






THE WATER USERS' ASSOCIATION INITIATIVE

Email for follow-up questions: bfaustina@gwcl.com.gh

BACKGROUND

The Low-income Customer Support Department (LICSD) of Ghana Water Limited (GWL) is committed to improving service delivery and customer relations in low-income urban communities (LIUCs). The department does so by involving Water Users' Associations (WUAs) in ensuring access to safe and affordable water in these areas. Since 2019, LICSD has helped establish over 44 WUAs in the Greater Accra and Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Areas. These WUAs act as intermediaries between GWL and the residents, with their formation being a result of collaborative projects with key partners, including the World Bank, UNICEF, and the Red Cross.

WHAT IS WUA?

The Water Users' Association (WUA) constitutes a voluntary non-profit organization, instigated and overseen by a consortium of water consumers within a given community. A "Water User" denotes an entity utilizing water provided by the Ghana Water Limited (GWL) for residential, commercial, or industrial applications. Given the voluntary nature of this association, its participants are required to demonstrate their commitment to advancing the community's development objectives pertaining to the provision and operational efficacy of water services.

WHAT PROCESS SHOULD BE FOLLOWED WHEN CONSTITUTING WUAs?

The Water Users' Association (WUA) is required to exhibit comprehensive representation of the entire community. Its membership should consist of a range between 8 to 12 individuals, with a deliberate emphasis on the inclusion of female participants, ideally in greater numbers. In instances where the community is of substantial size, the formation of multiple WUAs based on existing neighborhood divisions within the community is permissible.



WUAs ESTABLISHMENT

The subsequent steps delineate the protocol followed in the establishment of these WUAs.

- Engage Community Leadership
- Select Members
- Conduct Orientation
- Elect Executives
- Adopt Constitution
- Train WUA members
- Support and sustain WUAs

The establishment of the Water Users' Association (WUA) can be pursued through two distinct methods, which are as follows:

- Incorporating an already existing dynamic developmental entity.
- Creating a novel assembly of individuals (This may encompass Assembly members, Unit committees, Women Groups/Active Females within the Community, Standpipe Vendors, and various other Water Users).

WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF WUAs?

PROMOTION (PO1)

Lead process of demand promotion for new service connection to GWL pipe network

MOBILIZATION (PO2)

Mobilize community members for durbars and dialogues

LINKAGE (PO3)

Provide a link between community and the GWL that ensures that project interventions are genuinely benefiting the poor in the community

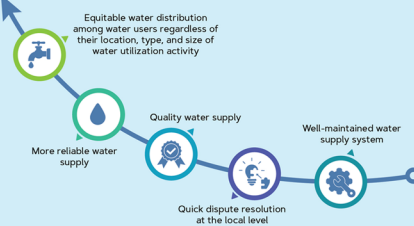
REPORTING (PO4)

Report irregular flow, leakages, faults and illegal connections to GWL district offices

EDUCATION (PO5)

Support water user education and hygiene promotion efforts

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ESTABLISHING WUAs?



WHAT ARE THE CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS OF WUAs?

The enhancement of the Water Users' Associations' (WUAs) capacity is imperative to enable their efficient operation. The ensuing subjects are recommended as fundamental for this purpose:

- **GWL Operations:** Incorporating aspects such as water sources, transmission, distribution, service lines, water quality, encroachment, and Non-Revenue Water management.
- **Water Resource Governance:** Addressing factors leading to water loss, their consequences, and appropriate preventive measures.
- **Competencies Essential for WUAs:** Encompassing stakeholder engagement techniques, effective communication skills, and proficiency in community mobilization strategies.
- **Meter Reading and Invoicing:** Involving varieties of metering instruments, tariffs across various service tiers, and the process of converting readings into bill statements.
- **Payment Mechanisms for Billing:** Incorporating mobile financial platforms and the GWL customer application.
- **Endurance of Water Users' Associations:** Covering executive roles and responsibilities, meeting protocols, formulating action plans, and provision of technical and financial assistance to WUAs.

SUSTAINING THE WUAs?

Upon the establishment of WUAs, it is imperative to ensure their continual functionality. The following key elements are essential for sustaining their operations:



SUSTAINING THE WUAs

1. Emphasizing the voluntary nature of membership from the inception phase.
2. Formal acknowledgment of WUAs by community members in regional communities.
3. Acknowledgment and support from GWL.
4. Development of a Comprehensive constitution to govern WUA operations.
5. Implementation of anti-leakage measures for WUA executive members.
6. Facilitation of training programs and on-the-job coaching for WUAs.
7. Provision of financial and technical assistance by GWL to resolve action plans.
8. Proactive sensitization of WUAs in collaboration with neighboring municipal assemblies.

GALLERY




■ A WUA Training Workshop at Gbetsile

■ WUA Members reading the meter during a practical session in Tegu community.

GALLERY







■ GWCL officers and WUA members of Kokrobite

■ WUA members of Abenwoha with some GWL staff

■ Some WUA members who supported organization of 2022 World Water Day in Moshie Zongo, Ashanti Region

■ Some WUA members of Tegu in a picture with Faustina Boachie (Centre), LICSD Chief Manager, GWL

■ WUA members at a tour of the GWL treatment facility in Weija, Accra