

SUMMARY BASELINE REPORT STATUS OF SANITATION IN GHANA AND THE ROLE OF CSOS IN POLICY PROCESSES

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In June 2019, CLEAR AA and Twende Mbele worked with Ghana Monitoring and Evaluation Forum to commission a baseline study on collaboration between Civil Society and Government for improved accountability and government performance in the use of evidence and results in the sanitation sector. This baseline report provides a brief on the sanitation situation in Ghana; the processes which lead to the generation of sanitation-related data or evidence, and how these are used to inform or influence relevant sector policies. It starts with background information on the sanitation sector in Ghana, key actors and stakeholders and their roles. It also provides the different indicators necessary, at various levels, to assess evidence and the various policy making platforms.

The report concludes that although CSOs/NGOs play a significant role in the use of evidence in the sanitation sector, their involvement is largely limited to evidence generated from projects, and the meta-data related to this evidence production is not coordinated across civil society. Some of the indicators are disaggregated and

not harmonized. This situation is inadequate and will have to be complemented by routine administrative data. The report recommends the need to develop agreed sets of indicators, channelled through government's administrative data framework (GSGDA II, NDPC, 2014). It also suggests some important measures required of NGOs/CSOs in the evidence generation processes must be adhered to, if they are to inform sanitation policy and make the desired impact.

Purpose of this Summary Report

The purpose of this paper is to provide a brief overview of the report for policy makers, CSOs and high-level stakeholders and provide options to improve collaboration between government and civil society. At the end of this summary, relevant information and links have been provided for those who wish to access the full report for further details.

¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/ghana/overview>

Methodology

The sources of information leading to the production of this report were largely derived from secondary data. It included an extensive review of national and international literature, sector documents and project reports to examine the data and information needed to portray the current sanitation situation in Ghana. This was complemented by primary data from major stakeholders and consultative sessions with representatives of MSWR, MoME, NDPC and other major government and non-government agencies including civil society organisations and private sector entities. As part of a series of multi-layer analyses, a validation workshop was organised to assemble and seek feedback from various actors, who had met in a similar session during the inception phase.

Background

Ghana is a Lower Middle-Income Economy, rich in mineral resources with a population exceeding 29.6 million (2018). The country is becoming one of the most urbanized countries in Africa. It is estimated that 54.8% of the population in Ghana live in urban areas (Worldometers 2019). In Ghana, only 14% of the population have access to basic sanitation and about 19% practise Open Defecation (OD). Almost 57% of the population use shared latrines – a standard which is below the acceptable levels for promoting safe and effective sanitation. The sanitation sector is also fraught with inequalities and inequities. The gap between the richest and poorest who have access to WASH, is largest in access to basic sanitation (UNICEF/WHO 2017). Further analysis suggests that the brunt of poor sanitation is borne by the poorest in Ghana. Sanitation seems to be inadequately provided for by governments in Ghana for various reasons.



Sources of Data and Evidence which Influence Sanitation Policies and Activities

Actors in the WASH sector, including NGOs/CSOs, are required to seek the inputs and mandate of beneficiary communities as part of the needs assessment process (NDPC, 2014). This is expected to be carried out through the MMDAs as part of the planning and reporting processes. A summary of approaches used to generate data and evidence to influence sanitation policies in Ghana include the following:

- Annual public hearings of plans and priorities developed by MMDAs, as directed by NDPC and reported by MMDAs.
- Programme/project reports issued by INGOs/NGOs and CSOs in and outside the country.
- Evaluation reports (formative, pilot, mid-term/end-term, outcome and impact). The frequency and number of evaluations are dependent on the range of programmes and their duration.
- Annual, half-yearly and quarterly reports issued by most sector stakeholders (including Government and CSOs). These are often made available on demand and submitted to key stakeholders.
- International conventions and publications (eg. WEDC conference)
- Administrative edicts and by-laws (Pay-as-you-use, shared toilet facilities).
- Research results (eg. reports presented at Mole series and platforms).
- National and project surveys (eg. MICS and DHS)

Policy Formulation Platforms

In Ghana, there are several policy and advocacy platforms in the WASH sector. Some are regular platforms and others, special platforms meant to address specific sanitation or WASH-related issues. For purposes of this assessment, a short list has been presented to cover both regular platforms and one-off or ad hoc events. The process involves the active participation of CSOs, NGOs and government agencies.

They include regular and irregular platforms for sanitation policy, comprising local, national and international motive-driven platforms such as:

National/Local Policy Platforms

- o Mole Conference series
- o National Level Learning Alliance Platform (NLLAP)
- o Sanitation stocktaking forum (organised annually by Environmental Health and Sanitation Department / Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (EHSD/MSWR))
- o Annual performance review conferences
- o Selected platforms for disseminating Functional Organisation Assessment Tool/ District League Table/ District Assemblies Performance Assessment Tool/ FOAT/ DLT/ DPAT reports
- o Development Partners (DPs) Forum (once every quarter or more, as needed)
- o International events, such as World Toilet Day (WTD) (organised annually)

Special one-off events

- o End of project conferences
- o Match-making meetings
- o Technology fairs / Special "Market place" events
- o SDG Implementation Coordination Committee (Ghana Statistical Service, GSS, 2017).
- Direct consultation and sponsorship of Government agencies (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) and MSWR).

Indicators and Types of Data

It is reported that most of the sanitation sector's policies depend on survey and project data instead of administrative data. GSS sources state that "administrative data systems are going to be key in producing SDG indicator data." According to GSS (2017), not only is administrative data cheaper to collect than survey data, it is also more timely, frequent and can produce far more detailed data than is possible from censuses and surveys. It was acknowledged by sector stakeholders, at the validation workshop, that some of the existing sanitation generation systems are project-specific and often limited in the range of data and geographical spread.

Existing Systems for Collation and Analysis of Sanitation Data

The existing systems for processing and analysing sanitation data are many. Indeed, almost all INGOs and local NGOs have M&E systems designed to fit and meet their project or organisational requirements. Most of these are project inspired and include the following:

BaSiS: The Basic Sanitation Information System (BaSiS) is decentralised and uses lowest-cost technology to ensure hygienic excreta and sullage disposal, and a clean and healthy living environment, both at home and in the neighbourhood.

DiMES: The District Monitoring and Evaluation System (DiMES) was established by the CWSA. DiMES is a useful tool for capturing relevant sector data at community level, including information on water and sanitation facilities from drilling works, through to subsequent functionality.

Expanded Sanitary Inspections, Compliance Management and Enforcement

The Expanded Sanitary Inspections, Compliance Management and Enforcement (ESICOME) programme was initiated in 1999. ESICOME has been migrated onto a digital platform called ESICAP, under a World Bank project called the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA) project.

The Policy Process

Beyond data collection, processing and presentation, not much data is rigorously analysed in the sanitation sector, on a routine basis across the country. Data is sometimes not collected from all regions or districts (A4WA, 2019); deadlines for submission of data are usually not met; and policy decisions are sometimes not based on data generated, thus not providing the incentive for people to report appropriately. As a result, most of the M&E systems mentioned above were reported as underutilised.

Dynamics in the Sanitation Sector

According to some key informants, the policy processes rely on both formal and informal processes. The sanitation policy formulation processes and the dynamics involved in it have not always been predictable. Original advocacy plans have sometimes not delivered the desired results and there was need to constantly review the different policy influencing approaches and stands, based on the quality of evidence and timeliness of information available to the actors. Advocacy was sometimes built around key persons in formal positions and selecting the right moments for intervention. Advocacy is always dependent on the urgency of the issue, availability of data and levels of vested interest in it. The major advocacy approaches have tended to slide along a continuum of strategies including Confrontation, Consultation, Consensus and threats of non-compliance.

Policies Issued through Massive NGO/CSO Involvement and Inputs

A list of key and recent documents has been provided and discussed below. These are policies whose very existence was largely driven by, or received massive inputs from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the sanitation sector of Ghana. There were also instances where they simply mobilised human resources to influence the policy making process. Some of the policies have been presented in the list below:

- Environmental Sanitation Policy (2010)
- National Environmental Sanitation Strategy and Action Plan
- Strategic Environmental Sanitation Investment Plan
- WASH BCC Strategy for Urban sub-sector (2011)
- Guidelines for Targeting the poor and Vulnerable for Basic Sanitation
- Rural Sanitation Model and Strategy



Prioritisation of Existing Sanitation Policy Platforms

As part of the validation processes of the baseline information, stakeholders and key sector players identified, assessed and prioritised the most important platforms for policy influencing, planning and direction setting. They included those listed in Table 1, below.

Table 1: Prioritization of Sanitation Policy Influencing Platforms in Ghana

Platform	Responsible Entity	Group 1 Scores	Group 2 Scores	Group 3 Scores	Total%	Comments
1. Mole Conference	CONIWAS ¹	30	25.5	26	81.5	1 st Priority
2. Sanitation Stocktaking Forum	MSWR	31	22.5	26	79.5	2 nd priority
3. National Level Learning Alliance Platform (NLLAP)	CWSA, IRC, WaterAid Ghana and TREND.	24	19	26	69	3 rd Priority
4. National WASH Technical Working Group	MLGRD/MSWR	23	15	17	55	4 th Priority

At the end of the assessment, with the aid of a six-point-criteria (presented in the main report), the Mole Conference series emerged as most influential in shaping sanitation policies and strategies in Ghana. It was suggested that NLLAP be linked to the Mole Conferences as the platform for improving data collection and use of evidence, in between the Mole Conferences. These platforms would also assist in promoting advocacy and collaboration on evidence generation and use for policy in the WASH sector.

Challenges

Some of the factors are related to poor data generation. Then, there is inadequate evidence to inform policies and strategies in the sanitation sector of Ghana. Some of the challenges in this area have been provided below.

1. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) component of the sanitation sector has been largely project-based.
2. The Environmental Sanitation Policy has not been updated in spite of the significant changes in the sector.
3. There are weak linkages between policy and the implementation of sanitation interventions.
4. Knowledge gaps exist with respect to performance M&E, at the district levels, and this does not allow for effective measurement of results in line with international and national development agenda.
5. The lack of dedicated M&E resources (human and logistical) to drive the management of sanitation within the government machinery (from national through to the district levels) has contributed to depleting capacities in the government sphere, for evidence generation and use.
6. Weak linkages between the various national-level policy frameworks.

Recommendations

- Most sector practitioners, in both government and CSOs, will require further capacity building in developing and understanding the different types of indicators for the sanitation sector.
- There is need for sector-wide advocacy and support towards the Government's development of an effective, harmonized and all-encompassing M&E framework.
- WASH sector actors must deepen advocacy towards the speedy establishment of the National Sanitation Authority (NSA), with an integrated performance management information system infrastructure for the Environmental Health and Sanitation Division (EHSD) of the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, from national through to the district level.
- The demand for a National Sanitation Fund (NSF) by key sector stakeholders is important and should be aligned with advocacy for the NSA.
- Support is also required for the institutionalization of M&E Focal Desks within the Environmental Health and Sanitation Units of MMDAs, to capture data on environmental health and sanitation to feed the M&E systems and inform MMDA planning and coordination.
- There is a need to establish/strengthen structures for active CSOs participation in the generation and regular submission of data, through the administrative channels of MMDAs
- National-level actors must coordinate their efforts at tracking policy implementation effectively and the resourcing of Area/Zonal Councils should be considered, to ensure a bottom-up approach in the fight against poor sanitation.
- The agenda and contents on sanitation and the broader WASH indicators should be considered in the design and conduct of the 2020 Population and Housing Census (PHC).
- The gaps in the WASH sector, including the absence of a comprehensive Hygiene and Behavior Change policy and guidelines should be prioritized and addressed.

Conclusions and Validation

At the end of the validation workshop which reviewed the baseline report, sanitation stakeholders present explicitly affirmed their willingness and ability to engage in further actions to improve on the use of evidence in the sanitation policy process. They also asked CONIWAS to play an active role and declared that GMEF would play a crucial role as a partner for driving the M&E component forward, and help the sector in sharpening its advocacy agenda. Other institutions were also identified and assigned the responsibility to collaborate and ensure that the decisions taken are carried out. They include GSS, DPs, INGOs, NDPC, academia and the private sector, including WASH Solutions, MAPLE Consult and other consulting groups.

For the full report and further information, please contact: Twende Mbele and GMEF.
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³ Coalition of NGOs in the WASH Sector