

USAID MuniWASH Facilitates Knowledge Sharing during the 2023 Fecal Sludge Management 7 Conference in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, February 19-23, 2023: The USAID [Municipal Water, Sanitation and Hygiene \(MuniWASH\)](#) Activity participated in the 7th Fecal Sludge Management (FSM) Conference held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in conjunction with the 21st International Congress and Exhibition of the [African Water and Sanitation Association](#) (AfWASA). The conference brought together global WASH sector experts to exchange knowledge and experience regarding the West African WASH sector. On the sidelines of this conference, the MuniWASH Activity organized a side event on the theme, "Organization of the Autonomous Sanitation Subsector in Benin and Côte d'Ivoire: Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities."



Panelists speaking about on-site sanitation at FSM7 / AfWASA Congress in Abidjan. Photo Credit: USAID/MuniWASH

This side event allowed MuniWASH to facilitate a direct dialogue between leading fecal sludge management stakeholders in West Africa. Panelists included representatives from national agencies in charge of fecal sludge management in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal as well as the Association des Vidangeurs Professionnels du Benin (Association of Vacuum Truck Operators in Benin) and DELVIC Sanitation Initiatives, a successful private operator in the regional sanitation sector.

This dialogue served two purposes for MuniWASH. It brought together the national government-mandated agencies including Direction de l'Assainissement et de la Voirie Urbaine (DAVU) in Benin and Office National de l'Assainissement et du Drainage (ONAD) in Côte d'Ivoire to explain and reassure the private sector of ongoing reforms in their respective countries to ensure efficiency in the transport and treatment of fecal sludge. The dialogue also helped private sector actors to understand the reforms and share their concerns and expectations. Overall, participants had a better understanding of the desludging reforms underway in Benin and Côte d'Ivoire. They also learned about the challenges of private emptying professionals and potential avenues to attract funding. DELVIC and the private companies advocated for tax relief and the establishment of a regulator between themselves and the national agencies. Drainage services and fecal sludge treatment plant operations are often not profitable. Therefore, the panelists urged all actors in the sanitation subsector to take bold steps to improve the sector's financial sustainability with particular attention to the valorization of sanitation by-products and activities.

About the author



Mr. Mamadou OUATTARA is a Planning Monitoring-Evaluation and Learning Expert with over 21 years of experience in the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector in Africa. Previously, Mr. Ouattara served in several positions of progressive responsibility at the Water and Sanitation for Africa (WSA) Head Office and International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN) ranging from Head of Planning for the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) unit to Program Director. In these different positions, Mr. Ouattara oversaw comprehensive monitoring, evaluation, and learning, and knowledge-sharing activities, identified service gaps and best practices, developed evaluation reports and organized events to effectively enhance learning and project results. Currently, Mr. Ouattara is a Knowledge Sharing and Learning Advisor in USAID/MuniWASH project where he is in charge of coordinating Gender, M&E, Communication and Knowledge sharing activities. He is based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.