

# COMMUNIQUE

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**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE ANNUAL MOLE XXXIV WASH CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY THE COALITION OF NGOs IN WATER AND SANITATION (CONIWAS) AND PARTNERS FROM 30<sup>th</sup> TO 2<sup>nd</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 AT ROYAL COSBY HOTEL, JIRAPA, UPPER WEST REGION.**

## **THEME**

**BUILDING INCLUSIVE AND RESILIENT WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH) SYSTEMS TO REACH THE UNSERVED.**

## **PREAMBLE**

The Annual Mole WASH Conference is a CSO-led multi-stakeholder platform aimed at reviewing sector performance, influencing policies, removing barriers, and promoting access to sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene services.

The 4-day conference was opened by Hon. Dr. Freda Akosua Prempeh, Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources with solidarity messages from the World Bank Senior Water and Sanitation Specialist, Mr. Harold Esseku, 2023/24 Child Sanitation Diplomat, Miss Adjoa G. Appiah-Kubi

The opening session of the conference was chaired by representative of Chief of Sankana - Naa Pagrange Sakoe Morna III. The ranking and deputy ranking members of Parliament Works and Housing Committee attended conference. The theme address was delivered by the Director of Institute for Oil and Gas Study of University of Cape Coast, Prof. Simon A. Mariwah.

The conference, which discussed four sub-themes – WASH System Strengthening; Innovative Service Delivery Approaches; Equity and Inclusion in WASH Service Delivery; and Policies and Regulations in Service Delivery. Conference was attended by one hundred and eighty-five (185) participants drawn from Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Development Partners, CSOs, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, MMDAs, Academic and Research Institutions, Private Sector and the Media attended the conference.

## THE CALLS

**At the close of deliberations, Conference resolve as follows:**

### **A. SECTOR COORDINATION**

1. Conference recognizes the urgent need to ensure a coordinated approach to implement WASH programmes at all levels to ensure equitable and sustainable WASH services. CONFERENCE is calling on Development Partners and INGOs to co-ordinate their programmes and projects to ensure targeted and harmonized approaches in WASH delivery. This should be done between **January to November 2024**.
2. CONIWAS, with the support of partners, will initiate an inter-ministerial dialogue on WASH involving MSWR, MOH, MOE, MESTI, MOF, MLGDRD, and MoGCSP to ensure effective coordination of WASH Service delivery. We will also work on the platform to ensure implementation and compliance with the established minimum standards for WASH in Institutions. This will be done between **March to October 2024**.
3. CONIWAS will work with the MSWR to institute a peer review mechanism to ensure the effectiveness and impact of sector player interventions. This is to ensure accountability and catalyse our shared journey towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This will be done between **February and October 2024**

### **B. CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND EMERGENCIES**

4. Building Climate Resilient WASH infrastructure is critical to promote equitable service delivery. CONIWAS will liaise with the MSWR, MESTI, INGOs and research institutions to disseminate information and knowledge on climate resilient approaches in a holistic manner. Conference calls on the MSWR mobilize resources and implement its WASH emergency WASH Emergency Response plans during

emergencies. This will be done between **November 2023 and November 2024**.

5. CONIWAS will engage with our members and other sector players to identify the WASH priority areas on climate change to feed into the GH-Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). CONIWAS will continue to work with stakeholders to leverage WASH-focused NDCs to mobilize funding for scale-up of climate-smart initiatives. This will be done between **April and November 2024**.

### **C. SECTOR POLICIES AND REGULATION**

6. National Water and Environmental Sanitation Policies: Conference call on the MSWR to fast-track processes to complete and roll-out the revised National Water Policy and Environmental Sanitation policies by end of **March 2024(Water Policy) and October 2024 (Environmental Sanitation Policy)**.
7. Enforcement of laws, policies, and regulations at national and sub-national levels is critical for effective innovative service delivery. We call on the MSWR to develop/review guidelines (including licensing regime for small water and sanitation enterprises) and the private sector participation in WASH service delivery. CONIWAS will work with the SWE Alliance and other relevant groups to intensify the advocacy for government to create regulatory and support system that could bolster private sector investment and participation. This will be done between **February and October 2024**.
8. A clear PPP guideline will enhance the enabling environment and attract the needed additional investments into the WASH sector. CONIWAS will continue to engage the MSWR, MOF and Parliamentary Select Committee to ensure appropriate tax waivers on WASH inputs. This will be done between **March and October 2024**.
9. Illegal mining (Galamsey) and Sand winning are destroying freshwater bodies and threatening the survival of water utilities to supply safe water to customers. We call on MSWR, Ministry of Lands and Natural

Resources, WRC and other relevant MDAs to accelerate enforcement measures to stem the tide of illegal mining and sand winning and protect water bodies and freshwater resources. CONIWAS will also engage traditional authorities in heavy mining/sand winning communities across the Country to elicit their support to protect water bodies in their traditional areas. This will be done between **January and October 2024**.

#### **D. INNOVATION AND SCALE-UP**

10. There is the need to scale up innovative service delivery approaches. CONFERENCE call on Development Partners, INGOs and Private Sector to synthesize innovative approaches for scale up. Sustainable and equitable financing should be scale-up to cover the underserved and unserved. CONIWAS will collate and synthesize innovations and liaise with the MSWR to facilitate scale-up of innovations. This will be done between **February and October 2024**.

#### **E. EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

11. CONIWAS will facilitate WASH stakeholder dialogues on pro-poor financing mechanisms with deliberate focus on equity and inclusion in the WASH service delivery, especially equity issues on financing household toilet constructions. This will be done between **January and October 2024**.

Conference endorsed on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023.

Approved and issued by CONIWAS Executive Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 at ROYAL COSBY HOTEL (JIRAPA DUBAI).