

CWSA 2017 REVIEW CONFERENCE

THEME: “RURAL WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES PROVISION; CURRENT ROLE OF CWSA, GAPS AND THE WAY FORWARD FOR EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE DELIVERY”

CONFERENCE COMMUNIQUE

INTRODUCTION

The Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) was established by an Act of Parliament, 1998 (Act 564) as the lead public sector Agency with the object of facilitating the provision of safe water and related sanitation services to Rural Communities and Small Towns through a decentralised service delivery approach.

Recent changes in the financing landscape of the country on the attainment of lower middle-income status in 2011 have led to a decline in donor inflows of grants and loans to the sub-sector. Additionally, recent policy statements from the Ministry of Finance suggest a growing preference for projects which are self-financing. These developments pose a great challenge to the sustainability of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sub-sector in the medium to long term. Recognising these challenges, CWSA commissioned an organisational assessment with the aim of repositioning the Agency to steer and keep the sub-sector on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 6).

A review conference was therefore held from the 8th to 12th May, 2017 at Noda Hotel, Fumesua in the Ashanti Region on the theme: “Rural Water and Sanitation Services Provision: Current Role of CWSA, Gaps and the Way Forward for Effective and Sustainable Delivery”.

CONFERENCE OBJECTIVES

- I. To examine the findings of the institutional assessment in terms of stakeholder perception, financing, organisational capacity and legal implications, sustainability of service provision, alignment with government policies and consistency with international best practices
- II. To build consensus on the future role of CWSA in the WASH sub- sector based on the proposed options
- III. To strategise on how to operationalise the selected option.

KEY OUTCOMES OF THE CONFERENCE

The key outcomes of the conference included four scenarios aimed at reforming the Agency. These are:

Scenario 1: Enhanced Facilitation

In this Scenario, CWSA would remain the same with some minor adjustments to enable it perform fully its functions under the existing Act 564 and CWSA Regulations 2011 (LI 2007) .

Scenario 2: Utility Provider

The Agency would be transformed into a Utility Entity serving the rural water sub-sector. This however, would require the repeal of its current Act and LI and the promulgation of new laws.

Scenario 3: Decentralisation

The Agency would be fully decentralised into the Local Government Service system at the regional and MMDA levels. This would also require the repeal of the existing Act and LI of the Agency and the amendment of the Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936).

Scenario 4: A hybrid of Facilitation and Utility Provision

In this scenario, CWSA would retain its facilitation role and expand its mandate to include the Management of Piped Schemes as a Utility Entity.

These outcomes would be subjected to further scrutiny by various bodies including CWSA Board of Directors and the final recommendations submitted to the Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources for cabinet consideration.

The overall goal of the above reforms is to ensure sustainable delivery of WASH Services in the Sub-Sector.

Opening Ceremony

The week-long conference was opened by the Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources Hon. Joseph Kofi Adda (MP). In his Keynote address, the Minister indicated that, in the rapidly changing environment, CWSA requires a shift in direction and therefore the need for strategic thinking and repositioning of the Agency for effective delivery of WASH Services. He announced that the government is committed to the provision of 25,000 boreholes and 300 piped schemes under the agenda for Sanitation and Water for All (SWA).

The opening ceremony was chaired by Professor Samuel Nii Odai of the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST). He announced a US\$50,000 package to support the Agency in the development of its manpower.

Giving an overview of the Sanitation and Water Resources Sub Sector for the period 2015 – 2016, the Chief Executive of the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA), Ing. Worlanyo Kwadjo Siabi (MV), indicated that the Agency relies heavily on Government subventions from the consolidated fund based on approved budgets and also attract funding from some development partners in the WASH sub-sector. However, over the last four years, the Agency has been starved of funding for its operations from these two sources which has affected its performance. He stated the following as key challenges; a shortfall of 57 in the current staff strength, high staff attrition rate, unfavourable working conditions, weak vehicles, non-functional water systems and poor water quality.

He highlighted the achievements over the period to include the delivery of 1,705 boreholes fitted with handpumps, 70 piped schemes, and 336 rehabilitated boreholes and 7 piped schemes. The Agency also delivered 12,756 improved latrines. He commended the new Ministry for allocating GHC 30,558,111.54 to the Agency in the 2017 budget of which 73% is targeted at capital investment.

On the need for reforms, he stated that the Community Ownership and Management (COM) concept is not functional and the involvement of the private sector in the management of piped schemes has not yielded the desired results. Consequently, most of these systems have broken down and waiting to be rehabilitated only to go through another cycle of mismanagement. He therefore suggested that the conference discusses other strategies, options and policy changes that will utilize the capacity of the Agency built over the years to salvage the situation.

In his conclusion, the Chief Executive pledged to lead the reforms that will be agreed on at this conference with the support of the Ministry to ensure that CWSA is strengthened to achieve its expanded mandate towards the sustainability of WASH services.

The welcome address was given by Mr. Francis Dwira Darko, Deputy Regional Coordinating Director of the Regional Coordinating Council on behalf of the Ashanti Regional Minister Hon. Simon Osei- Mensah. He commended the Agency for its achievements and urged participants to come up with strategies to transform the Agency for improved WASH services delivery.

PARTICIPATION

A total of 88 participants from CWSA, Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, Office of the Head of Local Government Service, Development Partners, Water Resources Commission, District Assemblies, CONIWAS, PUWU, IRC Ghana and the media attended the conference.