



Ghana Netherlands WASH Programme Workshop Sustainable Services and Exit Strategies 29 June 2022

Prepared by IRC Ghana

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1. Introduction

The Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (EKN Accra) and the government of Ghana have embarked on a multi-annual programme in Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) in 2012/2013. This Ghana-Netherlands WASH Programme (GNWP) focuses on integrated urban water and sanitation and is based on an initial Dutch contribution of € 82 million up to 2020.

Under the Ghana Netherlands WASH Programme (GNWP), five independent projects have been awarded grants in the fields of water, sanitation, hygiene, and waste. The Embassy administers these projects. In addition, GNWP also includes projects belonging to four separate Public-Private Partnership programmes that are implemented by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO):

- the Ghana Wash Window, commissioned by EKN Accra (GWW, with a total of 11 projects).
- the Sustainable Water Fund (FDW) (2 projects in Ghana).
- the Facility for Sustainable entrepreneurship & Food Security programme (FDOV, 2 projects).
- the Sustainable Development Goal Partnerships programme (SDGP, 2 relevant projects).

With that, GNWP showcases 22 initiatives (5 administered by the Embassy + 17 administered by RVO).

Over the years, the GNWP workshop has become an important platform for knowledge sharing and dissemination, for capacity building and impact enhancement in Ghana's water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), agricultural and nature conservation sectors. The 2022 GNWP annual meeting marked the end of events for the programme with similar meetings held in Accra in the period of 2015, 2017 – 2020.

2. Objective

The final workshop held on 29th June 2022 at the Fiesta Royale Hotel in Accra, Ghana focused on Sustainable Services and Exit Strategies.

The workshop was organised as a hybrid (virtual and physical) event bringing together the partners of the 22 projects in a stakeholders' dialogue. The workshop was organised in 3 broad sessions – official opening session, presentation from the projects, and sustainability and outlook. There were 39 participants with 25 in-person and 14 joining online.



3. Opening session

The official opening session of the workshop involved a welcome address from the Netherlands Embassy and key messages from the Government of Ghana partners. A presentation on the progress and insights over the implementation period was shared by the Netherlands Embassy and RVO.

3.1 Welcome address

The welcome address was delivered by H. E. Ambassador Jeroen Verheul. His speech focused on the following key points:

H. E Ambassador Verheul noted that monitoring is important for measuring progress within the sector, formulating lessons and recommendations to promote cross institutional learning and exchange. The Ambassador Verheul referred to the long history of relations between the Netherlands and Ghana and how water had played an important role in that process. He explained that the Netherlands Embassy over the past 10 years has invested in the WASH sector, and they are going to evaluate the contribution of that investment. The expectation is to get information on the successes and failures of the WASH programme as well as recommendations on lessons will inform the Netherlands Embassy's strategy going forward. He added that the Embassy will organize a gathering to disseminate the findings of the evaluation to determine the future role.

H. E Ambassador Verheul explained that the Embassy will respectfully phase out of WASH in Ghana. He explained that the role in terms of funding activities in the water and sanitation sector is going change. They will focus on the agricultural sector which is an essential element for the trade and investment relationship.

The Ambassador clarified that while the role of the Netherlands Embassy is changing, there will remain other Netherlands government institutions that will continue to work with the WASH sector. Some examples of include the [Blue Deal](#) which aims to achieve this by exchanging water management knowledge with other countries through the joint programme and [WaterWorX](#) which is a partnership of public water operators to increase access to sustainable water services for 10 million people between 2017-2030. He introduced the new institution, [Invest International](#), which has been endowed with investment capital by the Dutch State, to invest in major projects and are taking over some of the instruments managed by RVO.

H. E Ambassador Verheul expressed his pleasure for the opportunity to meet and encouraged participants to continue to exchange lessons during and after the event.

3.2 Key Messages from Government

Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources - Mr Kwaku Quansah, a deputy director at the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR), presented the key message on behalf of the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources. He noted that the changes in the global agenda will have an impact on the WASH sector in terms of Climate Change, Covid -19 pandemic and the global economic crisis. Mr Quansah urged sector actors to ensure that the issues around climate change are addressed in their plans and programming.

Mr Quansah expressed gratitude on behalf of the Ministry to be part of the workshop. They would listen, provide support and guidance where required and pick up lessons from projects and new models will inform the policies and strategy going forward



Ministry of Finance – Mr Ebenezer Nortey, Head of EU/Europe/Americas Unit, presented the key message on behalf of the of the Minister for Finance. He acknowledged the contributions of the Netherlands government and all the efforts they have put into delivering sustainable WASH systems and improving health facilities to the people of Ghana.

Mr Nortey stated that the Government of Ghana is committed to do what it takes to ensure these projects and initiatives are successful. He also reiterated that most of these projects funded by the Netherlands are in direct alignment to some government initiatives which also proves that both partners are on the right path to sustainable development. For example, the projects which complement the Government's agenda of making Accra the cleanest city in Africa. He noted that the opportunities made available to private businesses under the programmes also resonates with the president's coordinated programme of economic and social development policies on which government's Ghana's beyond Aid agenda is anchored and aims at boosting private sector growth and creating employment opportunities for the youth.

Mr Nortey acknowledged that, gradually, the Netherlands is moving away from traditional development with more focus now on trade and private investments. He thanked the Netherlands Government and looked forward to a very good meeting.

3.3 Presentation from the Netherlands Embassy and RVO

Ms Janet Arthur and Dr. Gabor Szántó made a presentation on the progress and insights of the Ghana Netherlands WASH programme over the implementation period. The presentation highlighted on the overview of the Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (WASH) Programme which was jointly funded by Governments of Netherlands & Ghana.

Ms Arthur explained that the emphasis of the programme has been on sustainability of interventions, through sustainable financing models with more private sector engagement to build capacity and behaviour change communication. She presented the outcomes of the first phase to include the development of 5 master plans, capacity building for municipal assemblies and review of by laws. She provided examples of how some projects such as the Cape Coast Water project, Living waters from the mountain, Protecting Atewa resources, Improving Urban Sanitation Project and Catalyzing WASH; Possible to Profitable(P2P) had contributed to achieving these outcomes.

Dr. Szántó presented on the Ghana WASH Window overview, there were 11 PPP projects (3 tender calls) with a total budget: € 37/78M. The projects focused on WASH with a circular focus, research (A2F, sectoral) and the Annual GNWP platform meetings. The direct economic output of these projects includes 17 (85%) viable & responsible business cases, 418 (96%) new jobs created and 9 of 11 projects with at least partial results. Under the GWW 281,013 people gained access to an improved water source (99%), 86,516 people gained access to improved sanitation facilities (20%), 33,000 households gained access to solid waste management (100%; ~165,000 ppl), 1,374 ton per year mixed, faecal sludge and solid organic waste effectively treated (two indicators summed up with 1% & 73%, resp.), 479 ton per year certified compost produced (52%), 474,500 kWh per year electricity produced & still growing (59%), 2,482,705 ppl reached with hygiene education or social marketing programme (131%) and 128 schools supported to become WASH compliant (91%). The GWW1505 is still being implemented and so far, the results reflect those from the M&E, the actual number of viable business cases is higher.



Dr. Szántó summarised the impacts of GNWP as follows:

- The public private partnerships were a strong approach and popular with most partners resulting in mutual capacity strengthening. The GWW/GNWP annual meetings supported to build an active WASH community.
- The business models were inclusive indicating that it is possible to generate O&M-covering revenues at BoP & SMEs, if the service is attractive! And access-to-finance for project beneficiaries is often essential (esp in sanitation).
- It contributed to changes in systems such as the introduction of (incremental), project-level innovations to support positive system change and innovations in service delivery improvement being replicated by peers and recognised by policy-makers
- There is apparent sustainability in most but not all cases, and the business models are likely to evolve post-project



4. Project presentations

The Strategic Water Advisor to Ghana made a presentation to debrief on his experiences over the period (2012-2022). Project representatives presented the current state of their projects with key issues on sustainable operations. After each thematic presentation, there were facilitated discussions, comments, questions, and answers. See Annex 2 for the list of presentation that will be attached to the report.

1. The **Sanitation, waste management and circular project presentations** were as follows:
 - a) Catalyzing WASH: from possible to profitable: WASH access to finance -SNV presented by Mrs. Theresa Swanzy-Baffoe
 - b) National Sanitation Revolving Fund – UNICEF presented by Mr Ramesh Bhusal
 - c) Improving sanitation access in urban Ghana – UNICEF presented by Mrs. Korama Ocran
 - d) Creating and capturing value: Supporting enterprises for urban liquid and solid wastes recycling for food, energy, and clean environment (CapVal) – IWMI presented by Ms. Bernadette Dzifa Agbefu
 - e) The Special Treat Project - Mdf presented by Mr Delasi Amable

The following questions and comments were discussed after the group of presentations:

- The incentive for loan uptake by households and businesses for Sanitation
- The cost of the loan and the financial burden to the donor
- What is the penalty for loan defaulters
- Does all the liquid waste in Yilo Krobo come to the plant, what is the % share / equity of the plant.

UNICEF explained that the review of the byelaws and its communication to households served as an incentive for the uptake of toilets. This complemented the behaviour changes measures put in place such as creating an effective demand system during and after triggering portraying the impact of ODF on the society. The capacity building activities provided by the financial institutions helped the artisans to understand the profitability of sanitation businesses.

SNV and UNICEF explained that measures have been taken to reduce the numbers of defaulters by investigating the credibility of the applicant before approving a loan, with a guarantor and in some cases, applicants are asked for collateral. The interest rates are subsidized e.g. 12% for the UNICEF Basic Sanitation Fund (BSF).

SNV explained that the P2P has a 95% recovery rate. In the BSF, the fund manager (the rural financial institution) has the responsibility of paying 100% of the loan but the task of recovery is on the fund manager.

IWMI explained that they have capacity constraints (5000cubic meters) and are unable to take all the liquid waste in the Yilo krobo district, as such even though there is a byelaw, it has not been enforced.



2. The **drinking water projects** presentations were as follows:

- a) PPP for water in Ghana - Safe Water Network (SWN) presented by Mr. Mohammed Ali Ibrahim
- b) Football for WASH -VEi presented by Mrs. Dorcas Adote
- c) Scaling up our District-Wide Safe Water Service in KEEA Municipal, Upper West and Savannah Regions -4Ward Development West Africa Presented by Mr. Sylvester Agyapong

The following questions and comments were discussed after the group of presentations:

- Is SWN cooperating with GWCL?
- Is the source of water same as CWSA, what is it that they do differently to make their water prices lower than CWSA?
- How is the issue of vandalism of school WASH facilities being handled by the programme?
- Was there any data collection from health institutions to confirm the impact of the project in schools with regards to health benefits?
- Why are some schools refusing to pay their water bills. Was the water used in the communities or by the schools

SWN explained that they have a closer collaboration with CWSA than GWCL as they are in the small-town sector. They are collaborating with CWSA to develop and implement water safety plans and roll them out. Also, since CWSA started taking part in managing the pipe systems, SWN has been collaborating with them to share lessons and experiences. SWN explained that the sources of water are from boreholes and the Volta Lake for communities close to the Lake. The capital cost is funded by the donors; however, they can recover the operational cost using prepaid smart meters and mobile money technologies. Ms Arthur said she was impressed with the work that SWN is doing in influencing policy, highlighting the contribution of safe water enterprises towards water services delivery in small towns.

Football for WASH explained that the schools provided data in relation to absenteeism and students who reported sick to support the statement on improved health and reduction in absenteeism. Following the discussion on how to address the issue of the school toilets being vandalised, the suggestion was made that the entire community including opinion leaders must be involved do they can understand the need for toilets in schools and serve as watch dogs to protect the facility. They were encouraged to collaborate with UNICEF that is also implementing urban sanitation in Cape Coast to work hand in hand to engage the communities effectively. On the non-payment of bills, Football for WASH explained that some of the schools are assuming that government is still paying water bills as was done during the Covid-19 relief period. Although, the government subsidy has ended, some of the schools are still refusing to pay their bills.

4ward development West Africa added that they are scaling up the work in Upper West and Savannah region and it is the opportunities that they are scaling from Wassa East. They expressed



gratitude for the support from the Netherlands Government that has enabled them to expand and scale up their interventions.

3. The **Nature conservation and agricultural projects** presentations were as follows:
 - a) Living waters from the mountain, Protecting Atewa resources – Arocha Ghana presented by Mr. Seth Appiah-Kubi
 - b) Strengthening the horticulture sector in Ghana to enhance exports to the EU - Cabi presented by Mr. Walter Hevi
 - c) Profile of Hope for Africa presented by Mrs. Vincentia Koranteng Asante

The following questions and comments were discussed after the group of presentations:

- How does government support the Atewa Forest reserve project? Since the project as sued government, how will project be sustained?
- Do you collaborate with the water resources commission? Have you conducted any study on the effects of mining on the waterbody?
- With regards to reusable sanitary pads, what are some of the complications that are faced in terms of cost? Is it worth it as compared to the disposable ones?

Arocha Ghana explained that before this current Government, they were working closely with the agencies, however with the change of Government the relationship has changed. This Government has an agenda which focuses on mining; hence it has not been easy working with the core institutions (Minerals Commission, Forestry Commission, Environmental Protection Agency and Water and Resource Commission). There is a campaign now for citizens to call on Government to protect the water sources. The project study was within the forest area while the mining activities happen on the fringes.

Hope for Africa explained that the sanitary pads that are produced are very safe and hygienic. It is reusable and cost wise it is cheaper than the disposable ones.

Dr. Szántó commended Cabi on their contribution to increasing in export volume and the reduction in interceptions harmful organisms in commodity exported to the EU markets.



5. Sustainability and outlook

This session focused on a facilitated dialogue among GNWP/GWW partners on:

- Exit strategies of the donor(s) and their impact and managing strategies of the project consortia (including how much of the partnership is still intact)
- The potential synergies and shareable lessons-learned amongst the projects

5.1 Outlook from the Netherlands Embassy, Accra

Mr Bram E. van Opijnen, First Secretary Economy, provided the focus for the Netherlands Embassy in next four years which is the private sector and green agrobusiness. The Embassy is considering how all the different initiatives and programmes can come together to create more impact in the field of green agrobusiness and to create more employment. This has consequences on the focus of the Embassy, and a strategy is being developed to guide the process.

The discussions centred on how the Embassy's decision to focus on trade will impact non-governmental organisations. Mr van Opijnen explained that the new policy is to attract Dutch companies to Ghana to create jobs, however, they need to invest in the enabling environment. He added that in the long term, the focus is to increase trade and investment, but in the short term the Embassy will leverage on the successful projects of the past. Mr van Opijnen said that climate is very important and a cross cutting theme, so they will focus on practices that do not harm the environment and will focus on green practices within the agrobusiness. For the water sector, they are exploring how water can be used in irrigation which supports the policy focus.

5.2 Poll and Group Discussions

Participants took part in an online survey to measure expectations on the following:

- Do you expect the ending of your GNWP, GWW, FDOV or FDW project to affect your operations? (Yes/No).
- How do you feel about your project impact on a scale of 1-5 (with one being a complete failure and five implying that all goals were met).
- Do you have upscaling plans and if yes, how definitive are they? (With options like 'No plans', 'Only have general ideas', 'Plans are in development', 'Plans are (about) ready for implementation' and 'Already realizing the upscaling plans')
- Do you expect climate change to increase the relevance of your work/activities? (With options like 'Not at all', 'Hardly', 'Moderately', 'Very much' or 'I do not know')
- How easy is it to access additional finance (subsidy, soft loan or commercial loan) for your activities? (With options like 'Near impossible', 'Hard', 'Challenging, but attainable', 'Fairly easy' and 'Very easy')

There were 18 responses in all and 61% did not think ending the GNWP will affect their project, and the project has either fully or partially met the goals. 44% indicated that they have already scaled up their projects while 16% indicated they had developed plans to scale up. 66% of the respondents indicated that access to additional funds is challenging but doable. The results are shown in Annex 3.

The participants then formed 3 groups to respond to the following questions:



- i. What was the most important, - positive and negative -aspect of working in PPP structure?
- ii. Sustainability: Are you still involved in your GNWP, GWW, FDOV or FDW initiative – after the end of the formal project period?
- iii. What is the key obstacle/challenge to sustain and/or upscale your WASH activities (services or products)? (Financing, capacity, need etc.)
- iv. What did you find most beneficial about the annual GNWP meetings?

The highlights from the group discussions are as follows:

For the in-person groups, some of the positive aspects of working in PPP structure included sharing the risks and creating ownership with clearly defined pathways for operations and sustainability. Both the needs of the people and the goals of the project were met because of the partnerships of the public sector and private sector. Some of the negative aspects included conflicting goals, timelines, and priorities. There is the need to manage expectations in PPPs because goals easily change due to factors on the ground and the number of people involved. When goals are not met, the partners involved are unable to maintain the trust of the donor.

There are some project implementers still involved post the Netherlands support because some are the main implementers of their business models so are unable to fold up when the project has not been completed. Some of the threats to sustainability were identified as lack of enforcement of the legal framework, inadequate financing for scaling up and continuing to maintain Government commitment

For the online group, 4Ward Development West Africa, explained that with the passing of the Public Private Partnership Act, 2020 (Act 1039) (“PPP Act”) on 29 December 2020, the law is now clearer, and they are trying to adapt to that especially in the new districts where they are now working. They noted that although the PPP process takes longer and requires approval from parliament, it provides a legal framework for the operations with clarity on roles and responsibilities among partners. They added that they are looking to serve 25000 people in 10 communities located in 4 districts. This replication is possible because of the investment from RVO and the learning from the Wassa East District. IRC Ghana explained that while the SMARTerWASH project with the Community Water and Sanitation Agency, Akvo and SkyFox was helpful for mapping water services in 131 districts and bringing out key issues about the status of water and sanitation. However, it was challenging to make a business case beyond the project. For the Government partner was unable to continue paying for the online platform or to find additional funds to support continuous data collection. The data from the project has however been instrumental for informing the institutional changes in CWSA’s mandate to become a utility to ensure that effective water services delivery.

The groups acknowledged that the annual GNWP meetings have been beneficial platform for sharing, networking, and forging a relationship with the Netherlands Embassy. In addition, insights of panellists in past years have supported guidance to the projects. The meetings provide a unique platform where private sector and NGOs and NL government meet to share knowledge.



6. Conclusion

Dr. Szántó wrapped up the meeting with the final remarks. He summarised the best GWW practicees and the lessons learnt. He acknowledged that the water access projects had met their goals and were scaling up, the aquaculture projects were performing well, and the compost projects achieved progress beyond the support of the programme and acknowledged that some challenges still need to be addressed.

Ms Arthur noted that the contributions of the GNWP is influencing sector policies and reviews such as the insights and contributions from the safe water enterprises, UNICEF's work on sanitation etc She thanked IRC for organising the event, the online participants for staying through the meeting, especially the Government partners and the in-person participants for their commitment and contributions.



Annexes

1. Programme for 2022 GNWP workshop, Fiesta Royale Hotel, Accra

TIME	SESSIONS
8:30-9:00	Registration
9:00-10:15	<p>Opening Session</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening Prayer and self-introduction 2. Welcome Address – H.E Jeroen Verheul Ambassador, Netherlands Embassy 3. Key messages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources • Ministry of Finance 4. Presentation on GNWP - Dr. Gabor Szanto & Ms. Janet Arthur 5. Comments, Q & A
10:15-11:15	<p>Project progress presentations (10 m/project)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regional water Issues – Mr Job Udo, HKV, NL <p>Sanitation, waste management and circular projects</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Catalyzing WASH: from possible to profitable: WASH access to finance -SNV 3. National Sanitation Revolving Fund – UNICEF 4. Improving sanitation access in urban Ghana - UNICEF <p>Q&A</p>
11:15-11:30	SNACK BREAK
11:30-12:30	<p>Project progress presentations (10 m/project)</p> <p>Sanitation, waste management and circular projects</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Creating and capturing value: Supporting enterprises for urban liquid and solid wastes recycling for food, energy and clean environment (CapVal) – IWMI 6. The Special Treat Project - Mdf <p>Q&A</p> <p>Drinking water projects</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. PPP for water in Ghana - Safe Water Network 8. Sustainable Rural Water Service Delivery, Wassa East District -4Ward <p>Q&A</p>
12:30 – 13:30	LUNCH



TIME	SESSIONS
<p>13:30-15:00</p>	<p>Project progress presentations (10 m/project) Drinking water projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Football for WASH -VEi <p>Q&A</p> <p>Nature conservation and agricultural projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Living waters from the mountain, Protecting Atewa resources – Arocha Ghana 2. Strengthening the horticulture sector in Ghana to enhance exports to the EU - Cabi <p>Q&A</p>
<p>15:00-16:15</p>	<p>Sustainability and Outlook Outlook – First Secretary, Netherlands Embassy</p> <p>Exit strategy and impact (Break out session)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poll questions 2. Group work – PPP and Sustainability 3. Plenary presentations 4. Level of sustainability in operations (RVO)
<p>16:15-16:30</p>	<p>Closing ceremony</p>



2. List of Presentations

- i. Ghana Netherlands WASH Programme 2022: Results and Dissemination
- ii. Debrief Strategic Water Advisor Ghana
- iii. Catalyzing WASH: from possible to profitable: WASH access to finance -SNV
- iv. National Sanitation Revolving Fund – UNICEF
- v. Improving sanitation access in urban Ghana – UNICEF
- vi. PPP for water in Ghana - Safe Water Network
- vii. Football for WASH -VEi
- viii. Scaling up our District-Wide Safe Water Service in KEEA Municipal, Upper West and Savannah Regions -4Ward Development West Africa
- ix. Save Atewa Advocacy Campaign– Arocha Ghana
- x. Strengthening the horticulture sector in Ghana to enhance exports to the EU - Cabi
- xi. Profile of Hope for Africa



3. Results from Polls

GNWP Quiz

18 Responses 01:32 Average time to complete Active Status

1. Do you expect the ending of your GNWP, GWW, FDOV or FDW project to affect your operations?

- Yes 7
- No 11



2. How do you feel about your project impact on a scale of 1-5? - with one being a complete failure and five implying that all goals were met

- 1 0
- 2 0
- 3 1
- 4 10
- 5 7





3. Do you have upscaling plans and if yes, how definitive are they?

● No plans	2
● Only have general ideas	1
● Plans are in development	4
● Plans are (about) ready for im...	3
● Already realizing the upscalin...	8



4. Do you expect climate change to increase the relevance of your work/activities?

● Not at all	0
● Hardly	2
● Moderately	8
● Very much	8
● I do not know	0



5. How easy is it to access additional finance (subsidy, soft loan or commercial loan) for your activities?

● Near impossible	1
● Difficult	3
● Challenging, but attainable	12
● Fairly easy	2
● Very easy	0

