



USAID | GHANA
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Water for the World Country Plan

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After more than two decades of democratic governance, political stability, and economic growth, Ghana is often cited as a role model for African development. However, significant challenges persist in the water and sanitation sector. Only 18 percent of Ghanaians use basic sanitation (i.e., household latrines), and Ghanaians living in the poorest quintile are 22 times more likely than those living in the richest quintile to practice open defecation. This practice exacerbates infectious disease and malnutrition.

USAID has partnered with the Government of Ghana (GoG) in the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector since 2009 to achieve its goal “for all Ghanaians to have access to safe, reliable drinking water and basic sanitation, and practice good hygiene by 2025.” In ten years, USAID investments have expanded access to water and sanitation services and promoted improved sanitation and hygiene behaviors. USAID’s new behavior-led, integrated Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) focuses on motivating actors (i.e. government, the private sector, and citizens) to define and address Ghana’s challenges through strengthened systems, accountability, and inclusive development. USAID’s WASH investments will focus on strengthening local systems to effectively deliver quality WASH services and stimulate increased partnerships between the GoG and the private sector. WASH programming will be primarily in rural areas, rural growth centers, and urbanizing towns, as these areas represent opportunities to close the equity gap and help the GoG meet its WASH targets.

II. INTRODUCTION

While Ghana achieved Millennium Development Goal 7 to halve the population without improved access to drinking water services, significant challenges in the WASH sector persist. For example, 57 percent of urban households have access to safely managed drinking water services compared to only 11 percent of rural households.¹ Over 1.7 million Ghanaians still use unsafe drinking water sources (i.e., lakes, rivers, and streams), 80 percent of whom are in the bottom two wealth quintiles. Twenty-one percent of health facilities in Ghana lack access to a basic water supply, which significantly contributes to newborn and maternal infections.² Maternal sepsis (infections) accounts for 10 percent³ of maternal deaths in Ghana and neonatal sepsis⁴ is among the five leading causes of neonatal deaths. In 2012, the World Bank estimated that the lack of improved sanitation costs Ghana \$290 million per year, equivalent to \$12 per person, largely due to costs associated with health care and premature death.⁵ Despite this, GoG spending on WASH declined from ~1 percent of the total GoG budget in 2017 (which was already inadequate) to ~0.4 percent in 2020.

III. WATER AND SANITATION CONTEXT IN GHANA

Government of Ghana's Water and Sanitation Priorities

The goal of the Water Sector Strategic Development Plan 2012-2025 is “sustainable water and basic sanitation for all by 2025” through three main priority objectives, as follows:

- Ensuring sustainable financing for investments, operation, and maintenance of WASH services;
- Ensuring that water sector institutions have the required expertise, information, equipment, logistics, and financing to perform their functions; and
- Ensuring sustainable harnessing, utilization, and management of water resources.⁶

Government of Ghana's Current Planned Strategies and Approaches

The Government of Ghana aligns its WASH priorities with those of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Africa Agenda 2063, and the 2015 Ngor Declaration on Sanitation and Hygiene. Furthermore, Ghana is a member of the global Water and Sanitation for All Partnership. To ensure this alignment, the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR), established in 2017, reorganized its key Water and Sanitation Directorates to foster a harmonized approach to policy development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. Key approaches to achieve water and sanitation for all by 2025 include: developing innovative finance mechanisms for the sector; and enacting legislation to better regulate sanitation and water, to increase household sanitation facilities, and to expand access to potable water in urban and rural areas.

1 Estimates on household water, sanitation, and hygiene by wealth quintile and sub-national region in Ghana. Updated December 2019. WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene.

2 WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program (JMP), WASH in Health Care Facilities Global Baseline Report, 2019

3 Ghana Statistical Service and Ministry of Health, 2017 Maternal Health Survey, August 2018

4 Ghana National Newborn Health Strategy and Action Plan, 2019-2024

5 World Bank Water and Sanitation Program (WSP). 2012. “Economic Impacts of Poor Sanitation in Africa”

6 Government of Ghana (2014). Water Sector Strategic Development Plan (2012-2025)

Challenges and Opportunities

- **Governance and Finance:** Local governments often have poor capacity to effectively plan, budget, mobilize finance, and manage local WASH services. Furthermore, the private sector approaches and engagement in WASH service delivery remain underutilized, representing an important opportunity.
- **Inequity of services:** Significant regional disparities in sanitation services persist, with 72 percent of the population in the Upper East and 56 percent in the Northern region practicing open defecation compared to only 4 percent in the Ashanti Region.
- **Rapid urbanization:** It is projected that as much as 70 percent of Ghanaians will live in urban areas in 2050, concentrated in cities such as Accra, Kumasi, and Tamale.⁷ High population density inherently enables proximity to water services, however, without effective planning for WASH services, urbanization compromises the potential for safely managed water and sanitation.
- **Coronavirus Pandemic:** The global COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of hygiene practices, particularly handwashing, to reduce infection risk. However, poor access to basic handwashing facilities and clean water inhibit critical hygiene behaviors. The increased prioritization of these services due to COVID-19 presents an opportunity to build collective energy across the public and private sectors on the issue.

VI. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Theory of Change

USAID/Ghana hypothesizes that:

IF the GoG creates an enabling environment (policy and incentives) for private sector participation in the WASH sector; local governments strengthen planning, budgeting, delivery, oversight, and citizen engagement for WASH services; WASH service providers (including private sector) adopt viable management and finance models; and citizens adopt improved WASH practices,

THEN access to sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services in target districts of northern Ghana will improve.

Relationship to the Journey of Self Reliance

USAID's approach recognizes Ghana's journey to self-reliance and the Ghana Beyond Aid agenda, which outlines a vision for Ghana to reduce dependence on foreign assistance and mobilize domestic resources to finance the nation's development priorities. In line with this vision, USAID will increasingly shift its focus from service delivery to a systems strengthening approach; including improving governance, financing, and monitoring of WASH service delivery. USAID/Ghana will continue to leverage the expertise, market potential, and financial commitment of the private sector to increase investment in low-cost, quality WASH products and services.

⁷ Ghana Statistical Service. 2010 Population and Housing Census Summary Report of Final Results; Ghana Statistical Service: Accra, Ghana, 2012

Program Components

USAID's new behavior-led, integrated Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) focuses on motivating primary actors (i.e. government, the private sector, and citizens) to define and address Ghana's challenges through strengthened systems, accountability, and inclusive development. USAID's new WASH investments will focus on strengthening local systems to effectively deliver quality WASH services and stimulate increased partnerships between the GoG and the private sector.

WASH programming will be primarily in rural areas, rural growth centers, and urbanizing towns, as these areas represent opportunities to close the equity gap and help the GoG meet its WASH targets. USAID will make strategic investments to advance gender equality and women's empowerment in WASH decision-making and management.

The USAID/Ghana Water and Development High Priority Country Plan will focus on the following areas:

Governance and Policy: Existing policies, such as the National Environmental Sanitation Policy, do not sufficiently leverage the expertise, financial commitment, and market investment potential of the private sector in sanitation. Similarly, the water sector requires the development and implementation of policies clarifying the roles and authorities of national government, local authorities, formal private sector actors, and formal/informal small water enterprises.⁸ USAID/Ghana investments will support revision and implementation of WASH policies, including carrying out routine audit services towards more transparent and accountable service.

Service Delivery: USAID/Ghana will play a facilitative role between central and local government, and private entities to pilot new public-private partnership models and facilitate increased engagement between the central and local governments, private sector actors, and civil society. USAID/Ghana will also help local authorities to improve WASH service delivery, including piloting new management models, such as delegated management contracts, aggregated community-based management or private operator models. Investments in service delivery will strengthen sector governance and financing, increase sustainable access and use of sanitation, promote the practice of key hygiene behaviors, and increase sustainable access to safe drinking water as per Development Results 1, 2 and 3 of the USAID Water and Development Plan. These improved WASH services will leave Ghana better prepared for future infectious disease outbreaks.

Financing: USAID will help the GoG to adopt improved financing models for quality WASH services. Building on past successes, USAID will engage local governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to develop affordable, quality WASH products and services that enable citizens to adopt improved sanitation and hygiene practices. Willingness to pay, and thus citizen behaviors, will be important revenue raising considerations. Expansion or learning from existing market-based approaches, new technologies, and low-cost but aspirational products in both the sanitation⁹ and water sectors may also improve aspects of governance and finance. USAID will provide technical assistance to improve tariff collection efficiency, reductions in non-revenue water, and customer feedback

8 Rural Water Technical Brief. USAID Water and Development Technical Series. 2020. <https://www.globalwaters.org/resources/assets/usaidthatwateranddevelopmenttechnicalseriesruralwaterservices>

9 Such as the Digni-Loo: <https://medium.com/usaidthatwateranddevelopmenttechnicalseriesruralwaterservices/innovative-ghanaian-latrine-makes-sanitation-aspirational-e51179ca7fb0>

mechanisms to improve the quality and reliability of water service delivery. Data-informed decisions on area-wide sanitation approaches and application of targeted subsidies will ensure durable gains in sanitation.¹⁰ These investments will contribute to Development Result 1 “Strengthen Sector Governance and Financing” of the USAID Water and Development Plan.

Social and Behavior Change: USAID/Ghana will continue social and behavior change approaches, particularly the community-led total sanitation approach, to sustain and reinforce basic hygiene practices, while expanding access to improved WASH services. Quality water services (i.e. accessible public taps and reliable infrastructure) and innovative social and behavior change approaches will save time for women and families, enabling and encouraging the consistent adoption of hygiene practices. In the health sector, USAID supports district management teams and front-line health workers to adopt practices to reduce coronavirus infection risk during routine services. USAID will continue to build on these interventions through the COVID-19 recovery period and beyond to strengthen health facilities’ ability to reduce clinic-associated infections and antimicrobial resistance, and to increase their ability to manage and control disease outbreaks. Specific measures include ensuring the existence, upkeep, and use of handwashing facilities and waste management systems, as well as the following of routine cleaning protocols. These interventions contribute to increasing sustainable access and use of sanitation and the practice of key hygiene behaviors, and sustainable access to safe drinking water as per Development Results 2 and 3 of the USAID Water & Development Plan. These measures are key to increasing Ghana’s capacity to prevent, control and mitigate disease outbreaks such as COVID-19.

Relationship to related/linked development priorities

The approaches articulated in this plan advance the U.S. Government’s Global Water Strategy, the Agency’s Ending Preventable Child and Maternal Deaths strategy, the Feed the Future Initiative, and the USAID/Ghana CDCS. USAID will concentrate WASH investments in Ghana’s five northern regions, where 75 percent of the country’s extreme poor reside and experience the worst development challenges. WASH investments will also target the 17 districts in four of the five northern regions, which comprise the Feed the Future Zone of Influence and where USAID will concentrate investments across the portfolio to achieve its Development Objective 3 “Accelerated development in Northern Ghana”.¹¹ In the Zone of Influence, WASH interventions will benefit the same populations as those targeted by nutrition, maternal and child health, and economic growth activities, resulting in these households’ improved resilience and wellbeing.

Budget and Mechanisms

The plan is costed based on prior year resources still available for programming and the FY 2020 estimated allocation of \$10.5 million. The Mission is designing several new awards, including a Fixed-Amount Reimbursement Award to the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development that will administer grants to the 17 target districts to implement WASH and other related, programmatic objectives. The main implementing mechanism is WASH for Health, a bilateral cooperative agreement that started February 6, 2015 and is scheduled to end Sep-

10 Rural Sanitation Technical Brief. USAID Water and Development Technical Series. 2020. <https://www.globalwaters.org/resources/assets/usaaid-water-and-development-technical-series-rural-sanitation-services>

11 Yendi, Mion, Karaga, Gushiegu, Nanton, Sagnarigu (Northern); East Mamprusi, Mamprugu Moagduri (North East); Bawku Municipal, Bawku West, Garu, Tempane (Upper East); Daffiama Bussie Issa, Nawdoli-Kaleo, Sissala East, Sissala West, Wa East (Upper West)

tember 30, 2020. The \$24,022,171 award is implemented in the Northern, North East, Savannah, Central, Western and Volta and Oti regions. The Mission is in the process of designing a new WASH activity.

Other related USAID-funded programming

Feed the Future: USAID/Ghana will work across different sectors and water users in order to contribute to the USAID Water & Development Plan Development Result 4: Improving the management of water resources. Interventions such as climate-smart agriculture and more efficient uses of water resources will help local communities better manage water use. Promoting small-scale irrigation, especially using renewable energy, will help farmers efficiently grow their produce and conserve water resources. Businesses can also apply to the West Africa Trade and Investment Hub for funds to improve water management for agricultural production and processing.

Power Africa: The USAID/Ghana Power Africa program will improve the sustainability of the electricity distributors, while highlighting to the public that clean water services are not free. Power Africa is also introducing technologies in Ghana to help businesses and farmers use water more productively and efficiently, like solar irrigation, solar drying, and solar energy for water pumps.

V. STAKEHOLDER COORDINATION

USAID will continue to engage with WASH stakeholders, including UNICEF, the World Bank, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies, and the Community Water and Sanitation Agency, through existing platforms, such as the bi-monthly WASH sector donor meeting and the national WASH sector-wide coordination meetings. USAID will also continue to coordinate closely with the Economic/Political sections of the U.S. Embassy and Peace Corps on environmental health issues. The USAID/Ghana Mission also has a Nutrition, Food Security, and WASH coordination group that meets monthly to facilitate stakeholder linkages across sectors.