

# SECTOR MINISTERS' MEETING 2019

San José — Costa Rica — 4-5 April



## The Ghana COUNTRY BRIEF

*The Country Briefs were prepared by governments ahead of the SWA 2019 Sector Ministers' Meeting. They are a snap-shot of the country's current state in terms of water, sanitation and hygiene, and future targets.*

### 1. Introduction

Ghana is one of Africa's most shining 'stars' of growing democracies, with a track record of peaceful transition of power spanning almost three decades. This was most recently illustrated by another smooth transition of power at the December 2016 elections<sup>1</sup>. The role of leaders and developmental elites who have looked beyond narrow identities to promote a share sense of national projects, coupled with the resulting social cohesion are essential building blocks that have underpinned, sustained and strengthened Ghana's democratic system since 1992. The space for political debate and expression has increased, and this has included a framework for formal rights, peaceful elections and the role of civil society and media. Organized Civil Society<sup>2</sup> and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have emerged around a variety of issues, challenged and complimented Government's role in the provision of basic WASH services including monitoring, evaluation, direct service provision, lobbying and policy engagement.

The Country has made significant progress in terms of economic growth over the last decade. But the shift to Lower Middle-Income Country (LMIC) status presents complexities by way of development co-operation and partnership, development financing, re-organization of institutional responsibilities, system changes and implications for aid flows. Persistent inequities in service provision (including WASH services) is worrisome, and suggest that effective targeting is needed to reach disadvantaged groups in communities, schools and health centres. Also, the rapid rate of urbanization in Ghana with about 52% urban status, is impacting heavily on municipal sanitation and waste management services. Thus, partnership<sup>3</sup> based on mutual respect, trust, complementarity and accountability have been the cornerstone of our successes.

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<sup>1</sup> ODI Development Progress Report for Ghana, March 2015.

<sup>2</sup> The Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation have held the WASH Mole annual conference series for 30 years whose outcome have been used to shape government WASH policies and also provided water, sanitation and hygiene services in thousands of communities in Ghana.

<sup>3</sup> A relationship of equality between our development partners, international and national NGOs, CSOs, private sector and communities with common shared values, purpose, goals and objective of universal WASH access to everyone everywhere will be pursued.

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The Government Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (2017-2024) further recognizes the dwindling aid flows and explores the implications of much needed capital expenditure. While roles and responsibilities and policies are better defined at all levels of government, financial and human resource challenges have continued to hinder effective and comprehensive service delivery. Overall spending for WASH is low and Government of Ghana is making efforts to increase budgetary allocations. Development partner contributions have concurrently declined, in part due to Ghana's achievement of reaching lower-middle income country status, and the lack of ability of some donors to continue to provide grants due to changes in their domestic policies.

With the inception of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2016, the Government of Ghana is making every effort to fully meet all of its Sanitation and Water targets by 2030. The National vision for water and sanitation sector is **"sustainable basic water and sanitation service for all by 2025"** which in detailed terms means "all people living in Ghana have access to adequate, safe, affordable and reliable basic water service, practise safe sanitation and hygiene and that water resources are sustainably managed". There is also a huge challenge of solid and liquid waste management. The Government is 'courting' the private sector to invest in these areas with all its potential of turning waste to energy and wealth through recycling and attendant employment benefits, especially for youth.

## 2. Sector Status and Vision

Despite Ghana's remarkable 89% water coverage rate in 2015 by MDG **basic services criteria**, there was huge access inequalities between rural-urban areas, rich and poor, women/girls and men/boys. Even the poor sanitation coverage of 15% at the expiry of the MDG in 2015 also reflected rural-urban inequalities. When measured against the safely managed criteria of the SDGs, Ghana's water coverage is significantly reduced to around 26.9% baseline figure according to 2018 National Development Planning Commission indicator baseline report, June 2018.

Area	National	Urban	Rural
Water	26.9 %	44%	6.7%
Sanitation	14.3	18.8	9.0

**Source: National Development Planning Commission SDG baseline report, 2018.**

The SDG 6 is an ambitious desire to **'ensure availability and Sustainable Management of Water and Sanitation for All' by 2030**. Targets 6.1 and 6.2 calls for drinking water, sanitation and hygiene call for the equitable access to safe and adequate services for all, as well as end open defaecation. The Government of Ghana has aligned itself to the goal and targets, and is taking appropriate steps to review national WASH

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policies to also reflect the Africa Agenda 2063, N'gor and other SWA commitments. Against this backdrop, the newly established Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR) from 2017 to date had to re-strategize and re-organize its key Water and Sanitation Directorates with focus on well-coordinated and harmonized approach to policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The actualization of Ghana's WASH vision is further bolstered by on-going reforms<sup>4</sup> in the rural and small town water delivery with professionalization of staffing and service delivery at the core. Hopefully, this will deal with hydra-headed sustainability and equity challenges in WASH services delivery. According to IRC<sup>5</sup> Ghana, almost 30% of rural water supply infrastructure is not functional, and only 2% provides basic levels of service for which they were intended. For Ghana to meet the above stated vision, an improved understanding of equity issues is imperative. Equity-focussed programming and effective targeting of the poor and marginalized beyond the current geographic targeting is urgently needed. More funding and technical support for post- construction operation and maintenance support by Government and partners are crucial to sustain WASH services. The Ministry has acknowledged the need to quicken on-going process to review/update the 2007 National Water Policy and 2010 Environmental Sanitation Policy and related strategies and plans to align with the SDG standards and national aspirations. The quarterly Water and Sanitation Sector Working Group meetings between the top-management of the Ministry, Development Partners/International NGOs and Civil Society is being activated to sustain our partnership to achieve WASH for all by 2030.

We acknowledge that national leadership and ownership is critical, and hence the need for strategic national partnerships financial and technical assistance as well as policy advice to consolidate the gains made in the past and work smartly to achieve our vision by 2030. With effective and sustainable partnerships with Development Partners, Civil Society and the Private Sector, we will develop robust sector policies and strategies, ensure co-ordination of strategies and plans at both national and decentralized sub-national levels to promote sustainable and equitable WASH services delivery. The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection is in the process of compiling Ghana National Household Registry (GNHR) data to ensure effective targeting of Ghana Social Protection Assistance programmes. Together the guideline for targeting the poor and vulnerable for basic sanitation services in Ghana, we will promote transparency and accountability of our planning processes to ensure inclusive WASH services delivery. In a bid to enhance broad based participation, planning and review, we are committed to ensuring a Country-driven and inclusive co-ordination mechanism at Ministerial, Agency level, Development Partners, Private Sector and decentralized sub-national level to improve our efficiency and effectiveness. The Ministry with the support of the World Bank is working to finalize our Sector Information System (SIS) which will form the basis for monitoring and evaluation and inform evidence-based decision-making processes.

There is limited technical personnel in the public WASH sector due to challenging working conditions, attrition and limited motivation package to attract qualified people to fill vacant positions. While gains

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<sup>4</sup> Led by the Community Water and Sanitation Agency, responsible for rural and small town water supply delivery

<sup>5</sup> IRC 2017: A study on Drivers and Barriers to co-ordination& harmonization of water service delivery at the district level. Also, Rural Water and Sanitation Supply Network (2010) has confirmed this in another global study.

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have been made in developing capacities at the local level, further efforts are needed to consolidate and advance local capacity. The ongoing national reforms in rural and small-town water delivery is improving staff capacity issues, but more needs to be done to consolidate the initial gains, enhance the prospects, effectiveness and viability – particularly in rural areas where population densities are lower. We will vigorously pursue partnerships with the Private Sector, Development Partners and International NGOs to address this challenge.

Addressing inequalities in accessing to WASH services is key on Government agenda. According to WaterAid<sup>6</sup>, and confirmed by many other studies, poor WASH conditions are negatively and unequally impacting women and girls. The burden of water collection and the management of household illnesses fall disproportionately on women and girls, exerting a toll on their energy, time, and resources and limiting their ability to become economically productive contributors to society and their families. Currently, Government has a number of pro-poor WASH interventions including the GAMA<sup>7</sup> supported by the World Bank, GASSLIP<sup>8</sup> supported by the African Development Bank, and the Embassy of the Royal Netherlands-UNICEF basic sanitation fund all aimed at addressing challenges by disadvantaged groups to build home toilets and hygiene facilities.

### 3. Addressing Inequalities in WASH

There are important linkages between SDG 6 and other SDGs to reduce extreme poverty by 2030 and ensure everyone, everywhere has clean, decent toilets and good hygiene. As such progress in education, health, work and economic development are crucial, without which the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development will fail. In addition, Government endorsed the United Nations 2010 declaration of water and sanitation as a right, and is committed to take progressive steps to make it happen. This also finds expression in Ghana's 1992 Constitution under the direct principles of state policy. The current national water and sanitation policies also recognize them as social goods with economic value, hence an enabler of development. Hopefully, a future Constitutional review will make water and sanitation right more explicit. Our national drinking water target is 100% of the population use improved water source within 30 minutes round trip by 2025; eliminate open defaecation by 2025, especially among the poorest quintile, 100% access to basic sanitation services as well as faecal sludge treated to national standards by 2025. Households should have basic handwashing facilities with soap; Women and girls using appropriate menstrual hygiene materials. All schools should have 100% functional basic water, sanitation and hygiene services; all health care facilities should have 100% functional WASH services.

### 4. Sustainable Financing

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<sup>6</sup> WaterAid Publication: How to reach everyone with safe water and sanitation by 2030 (March, 2018)

<sup>7</sup> Greater Accra Metropolitan Area

<sup>8</sup> GASSLIP is Greater Accra Sustainable Sanitation and Livelihood Improvement Programme under implementation for three years.

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One of the critical bottlenecks to overcome to address WASH inequalities and ensure universal access is the heavy reliance on donor funding (over 80% of sector budget) with low public investment and limited leveraging of private sector resources. Government has taken concrete policy measures with ongoing water sector reforms to make both urban and rural water service providers achieve financial and commercial viability with cross-subsidy and tariff reforms to support poor households. This will address challenges of low capital maintenance and renewal cost, inadequate operating and current maintenance cost as well low tariffs charge by utilities. The World Bank estimates an annual funding requirement of USD 946<sup>9</sup> million to achieve Ghana SDGs. With current sector funding at USD 114 million a year, this leaves a significant funding gap to achieve universal access. Projections of available finances indicate higher allocations and more predictable funding streams from taxes. However, taxes alone will be insufficient to guarantee the aggressive nature of progress which is required to achieve the SDGs. Additionally, the current contribution of tariffs to operation and maintenance can be further improved if quality of services is high. A combination of domestic revenues, more efficient allocations and use of available financing as well as accessing commercial revenue is needed. In addition, inefficiencies must be curtailed particularly those emanating from poor revenue collection, high levels of non-revenue water, poor functionality and high operating costs to enable utilities expand coverage and sustain services.

## Priority actions of the MSWR (2018-21) and our commitments include:

- To promote sustainable water resources development and management
- To increase public financing for improved access to safe and reliable water supply, eliminate open defecation, solid and liquid waste infrastructure development, and increase access to household toilets (including enforcement of sanitation bye-laws)
- The MSWR will ensure strong collaborations and cooperation with development partners, private sector, INGOs and academia to accelerate WASH service delivery at all levels
- The MSWR will reactivate the sector working group, ensuring that the private sector, development partners, NGOs, academia with financial and technical resources sit together.
- To explore viable options for mobilizing additional resources include PPP, which Government will pursue to increase financing for WASH programmes

In conclusion, the Ministry will ensure the provision of improve and sustainable basic sanitation and water for all by 2025 which is in tune with the vision of the Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policy (2017-2024) ***“An optimistic, self-confident and prosperous nation, through the creative exploitation of our human and natural resources, and operating within a democratic, open and fair society in which mutual trust and economic opportunities exist for all”***

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<sup>9</sup> World Bank Analysis captured in Safe Water 2017 Sector Review Report.