



Report on NCPD Workshop on Mainstreaming Disability Issues in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Services

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List of Abbreviations

AVRL	Aqua Vitens Rand Limited
CBHVs	Community Based Hygiene Volunteers
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CWSA	Community Water and Sanitation Agency
DPOs	Disabled Persons Organisation
EU	European Union
GFD	Ghana Federation of the Disabled
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCPD	National Council on Persons with Disability
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
PWDs	Persons with Disability
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Organisation
WAG	WaterAid Ghana
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WATSAN	Water and Sanitation
WC	Water Closet
WHO	World Health Organisation

BACKGROUND

Over the past 5 years Ghana has made considerable progress in putting in place the necessary policy frameworks and legislation to address the needs of people with disabilities in all aspects of life and development. Ghana passed a “Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715)” in August 2006, an Act to provide equal opportunities for Ghanaians with disabilities across economic, social and political dimensions. Section 41 of the Act provides for the establishment of the National Council on Persons with Disability (NCPD), and this was implemented in 2009. The mandate of the NCPD among others is to propose and evolve policies and strategies to enable persons with disability enter and participate in the mainstream of the national development process. In line with this mandate, the NCPD is embarking on efforts to dialogue with stakeholders at the frontline of delivering public services such as Water, Sanitation, education and health on how to improve the disability friendliness of public services. This one-day workshop was outlined to meet stakeholders in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)sector to share experiences on the extent to which issues of disability have been mainstreamed in sector policies, strategies and implementation guidelines, and more importantly on how service providers are translating these polices and guidelines into practice after the passage of the Act 715

The workshop begun with a self introductory session, followed immediately with an overview of the workshop programme, led by the facilitator Mr. Patrick Apoya.

OPENING SESSION

The opening session started with an introduction of the chairperson for the workshop, Mr. Charles Appiagyei, a board member of Action Aid Ghana and the chair of the National Disability Network, by Ms. Mavis Nakwor.



Chairperson’s opening remarks

In his opening remarks, Mr. Charles Appiagyei, stated that water is life health and development and rights issues. He said since we are talking about disability which is a development and human rights issue we allude to service providers to extend services that are related to development processes.

He said the National Disability Policy talks about mainstreaming the needs of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in development processes by 2020, which is

about a decade away. Referring to frameworks like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), health, water and poverty, the Convention on Human Rights, and universal declarations, right to life and to water services, he said they all pointed to full participation and access of PWDs.

Mr. Appiagyei said talking about access and accessibility is not just “how to get in there, but also talks about the technology that relates to the access – how permissive the technology is, and how closer, in terms of proximity, that the service delivery also is.”

He also talked about access to information by PWDs regarding where the accessible services are. Quoting an NGO – Wealth, he said “According to Wealth 2005 ‘water and sanitation services can’t ignore the issue of persons with disabilities for much longer.’”

The chairperson said the knowledge and skills of water and sanitation services could play a vital role in making ostensive in the physical environment and in the service delivery approaches to promote all inclusiveness services and access to persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.

He stressed that the water and sanitation sector should include persons with disabilities because the development agendas and Development projects of water and sanitation services would not be equitably shared, unless the needs of persons with disability have been factored in the services provision.

Reiterating that the issue is developmental and human rights, he said “if water is life, then everybody must have access to life.” “If sanitation precipitates health and we say health is wealth, and everybody wants to be wealthy and healthy, persons with disability out not to be excluded,” he added.



He opined that the services that need to be provided only need a little modification or retrofitting sometimes and does not need a special skill that will factor in the persons living with disabilities.

Mr. Appiagyei continued that a little knowledge from persons with disability on what their specific needs are could help engineers come up with modifications in designs.

SOLIDARITY MESSAGES

The chairperson’s opening remarks was followed by solidarity messages from the NCPD, WaterAid Ghana and the Ghana Federation of the Disabled.

Delivering NCPD's solidarity message on behalf of the Council's Chairman, Mr. Andrew Okaikoi, Victor Larbi, also a member of NCPD, said the council was in the process of actualising the provisions of the Disability Act.

He said when this is done it will make people understand and become aware that disability is part and parcel of the way of life, is a fact of life and that it could be anybody, adding that according to the experts, everybody has a form of disability.

Mr. Victor Larbi thanked WaterAid and all the other stakeholders present, saying their presence at the workshop showed their immense support to the work of the council. He added that "One of the ways to resource ourselves is by way of collaborative effort as has been done with WaterAid."

Message from WaterAid Ghana

The solidarity message from WaterAid was delivered by the Head of Programmes, Mr Jesse Kofi Danku.

He said "WaterAid has a vision of a world where everybody has access to water, sanitation and hygiene services," adding that, WAG was very excited when NCPD indicated they were going to hold a workshop to push forward an agenda operational to everybody.

He said their involvement with the workshop started from that point, and that they had not regretted partnering NCPD.

The Programmes Manager said "When we talk of everyone having access to sanitation, it presupposes that everyone means everyone; there should be no exclusion," and it is in line with this that WaterAid Ghana (WAG) has a thematic area on equity and inclusion, to ensure that whatever intervention in its policies includes everybody such as the vulnerable, the marginalised such as persons with disabilities.

He said it is therefore "good for us to create a platform for others to brainstorm and come out with workable solutions," adding "we think that the challenges that confront the sector are enormous and cannot be tackled by any individual organisation," which calls for synergies and collaboration from other partner organisations.

WAG's Head of Programmes said it is in this vein that WAG collaborated with the NCPD to organise the workshop.

Quoting from the World Bank World Development Report of 2006 on Equity and Development, he said; "Inequality of opportunities both within and among nations sustains extreme deprivation, results in wasted human potentials and often roots in prospects of overall prosperity and economic growth."

He added that the process of inclusion is not just about improving access, but also supporting people, including those who are discriminated against or marginalised, and that they will engage in processes to ensure their rights are recognised.



“WaterAid believes both organisations are doing a lot in the sector, but it is possible that our efforts are not enough,” he alluded. He added that it is thus good to hear from the people who are living with disability and that most often in their plans, organisations think for PWDs.

WAG assured NCPD of their support and urged other partner organisations to join in to push forward the agenda of targeting everybody in the provision of WASH services in order to achieve the MDG target of halving people without access to water, sanitation and hygiene services by 2015.



Ghana Federation of the Disabled:

On their part, the Ghana Federation of the Disabled, which is an umbrella organisation of all PWD movements, thanked the NCPD and WAG for making the workshop a reality.

Speaking on behalf of the Federation, Mrs. Lilian Bruce Lyle(a PWD herself), Chief Director, Ministry of Chieftaincy and Culture expressed the hope that the platform would be an opportunity for all gathered to share ideas and experiences and also learn more.

Speech Delivered by Minister of Employment and Social Welfare:

After a snack break, a speech was delivered to the workshop on behalf of the Minister of Employment and Social Welfare, Hon. Enoch Tei Mensah, by Mr Ofori

Addo

The Minister said that there was the need to engender efforts to ensure that persons with disability are part of development, bemoaning that in spite of the diversity of their population, persons with disability are still underrepresented in development efforts, which is why the problems they face today must be a concern for all.

Reiterating government’s commitment to ensuring that persons living with disability do not encounter challenges of having to live at the margins of human existence, the Minister said the problems of persons with disability are human rights issues.

He explained that, that was the reason for the enactment of the Persons with Disability Act by Parliament in 2006, Act 715, to provide a legal framework to mainstream disability issues in Ghana.

“The Act is a legal response to the constitutional provision contained in article 29 of the constitution of Ghana,” he stressed.

He added that it was to further demonstrate government’s commitment that President Mills inaugurated the National Council on Persons with Disability, to play a lead role towards implementing the provisions contained in the Persons With Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715).

He assured that government is not reluctant to ratify international human rights instruments that recognise the rights of PWDs and that although Ghana has not ratified the UN convention on the rights of Persons with Disability, “plans are underway to ensure that the country ratifies and/or adopts this convention and its optional protocol.”

The Minister added that “As one of the only international instruments that emphasises on international development cooperation through the transfer of technical assistance, technological and experience sharing, as well as economic assistance, government will definitely be interested, since it will enhance the speedy implementation of the Disability Act.”

He asserted that for government to achieve the objective of ensuring an all-inclusive society there is the need for collaboration with stakeholders like non-governmental organisations and all other agencies whose services directly affect persons with disability, as government alone cannot provide the needed enthusiasm for disability mainstreaming in Ghana.

“Mainstreaming cannot take place until development organisations incorporate issues of disability in their policy frameworks or development planning to ensure that PWDs become active participants of development processes. In doing so, the services provided by development organisations should be accessible to persons with disabilities,” he stated.

Mr. E. T. Mensah stressed that even though the availability of WASH services answers Millennium goal seven of ensuring environmental sustainability “we cannot claim to be working towards achieving this goal if these services are not accessible to all persons.”

“It is important that when designing these services such as public toilets and mechanised boreholes, issues of disability are integrated into the designs, otherwise we will be marginalising PWDs and defeating the purpose of holistic development, which is the emphasis of development organisations like those in WASH services,” he emphasised.

He urged organisations not to see themselves as doing a favour to PWDs by integrating disability issues into their development planning, but instead see

difficulties for PWDs accessing the services as a development lapse which needs to be addressed.

Presentations:

There were three presentations in all – the first by the NCPD, second by the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) and then lastly by WAG, followed by the sharing of experiences by some stakeholder organisations.

NCPD Presentation



The NCPD's presentation, which was delivered by a member of the council, Bonchel Duut A., focused on the NCPD's mandate and its functions.

He said the council, which was established under the Disability Act 2006, Act 715, has the overall objective of evolving and proposing policies and strategies to ensure that persons with disability enter and participate in the

mainstream of national development process.

He said the specific objectives and functions of the council include:

- Monitoring and evaluating disability policies and programmes;
- Formulating strategies for broad-based inter-sectoral, interdisciplinary involvement and participation in the implementation of the national disability policy;
- Producing an organisational manual on the operations of the Council and its secretariat;
- Coordinating disability activities; and
- Advising the Ministry on disability issues and submitting to the Minister, proposals for appropriate legislation on disability.

He explained the rationale of the workshop thus:

“When considering the provision of water and sanitation (WATSAN) services and facilities, persons with disability have been given very little consideration.

Where disability legislation ensuring equal access to programmes and services exist, they are hardly reflected in WATSAN policy and strategy.

The figures are staggering –, WHO estimates that about 35,000 people die each day from water related diseases and over a billion people do not have access to safe drinking water in the dry season. What we must not lose sight of is that among these numbers are disabled people and other very vulnerable members of society.”

Bonchel continued that achieving MDG 7, which is to halve by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation, will only be an illusion unless concrete and unrelenting efforts are made to address access to water supply and sanitation for persons with disability.

He gave the probable reasons why disability is missing from WATSAN Services as service providers not being aware of the problem, probably aware of the problem but do not know what to do or the misconception that persons with disability will require special facilities that are often expensive to procure or construct.

To mainstream WATSAN services and facilities he suggested the following:

- Include people with disabilities in the research, design, implementation and evaluation of WATSAN projects. For facilities that are already in place, disability audits by persons with disability themselves will go a long way to help reduce barriers in place.
- Ensure a strong relationship between disability organisations/service providers and WATSAN service providers to ensure inclusion of persons with disabilities in WATSAN projects.
- Recognise that the needs of persons with disabilities can be met in mainstream programmes by only minor changes at minimal cost.
- WATSAN service providers may have to develop disability sensitive indicators for their industry and put measures in place to ensure compliance.

On the other hand, he disclosed the consequences of the lack of clean water that have been documented.

He said WHO estimates that six million people worldwide are blind due to trachoma, while another 150 million people are in need of treatment. The condition is common where people live in overcrowded conditions with limited access to safe water for washing of face and hands, he said.

He gave another example as polio, which leads to paralysis of essential muscles – a major cause of mobility impairments. The virus is spread through fecal contaminated water or food.

Presentation by CWSA



The presentation by the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) which was done by Theodora Adomako-Adjei, an Extension Services Coordinator, was on the topic - **DISABILITY MAINSTREAMING IN WASH.**

The presentation included the following statements:

- ❖ CWSA is just a facilitator. Implementation is done by the private sector.
- ❖ CWSA promotes household latrines as well as institutional latrines.
- ❖ Hygiene promotion is also done by CWSA as well as Community/Participation.
- ❖ CWSA recently reviewed guidelines.
- ❖ Design of any facility depends on function that facility is to perform and should be controlled by functional specification and (2), the user of the facility and any special needs he/she may have.
- ❖ Facilities must not only consider people with limb disabilities.

Touching on the provisions for guidelines/standards, Theodora Adomako-Adjei said for sanitation facilities, the nature of the disabilities to have in mind imply:

- Ease of access and exit, especially for those with physical disabilities who are also with wheel chairs (wide entrances, wide rooms for ease of movement).
- Support to physically disabled people to hoist themselves onto the sanitary facility (This implies side support on side walls fixed to the floors on either side of the sanitary facility).

She continued that for some disabilities, the design of the sanitary facilities should also preferably be raised like WC, even for dry on-site latrines, so that sightless people do not accidentally put a foot in the squat hole.

For others, a flat squat hole will be easier for them to use if they have sight, she said, adding that hand washing facilities should be easily accessible for dry on site latrines, while small children with disabilities may need extra help from adults.

The CWSA representative listed barriers to mainstreaming as:

Technical Barriers which consists of:

- Inadequate technical know-how;
- Absence of designs, standards and technology options for water and sanitation facilities;
- Non availability of materials & skilled labour to develop appropriate technology; and
- Geographical location.

Financial Barriers made up of:

- New designs/Modifications/adaptations of disability friendly facilities and programmes requiring more funding; and
- Lack of low cost technologies and materials.

Implementation Barriers consisting of:

- Low priority/commitment; and
- Non enforcement of provisions for the protection and promotion of the right of disable.

Social cultural Barriers:

- Exclusion and Social stigmas and
- Social burden.

The consequences of such barriers, she said includes:

- Dependence on others for water and sanitation facilities and services which affects morale and self esteem;
- High risk of infections- due to unsuitable latrine designs; and
- Exclusion from water and sanitation activities which also results in lost opportunities and lack of progress for PWDs.

For the way forward, Ms. Adomako-Adjei enumerated the following:

- **Sensitization at all levels** - household based, community, district regional and national education to increase understanding and generate interest in disability issues;
- Change in attitudes towards disability issues;
- **Advocacy- Demand for Positive action** - to make disability issues as critical as other development issues;

- **Clear Direction-** well developed policies, guidelines, standards, designs and drawings, strategies;
- **Knowledge and skill on appropriate technology**
- **Financial supporting system**
 - Special provisions/allocations- target “ disabled projects”- feasibility to ensure needs are covered;
 - External & internal support- Cost sharing models- between multiple agencies and stakeholders;
- **Local innovation-** The use of local materials facilitates increased ownership, reduces costs and makes facilities sustainable.
- **Coordination and collaboration**
- To ensure maximisation of resources, avoid duplications, complement efforts, share experiences for better or improved services
- **Creating inclusive environment**
 - To bring about active participation of persons with disability in all stages of water and sanitation programmes from promotion to post implementation;
 - To offer PWDs a platform and a voice, involve them in major decisions, community processes, meetings and training.

The CWSA Extension Services Coordinator concluded that Persons with disability are part of the society, disability issues are national/communal issues and not personal issues and that the focus should be a shift from exclusion to inclusion.

Presentation by WAG

The presentation by WaterAid Ghana was done by Destina Samani, a programme officer in charge of the Northern project for WAG and had as its heading, “Water and Sanitation Sector NGOs and the Reality of Mainstreaming Disability Issues in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Practice.

She stated that there are currently 2.5million persons with disabilities in Ghana, of whom 70% are poor (WHO, 2006) 80% according to the International Labour Organisation are unemployed, while 97% lack formal education/skills, because they have not been consciously included in development efforts.

Ms. Samani said despite the numbers of PWDs, they are currently not considered in most of the MDG targets, indicators and are rarely mentioned in country reports, adding that WaterAid's vision of a world where everyone has access to WASH will not be achieved unless PWDs are brought into the development mainstream.

"Water Aid's mission of reducing poverty through the transformation of lives will also be impossible. The MDG target of halving poverty by 2015 will not be reached if PWDs are left out," she added.

According to her, it is for the above reasons that WaterAid has since developed a language policy and is in the process of developing an E & I policy informed by an EI framework to ensure that it properly targets PWDs and other marginalised groups.

She urged PWDs to move away from the perception "we can't do it, we want you to do it for us," arguing that independence of PWDs was very vital.

Ms. Samani grouped WaterAid's activities to incorporate disability issues in WASH services into four global aims thus:



Global Aim 1

- Conducting a baseline to map out PWDs for proper targeting;
- Our project life cycle processes ensures inclusive, targeting of PWDs;
- We seek to ensure that our WASH services/designs are appropriate to their

needs (Simple but effective and sustainable);

- We seek to empower the PWDs to know and demand their rights, while carrying out their responsibilities;
- Facilitate communities' recognition and respect for including PWDs in development processes and their leadership roles.

Global Aim 2

- Identify and collaborate with DPOs/NGOs to promote and develop PWDs' capacity to demand accountability from service providers;
- Identify gaps and build capacity of all our projects implementing teams on inclusion of PWDs;
- Support the sector to identify minimum inclusive WASH standards & monitoring indicators.

Global Aim 3:

- Our development programmes will seek to raise awareness on disability issues with duty bearers, communities and society against the social stigma;
- Support PWDs to identify and advocate against Social, attitudinal, physical and institutional barriers that deny them access to WASH, education, health etc.;
- Will document best practices and learning from our work and use it to influence other sectors & policies on inclusive development;
- We plan to support a research into causes and consequences of excluding PWDs from WASH and impact on poverty.

Global Aim 4:

- Develop leadership and people management to value diversity and promote inclusive practices;
- We seek to be inclusive in recruitment processes;
- We are striving to make our physical offices and other equipment/facilities accessible to PWDs;
- Shared understanding of equity and inclusion as rights based approaches;
- Our policies address equity and inclusion in a way appropriate to country context.

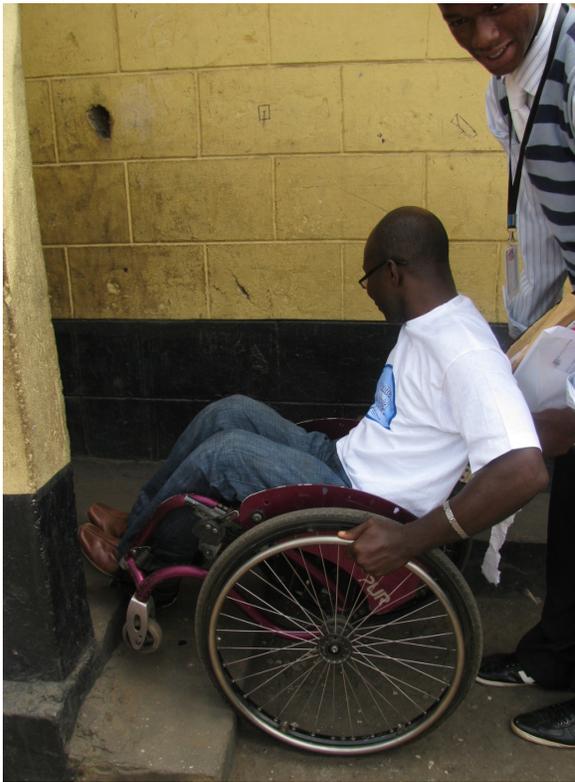
On the way forward, WAG said it will conduct a national study to understand who is excluded from WASH, causes of exclusion and impact of lack of WASH and climate change on their lives.

It also said the outcome of the forum will lead to the development of simple, low cost, inclusive designs of water taps, latrines, hand basin, shower etc and help them conduct a cost-benefit analysis for future costing of modified designs.

WAG further submitted that the outcome of the forum will form the basis for the NCPD to carry out one of its mandates of monitoring; auditing and evaluating WASH projects and also assist WaterAid improve upon its documentation and reporting.

Sharing of Experiences: inappropriate WASH facilities





There was also the sharing of experiences by sector NGOs such as World Vision Ghana's Rural Water Project, Church of Christ and New Energy.

The Church of Christ, which was the first to share its experiences, asked that effective participation of all groups in sanitation and hygiene events be ensured.

The church also recommended the following:

- Promoting community participation in project design for communities and the conscious inclusion of people with disability;
- Designing and constructing disability friendly water facilities (Hand pump, Concrete Pad and Aprons etc.);
- Constructing sanitation facilities that are disability friendly;
- Conscious inclusion of People with Disability in the formation of WatSan Committees, CBHVs, Pump Care takers, Water and Sanitation Development Boards, School Health Clubs etc.

The Church of Christ said it made the recommendations:

- To encourage sustainable monitoring and evaluation of sanitation facilities in schools and communities in relation to disability;
- To train the Community Based Hygiene Volunteers (CBHVs) in advocating for disability friendliness /inclusiveness facilities in our schools and communities among others; and
- To promote the translation of disability policies into practices in WASH services in schools and communities.

For his part, Napari Mami, who spoke on behalf of New Energy, alluded to the importance of the workshop, citing that both New Energy and WaterAid Ghana are organisations that have expressed worry about the lack of proper policies in disability issues in the WASH sector.

He divulged that his organisation is involved in the construction of institutional and household latrines as well as hand dug wells, boreholes and mechanisation of those boreholes, adding that in their construction they factor in how those with disability would be able to use those facilities and include features such as railings to support the PWDs when they want to use toilets.

Napari Mami was also bemused that even lorry stations are built without recourse to PWDs and asked that it should be made a policy that those who construct facilities to be used by the public do not neglect those with challenges, for equal access and use.

He also recommended that engineers and contractors who do not have the requisite designs must involve PWDs in order to incorporate designs that will make the facilities beneficial to them.

The last to share its experience, World Vision's representative stated that all representations had buttressed the point that categories of PWDs were not considered in the provision of WASH services.

He thus enjoined participants to take all sections of society into consideration when putting up water and sanitation facilities, to enable every disabled person to use such facility. "When we are designing we should take everybody into consideration," he said.

He advised that "Because none of us knows what holds for him or her in future, when we are designing we have to consider everybody at stake, so that we will all have a fair share of the facility."

Questions & Comments:

After the presentations, participants posed questions and made contributions ranging from the lack of consideration for people living with disability in the construction of buildings, sanitation facilities such as toilets, to erecting platforms for bore holes or water pumps without incorporating designs that will make them accessible to the physically challenged.

The participants also passionately discussed the construction of inappropriate and very steep aprons for PWDs where they are even considered in any construction, because their inputs are not sought when such facilities are being put in place, after which the participants engaged in group work.

Setting the tone for the question time after the second presentation of the day, Nicholas Halm of the Ghana Association of The Blind stated that:

- ✓ The Disability Act provides for PWDs and not physically challenged;

- ✓ Moratorium of 10 years now left with five years and that there is the need to address pertinent issues within the set time of the moratorium; and that
- ✓ The NCPD should have informed all to make PWDs part of society.
- ✓ The second contributor, who cited the inadequacy of a Mankessim toilet facility so far as PWDs are concerned, stated that persons must understand what they are doing at the designing stage and involve designers.
- ✓ In the view of Bismarck Parker, Waste Wise Ghana, collaboration must be well looked at between CWSA and the NCPD. He admonished that in spite of the topic under discussion, able-bodied people must be of assistance to PWDs at WASH facilities.

Abdul Aziz Mohammed, Ghana Disability Association, for his part, spoke of humiliation at public facilities and stated in view of that he cannot get water for himself whether a facility is there or not or use a public toilet.

When he had his turn, Selorm Anagla, Share Care Ghana asked if rainwater is filtered before storage when it is harvested from roof tops.

While seeking more clarification on access to water and sanitation facilities and how they could be used, Emmanuel Addae of Water & Sanitation Platform suggested that wheelchairs be modified to take water and other luggage to ease the dependence of PWDs on others.

For her part, Mrs. Lilian Bruce Lyle suggested the use and study of sign language as part of mainstreaming to assist PWDs in other areas such as education and to afford those with speech or hearing disability to be able to send out their concerns and be heard.

She also also assured that PWDs are not very difficult to be managed. “Just make available the requisite facilities and we will take care of ourselves,” she said.

Responses

- Bonchel Duut A. (Member, NCPD), said the council was ready to play an advocacy role on behalf of all organisations which work with PWDs. He added that as part of their advocacy role, the NCPD will be leaning on some of the stakeholder organisations present so that together they will be able to achieve the mainstreaming agenda.
- Another Board member of NCPD added that the council had so far had interactions with the UNDP, EU and visited Canada and the United States “purely to interact with how others are doing it and how they can also assist us in what we want to do.”

- He added that currently the NCPD are surveying the work that needs to be done in order to see the way clearer for the work that is at stake, so that when they put up a policy it will be universal.
- Answering the question on the quality and storage of harvested rainwater, Theodora Adomako-Adjei of the CWSA explained how the harvesting mechanism works, stressing that they take quality issues very seriously.

Chair's comments

Adding his voice to the design of toilet facilities to accommodate PWDs, Mr. Charles Appiagyei said the door to a sanitation facility must not always be opened from outside to inside as is widely held, but must rather be opened from inside to outside so as to allow for privacy.

He reminded that the issue in mainstreaming disability issues in WASH services is that PWDs are so heterogeneous and not homogenous, so that the provision of facilities must be done such that it can serve all the different strands.

In view of that he said the various parameters and needs need to be discussed so that they are incorporated in various designs.

Mr. Ofori Addo, a participant, in his submission on inclusiveness, said it does not mean getting access to water in rooms as suggested by a contributor, but is about removing barriers to majority of PWDs to have access to services and opportunities.

He added that it does not mean everybody can have access to the facilities, as some are holed up indoors and have to be taken care of in their rooms, asking that what is needful is to find ways to reduce the barriers that PWDs encounter in accessing the services.

The Minister of Employment and Social Welfare Hon. E. T. Mensah, upon arrival later had these comments for participants:

Hon. E. T. Mensah stated that disability is not inability. "There is a thin line between the people with disability and those of us who claim we don't have," he said.

He said there was the need for advocacy for people living with disabilities, saying whereas provision has been made for PWDs elsewhere, they have been neglected in Ghana. "When things don't work at the social welfare ministry we change names instead of tackling the issue of social welfare seriously," he lamented.

The Minister for Social Welfare said there should be a paradigm shift from business as usual to tackling the real issues, commending organisers of the workshop.

He hinted of a disability walk to be organised by his ministry to create awareness of the needs of PWDs and urged participants to make the Disability Act relevant.

Second Round of Questions & Comments:

During the second round of questions and comments, Mrs. Lilian Bruce Lyle said: “People think that just providing a ramp settles the disability issue. The gradient of some ramps is too steep and tiles slippery. A ramp without a rail is as dangerous as when there is no ramp. When it is about us we should be part of it so that we may tell you exactly how we want it to be.”

She said there is the need for advocacy to enable able persons understand their needs, chipping in that the department that needs to advise designers are ignorant themselves.

For Julius Akuaku, Ghana National Association of the Deaf however, the issue of concern was the management of Ghana’s water resources.

He cited residential areas such as East Legon, Kaneshie and Awudome in Accra and others where treated water is used for flowers, while other places like Teshie Nungua and Adenta, also in Accra, do not have access to potable water.

He thus suggested that resource persons be included at subsequent fora to enlighten participants on water recycling.

Another participant also called for the consideration of the deaf when passing on vital information such as shortage of water or closure of taps or halt in the rendering of other utility services, as they cannot hear when they are announced on mass media network.

For Ruth Odoi however, the issue of assistance for PWDs to access certain facilities was very paramount, as she had had a firsthand experience at the venue of the workshop, when she found it difficult to access the restaurant during lunch time because she could not descend a flight of stairs and could find no one to assist her.

Another contributor, Emmanuel recommended a sanitation market, to showcase the various types of sanitation facilities that can be friendly to any type of person, adding that such market must not just be sited in the capitals but all districts which will be able to choose the options that will best suit them.

On his part, a participant pointed out that the undue delays and stoppages that were experienced at the workshop as a result of anticipation of the minister’s coming could have been averted.

In his contribution, the Head of programmes for WAG, Jesse asked participants to consider the next step to take after the workshop, which is how to make proposals from the workshop work.

Action

In her submission, the representative of AVRL at the workshop was pleased that it had been very valuable as well as informative. She thus asked that the NCPD or PWDs must let them know what designs they need when they (AVRL) are on the field to provide services and that will be done.

It was subsequently agreed that any proposal from an individual can be sent to the association he or she belongs to, and then forwarded to the council for onward transmission to AVRL.

GROUP WORK

The group discussions centred on four major areas, which were divided among four groups. These were identifying gaps in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) delivery, proposing measures to address the gaps and proposing minimum indicators for monitoring the integration of disability issues in WASH services.

Other areas of discussion were identifying challenges to effective participation of people living with disabilities (PWDs) in planning, implementation and monitoring of WASH service delivery and proposing mechanisms or measures to make participation of PWDs more effective.

The rest were how civil service organisations (CSOs), NCPD and the media can collaborate to influence policies and practice on issues relating to disability, proposing four most pertinent issues for advocacy and outlining the methods for achieving the advocacy targets.

Group 1:



The first group, which was spearheaded by CWSA, identified gaps in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) delivery and proposed measures to address the gaps. It came up with the following:

Gaps:

- (1) Non-operationalisation of policy framework for the disabled;

Policies are made but not implemented and as a result issues are not addressed as stated on paper;

- (2) Poor Accessibility: Access to WASH facilities is limited by poor road networks, distance, location etc.

- (3) Design of WASH facilities;

- (4) Understanding disability issues: Policy makers lack understanding, hence do not appreciate the challenges faced by PWDs. This results in construction/building facilities that are not user friendly;
- (5) Weak Networking: Exclusion of PWDs and other stakeholders in WASH programmes.

Measures/Solutions:

- (1) Operationalisation of policy framework for the disabled;
- (2) Accessibility must be improved;
- (3) User friendly designs of facilities must be ensured;
- (4) Need for in-depth understanding of disability issues;
- (5) Inclusion of PWDs needed.

Group 2:



Group two, led by GFD, was tasked to propose minimum indicators for monitoring the integration of disability issues in WASH services. The group came up with the following:

- (1) An organisational policy on disability;
- (2) Nearness of the facility to the community;
- (3) Ramps and rails needed to guide PWDs in accessing a facility; and
- (4) Community bye-laws for operation.

Group 3:



The third group, which was led by WaterAid, identified challenges to effective participation of people living with disabilities (PWDs) in planning, implementation and monitoring of WASH service delivery and proposed mechanisms or measures to make participation of PWDs more effective.

- (1) The main challenge identified was the fact that PWDs are not involved during planning, while communication is lacking;
- (2) This, the group viewed was because people have the perception that PWDs cannot do it;
- (3) People lack ideas as to how to assist PWDs ie. There is limited technology;
- (4) PWDs exhibit inferiority complex and low self esteem due to stigmatisation. (For most of them, because their livelihood depends on others, they are not willing to voice out their ideas or challenge those who support them)
- (5) Government institutions do not support implementation of policies;
- (6) Prevailing standards do not encourage participation of PWDs, since their inputs are not considered.

Mechanisms/Measures:

- (1) PWDs should be empowered to be vocal and to be able to participate in community-led initiatives;
- (2) Community members should also be sensitised to assist people with disabilities;
- (3) Donor influence is very important;
- (4) Community concerns must be put into MoUs with partners;
- (5) Associations and networks of PWDs must be formed in all communities and their self esteem and capacities built;
- (6) Any decision in the WASH sector about PWDs must involve same;
- (7) Government should appoint PWDs to District Assemblies to motivate them to stand for electoral positions.

Group 4:



The last group, which was led by NCPD, looked at how civil service organisations (CSOs), NCPD and the media can collaborate to influence policies and practice on issues relating to disability, proposed four most pertinent issues for advocacy and outlined the methods for achieving the advocacy targets.

Collaboration between CSOs, NCPD & Media:

On the issue of collaboration between the three bodies, the group proposed the following:

- (1) Affirmative action must be targeted;
- (2) Special desks must be created for PWDs to tackle issues like gender and disability issues;
- (3) Information sharing.

Advocacy issues:

- (1) On the issues for advocacy, group four proposed access to services;
- (2) Awareness creation on disability issues;
- (3) Affirmative action;
- (4) Integration of PWDs in national development and
- (5) Enforcement of the tenets of the Disability Act.

With regards to the methods for achieving the advocacy targets, the group suggested thus:

- (1) Institutions like the media and individuals in service industry must be engaged in consultations;
- (2) Using the media to disseminate information of specific issues on disabilities – The use of national and international days to drum home the message with pictorial representation;
- (3) There must be engagement with the disability groups and specific issues regarding the PWDs can be addressed through activities like a health walk;
- (4) Bottom up approach – grass root participation like the election of assembly members and
- (5) The guidelines on the Disability Act must be obeyed.

Vote of Thanks:

In her vote of thanks, Mrs. Bruce Lyle commented on the conspicuous absence of Members of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Social Welfare, and asked that they be included in subsequent deliberations.

Appendixes:

Appendix A: Concept Note

Stakeholder Workshop on Mainstreaming Issues of Disability in WASH SERVICES IN GHANA

Introduction/Background

Over the past 5 years Ghana has made considerable progress in putting in place the necessary policy frameworks and legislation to address the needs of people with disabilities in all aspects of life and development. Ghana passed a “Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715)” in August 2006, an Act to provide equal opportunities for Ghanaians with disabilities across economic, social and political dimensions. Section 41 of the Act provides for the establishment of the National Council on Persons with Disability (NCPD), and this was implemented in 2009. The mandate of the NCPD among others is to propose and evolve policies and strategies to enable persons with disability enter and participate in the mainstream of the national development process. In line with this mandate, the NCPD is embarking on efforts to dialogue with stakeholders at the frontline of delivering public services such as Water, Sanitation, education and health on how to improve the disability friendliness of public services. A one-day workshop has been outlined to meet stakeholders in the WASH sector to share experiences on the extent to which issues of disability have been mainstreamed in sector policies, strategies and implementation guidelines, and more

importantly on how service providers are translating these policies and guidelines into practice.

Rationale

According to the World Health Organization, there are about 2.5 million people with disabilities in Ghana, of whom 70% are illiterate due to lack of educational access¹. Despite the passage of Act 715 (2006), the NCPD has noted little implementation. Many stakeholders appear not to be sufficiently informed about its provisions, and how to make their services conform to needs of PWDs. Public facilities and services continue to be disability unfriendly. Persons with disability cannot use most Public/institutional latrines in the country, including those that were most recently constructed. Among others, inappropriate designs and improper maintenance, especially in keeping the toilets clean are reasons commonly cited for this situation. The use of household toilets and water facilities constructed in rural areas is also challenging to PWDs in terms of distance and design. Given that policy makers and service providers all acknowledge the need to mainstream issues of disability into service provision, yet considerable gaps exist in terms of disability-friendly services on the ground, a meeting with all stakeholders will help identify the major constraints and measures to best address the problem.

Objectives of Workshop:

1. To provide information on people with disabilities (PWDs) with regard to WASH services, and the need to mainstream disability issues into service delivery at all levels.
2. Establish clear monitoring indicators and standards for service providers and recommend a framework for participatory monitoring of provider compliance with agreed standards for mainstreaming.

Workshop Design and Approach

The workshop will employ a combination of presentations, plenary discussions and group work to achieve its objectives. Two technical presentations will be featured, including an overview of the disability Act and a presentation from the Community Water and Sanitation Agency/Local government on the official policy/standards and practice on the ground regarding disability mainstreaming in service provision. One local and one international NGO

¹ NCPD, January 2010

engaged in service delivery will also share their experiences with regard to how they mainstream issues of disability in their policies, strategies and practice. Based on these presentations, participants will work in groups to propose a minimum set of standards for service providers to consider in the design, packaging and provisioning of services. The groups will also propose monitoring indicators and a common framework for monitoring the compliance of service providers to the agreed minimum standards.

Participation

About 80 participants from relevant government ministries, departments and agencies, NGOs, the private sector, organisations of people with disability, local government authorities and community representatives will attend the workshop.

Date: The date of the workshop is 19th April 2010.

Sponsors: The workshop is sponsored by Water Aid Ghana

Appendix B: Workshop evaluation summary

Item	Excellent (5)		Good (4)		Average (3)		Fair (2)		Poor (1)		Unanswered	Total values	Mean	Std. deviation
	Values	%	Values	%	Values	%	Values	%	Values	%				
Room setup and equipment	6	14.6	19	46.3	10	24.4	1	2.4	0	0	5	41	3.8333	.73679
The mix of presentations, exercises, participation and discussions	7	17.1	26	63.4	7	17.1	1	2.4	0	0	0	41	3.4878	.81000
The usefulness of the group	10	24.4	28	68.3	3	7.3	0	0	0	0	0	41	4.1707	.54325
The meals and tea break	5	12.2	15	36.6	14	34.1	3	7.3	2	4.9	2	41	3.4615	.99594
Accommodation arrangement	5	12.2	9	22	5	12.2	5	12.2	2	4.9	15	41	3.3846	1.23538

Content of workshop	12	29.3	25	61	2	4.9	0	0	0	0	2	41	4.2564	.54858
Usefulness of the information to participants' work	16	39	20	48.8	4	9.8	0	0	0	0	1	41	4.3000	.64847
The time allotted to ask and discuss questions	2	4.9	18	43.9	17	41.5	2	4.9	2	4.9	0	41	3.3902	.86250
The expertise of facilitator	13	31.7	22	53.7	4	9.8	0	0	0	0	2	41	4.2308	.62667
<i>How the topics / activities are organized</i>	6	14.6	22	53.7	10	24.4	1	2.4	1	2.4	1	41	3.7750	.83166

Appendix C: List of Participants

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

Attendance Sheet for Stakeholder Workshop on Mainstreaming Issues of Disability in WASH
SERVICES IN GHANA

April 19, 2010

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NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITY

Media Attendance Sheet for Stakeholder Workshop on Mainstreaming Issues of Disability in
WASH SERVICES IN GHANA

April 19, 2010

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