sector as a crucial stakeholder in the effort to provide WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene) services nationwide, aiming to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Dr. Prempeh underscored the importance of the theme for the year's conference, focusing on "Building Inclusive and Resilient Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) systems to reach the unserved," emphasizing the collective efforts required to ensure universal access to safe water and sanitation for all by 2030.



Highlighting Ghana's progress toward SDG 6, Dr. Prempeh noted a notable improvement in basic water supply and moderate improvement in sanitation. However, she expressed concerns that the current pace might not be sufficient to achieve the set goals by 2030. She urged sector players to focus on delivering comprehensive district-wide sanitation services to meet the targets, emphasizing the need for coordinated, cost-effective, and inclusive efforts by all stakeholders.

Dr. Prempeh shared that the recently launched Ghana WASH Sector Development Programme estimates a total funding requirement of US $1.9 billion to ensure WASH for all by 2030. She also mentioned the completion of the revision of the 2007 National Water Policy, along with the commencement of the revision of the Environmental Sanitation Policy. The minister highlighted the launch of the Hand Hygiene for All Strategy as part of the activities commemorating the 2023 Global Handwashing Day and emphasized plans for nationwide Water Safety campaigns.

In conclusion, the minister expressed gratitude to all stakeholders for their collaborative interventions and hard work and emphasized the commitment to positive change in the WASH sector.

By Franklin ASARE-DONKOH

Commitment to Driving Positive Change in Ghana's WASH Sector.



Basilia Nanbigne speaking at the event

The Coalition aims to unite the collective efforts of its members, harness the power of collaboration, and find lasting solutions to the most pressing issues in WASH space.

She maintained that the coalition over the years has been working tirelessly to bring attention to critical issues in the water, sanitation, and hygiene sector in Ghana and beyond.

The mission of CONIWAS she emphasised is to "work with citizens and relevant stakeholders to influence policies, remove barriers and promote access to safe water, improved sanitation, hygiene, and livelihoods, especially for the poor and vulnerable."

Over the last two decades, CONIWAS members have made tremendous contributions to WASH delivery, innovations, research, advocacy, monitoring, evaluation, and learning resulting in safe WASH delivery. The Chairperson added.

The theme for this year's MOLE Conference series which also coincided with the 20th anniversary celebration of CONIWAS is "Building Inclusive and Resilient Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) systems to reach the unserved".

The Mole WASH Conference series is an annual gathering that brings together WASH practitioners, policymakers, researchers, media, and stakeholders from across the globe to share insights, and innovations, and chart the course forward for the sector.

Consider sustainable funding partnerships with local NGOs, CBOs – CONIWAS appeals to development partners.

Source: GWJN

Access to portable drinking water is still a huge challenge in UWR – Dr Bin Salih



The Upper West Minister commended the organizers and their partners for their continuous support in helping to meet the water demand needs of the region and commended the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) as well.

According to Dr. Hafiz Bin Salih, the Regional Minister, around 815 communities in the Upper West Region have achieved Open Defecation Free (ODF) status. He also mentioned that 24 other communities previously known for open defecation now have the potential to attain ODF status.

Dr Salih attributed the achievements to the continuous support from CONIWAS and expressed the hope that the Coalition would continue to assist and help improve sanitation situation in the region.

On water provision, the Regional Minister said despite the 76 percent water coverage, getting access to safe drinking water was still a challenge in many of the communities in the region.

Describing potable drinking water as a basic human need, Dr Salih said more support was required from CONIWAS and other development partners in providing water and WASH delivery services in the area.

Source: Modern Ghana

CONIWAS Appeals to INGOs and Development Partners to Consider Sustainable funding Partnerships



The National Executive Committee of CONIWAS is appealing to INGOs and Development Partners to consider sustainable funding partnerships with coalition members, both local NGOs and CBOs to sustain their programs and Organizations.

According to the coalition, all active National NGOs and CBOs members are deeply struggling with funding challenges to implement its policies and programmes.

This appeal was made on behalf of the Coalition, by the newly elected Chairperson of CONIWAS, Ms. Beata Awinpoka Akanyani during her welcome address at the 34th edition of the MOLE Conference series which is been held at the plush Royal Cosy Hills and Safari Resort at Jirapa in the Upper West Region.

According to Ms. Awinpoka Akanyani, the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) era has further exacerbated the funding situation for most national NGOs and CBOs.

"I am using this opportunity to appeal to International NGOs and Development Partners (DPs) to consider sustainable funding partnerships with our national NGOs and CBO members of CONIWAS to sustain their programmes and Organizations" She reiterated.

The CONIWAS which was established in 2003 with over 80 memberships from National NGOs, International NGOs, and Affiliates is currently divided into three zones which are; the northern, middle, and southern zones.

The Chairperson of CONIWAS hinted that the Northern Zone of the coalition has a vibrant membership and has come up with critical policy perspectives on Community-led Total Sanitation (CLTS) and Sanitation which they are preparing to develop into a position paper.

Members of the Northern Zone, retorted are also preparing to develop another policy position on subsidies and will soon hold policy dialogues with relevant stakeholders on these issues.

However, the Middle Zone, she noted is reactivating its membership base and is planning to engage more with the Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in the Eastern, Ashanti, Bono, Bono East, and Ahafo Regions to support WASH planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

"Let me emphasize that this is a ZONE with very poor donor support for WASH activities which has affected and continues to affect our members," the Chairperson of CONIWAS revealed.

She also emphasised that despite the many INGOs and DPs having their headquartered in Accra, members in the Southern Zone which includes the Greater Accra Region are also not spared of the challenge of inadequate funding for WASH activities.

However, Ms. Awinpoka Akanyani assured the coalition members as well as other sector players of the newly elected national executives and Zonal Leaders commitment to rewrite the narratives. Saying they are poised and ready to work with INGOs, the Government of Ghana (GoG), and DPs to accelerate Ghana's WASH access rate.

"We are prepared for durable and effective partnerships to promote innovative service delivery, address inequities and work to strengthen systems" she added.

Source: GWJN

COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE END OF THE ANNUAL MOLE XXXIV WASH CONFERENCE

THEME

BUILDING INCLUSIVE AND RESILIENT WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH) SYSTEMS TO REACH THE UNSERVED.

PREAMBLE

The Annual Mole WASH Conference is a CSO-led multi-stakeholder platform aimed at reviewing sector performance, influencing policies, removing barriers, and promoting access to sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene services.

The 4-day conference was opened by Hon. Dr. Freda Akosua Prempeh, Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources with solidarity messages from the World Bank Senior Water and Sanitation Specialist, Mr. Harold Esseku, 2023/24 Child Sanitation Diplomat, Miss Adjoa G. Appiah-Kubi
The opening session of the conference was chaired by representative of Chief of Sankana - Naa Pagrange Sakoe Morna III. The ranking and deputy ranking members of Parliament Works and Housing Committee attended conference. The theme address was delivered by the Director of Institute for Oil and Gas Study of University of Cape Coast, Prof. Simon A. Mariwah.

The conference, which discussed four sub-themes – WASH System Strengthening; Innovative Service Delivery Approaches; Equity and Inclusion in WASH Service Delivery; and Policies and Regulations in Service Delivery. Conference was attended by one hundred and eighty-five (185) participants drawn from Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Development Partners, CSOs, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, MMDAs, Academic and Research Institutions, Private Sector and the Media attended the conference.

THE CALLS

At the close of deliberations, Conference resolve as follows:

A. SECTOR COORDINATION

1. Conference recognizes the urgent need to ensure a coordinated approach to implement WASH programmes at all levels to ensure equitable and sustainable WASH services. CONFERENCE is calling on Development Partners and INGOs to co-ordinate their programmes and projects to ensure targeted and harmonized approaches in WASH delivery. This should be done between **January to November 2024.**

2. CONIWAS, with the support of partners, will initiate an inter-ministerial dialogue on WASH involving MSWR, MOH, MOE, MESTI, MOF, MLGDRD, and MoGCSP to ensure effective coordination of WASH Service delivery. We will also work on the platform to ensure implementation and compliance with the established minimum standards for WASH in Institutions. This will be done between **March to October 2024.**

3. CONIWAS will work with the MSWR to institute a peer review mechanism to ensure the effectiveness and impact of sector player interventions. This is to ensure accountability and catalyse our shared journey towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This will be done between **February and October 2024**

B. CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND EMERGENCIES

4. Building Climate Resilient WASH infrastructure is critical to promote equitable service delivery. CONIWAS will liaise with the MSWR, MESTI, INGOs and research institutions to disseminate information and knowledge on climate resilient approaches in a holistic manner. Conference calls on the MSWR mobilize resources and implement its WASH emergency WASH Emergency Response plans during emergencies. This will be done

between **November 2023 and November 2024.**

5. CONIWAS will engage with our members and other sector players to identify the WASH priority areas on climate change to feed into the GH- Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). CONIWAS will continue to work with stakeholders to leverage WASH-focused NDCs to mobilize funding for scale-up of climate-smart initiatives. This will be done between **April and November 2024.**

C. SECTOR POLICIES AND REGULATION

6. National Water and Environmental Sanitation Policies: Conference call on the MSWR to fast-track processes to complete and roll-out the revised National Water Policy and Environmental Sanitation policies by end of **March 2024(Water Policy) and October 2024 (Environmental Sanitation Policy).**

7. Enforcement of laws, policies, and regulations at national and sub-national levels is critical for effective innovative service delivery. We call on the MSWR to develop/review guidelines (including licensing regime for small water and sanitation enterprises) and the private sector participation in WASH service delivery. CONIWAS will work with the SWE Alliance and other relevant groups to intensify the advocacy for government to create regulatory and support system that could bolster private sector investment and participation. This will be done between **February and October 2024.**

8. A clear PPP guideline will enhance the enabling environment and attract the needed additional investments into the WASH sector. CONIWAS will continue to engage the MSWR, MOF and Parliamentary Select Committee to ensure appropriate tax waivers on WASH inputs. This will be done between **March and October 2024.**

9. Illegal mining (Galamsey) and Sand winning are destroying freshwater bodies and threatening the survival of water utilities to supply safe water to customers. We call on MSWR, Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, WRC and other relevant MDAs to accelerate enforcement measures to stem the tide of illegal mining and sand winning and protect water bodies and freshwater resources. CONIWAS will also engage traditional authorities in heavy mining/sand winning communities across the Country to elicit their support to protect water bodies in their traditional areas. This will be done between **January and October 2024.**

D. INNOVATION AND SCALE-UP

10. There is the need to scale up innovative service delivery approaches. CONFERENCE call on Development Partners, INGOs and Private Sector to synthesize innovative approaches for scale up. Sustainable and equitable financing should be scale-up to cover the underserved and unserved. CONIWAS will collate and synthetize innovations and liase with the MSWR to facilitate scale-up of innovations. This will be done between **February and October 2024.**

E. EQUITY AND INCLUSION

11. CONIWAS will facilitate WASH stakeholder dialogues on pro-poor financing mechanisms with deliberate focus on equity and inclusion in the WASH service delivery, especially equity issues on financing household toilet constructions. This will be done between **January and October 2024**.

Conference endorsed on 2nd November 2023.
Approved and issued by CONIWAS Executive Council on 2nd November 2023 at ROYAL COSBY HOTEL (JIRAPA DUBAI).