



GAMA-SWP AF News



IN THIS EDITION

- President Akufo-Addo commissions two sewerage facilities in GAMA.
- Minister commissions 38 modern school toilets in Kumasi.
- 63 more institutions in Accra get modern toilets; 75% progress in Kumasi.
- GAMA SWP connects piped water to 5,000 more households in project areas.



**A COMPLETE
TOILET AT**
GH¢1,200



FOREWORD

Very warm greetings from the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) and welcome to the final year of the current phase of the GAMA Sanitation and Water Project.

As anticipated, 2023 was a very action-packed year and in fact, served as the spine of the success of the entire project. This is because as at the beginning of that year, there were a lot of uncertainties surrounding the possibility of achieving project targets by the end of 2024, especially concerning provision of household toilets. Demand by target beneficiaries was slow, supply by sub-project implementers (contractors) was slow, post-COVID economic hardships in the country were dire, and in fact, there was a huge gap between the targets and the achieved.

Based on previous project implementation experiences, however, we were always sure of success; needing only to review, explore, and revise some of our implementation arrangements and strategies. Some of the new strategies have worked and we are super confident that come 31st December 2024, we will meet and possibly exceed our target for household toilets once again. Elsewhere in the Greater Accra Region, we have already exceeded our 12,000 household toilet targets as we have already provided 25% more.

At the beginning of 2023, halfway into the project implementation period, not a

single institutional toilet facility had been constructed. However, most of the software activities including school selection, facility designs, procurement activities, and environmental and social safeguard processes had largely been completed. As at the end of the year, construction of institutional toilets in GAMA had been completed with the targeted 30 facilities more than doubled! Work on the 129 target facilities in Kumasi was also 75% complete and hopefully they will be completed by the end of March 2024.

During the same year (2023), all the necessary social and environmental conditions were ripe enough to get the two sewerage systems at Ashaiman and Bankuman in the Greater Accra Region officially commissioned by no other person than the President of the Republic himself.

These successes, ladies and gentlemen, have come through nothing else but the commitment of all project staff, from MMAs to the PCU, support from the Honorable Sector Minister, Directors and staff of the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, and the ever-willing funding and technical support from the World Bank. These were achieved through review of household toilet promotion approaches and behaviour change communication campaigns, more staff time in communities, introduction of new sub-project implementers, admission of boundary communities into the project to qualify for household toilets, a massive team-building exercise at the beginning of the year, and several other factors including regular monitoring and support missions by the World Bank.

Alongside the hardware deliverables were institutional capacity building activities that spanned beyond the confines of the project. These include capacity building

activities on menstrual hygiene management and training of Environmental Health Prosecutors. On a higher note, the project supported the development of the Ghana WASH Sector Development Programme, which was launched by the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources in 2023, while the review of the Environmental Sanitation Policy also advanced considerably. A manual on Bio-digester sludge emptying and transport was developed, while there were knowledge sharing forums on operation and maintenance of school WASH facilities.

The list of achievements for 2023 alone is, in fact, endless and the project continues to attract attention from other corners of the country. Unofficially, there have been incessant calls from influential persons from various regions for extension of the project to their areas. Recent media reports have also captured some of these calls from other regions. The project continues to generate and share knowledge on urban sanitation promotion in Ghana and it is hoped that the months ahead till the end of 2024 will each count towards a justification of a scale-up of this project to other regions, if not nationwide.

Once again, thank you very much for being a regular reader of this newsletter and supporting the project in-kind and in spirit to succeed.

Ing. George Asiedu
Coordinator, GAMA/GKMA SWP



President Akufo-Addo unveiling the plaque to officially commission the facility.

PRESIDENT AKUFO-ADDO COMMISSIONS TWO SEWERAGE FACILITIES IN GAMA



The President exchanges pleasantries with the Greater Accra Regional Minister, Hon Henry Quartey, and the Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources, Hon Freda Akosua Prempeh, at the entrance of the facility



The President in a chat with Anna Cestari, World Bank's Practice Manager, Water Global Practice for West and Central Africa during the occasion



Aerial view of the Ashaiman Sewerage Treatment System

The President of the Republic, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, on Wednesday, 2nd August 2023, commissioned a Simplified Sewerage Facility and Treatment Plant at Ashaiman New Town in the Ashaiman Municipality, and a rehabilitated and expanded Simplified Sewerage Plant at Bankuman in the Tema Metropolis. The two sewerage facilities, with combined 51km sewer lines, have the capacity to serve approximately 8,000 households with an estimated population of 48,000. While the Ashaiman facility is capable of treating about 1,800m³ of sludge per day, that of Bankuman can treat 1,600m³ per day.

Speaking at the ceremony held at Ashaiman New Town, the President said that completion of the facilities reinforced Government's commitment to offer solutions to the infrastructural gap identified as one of the major challenges plaguing the sanitation and water resources sector.

"The projects being commissioned today are examples of the many sanitation projects that have been provided across the country. This magnificent, simplified sewerage system, as well as the rehabilitated Bankuman project, will inure to the benefit of the people living within the catchment areas of Ashaiman and Bankuman communities of Greater

Accra."

Recounting some of the achievements of the GAMA Sanitation and Water Project, which coordinated the construction of the two sewerage facilities, President Akufo-Addo said the project had been so successfully executed that additional financing was sought from the World Bank to extend the intervention to the Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Area as well.

"Under the additional financing, a total of 129 improved and modern disability-friendly, gender sensitive institutional toilet facilities, as well as 30,000 household toilet facilities are under construction for beneficiary schools and individual households

MINISTER COMMISSIONS 38 MODERN SCHOOL TOILETS IN KUMASI

in the Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Area,” the President said. In addition, the President said the project would also rehabilitate the 29-year-old Asafo sewerage system in Kumasi, while providing additional 30 modern toilet facilities to selected schools and healthcare facilities, as well as 12,000 more household toilets in GAMA by the end of 2024.

The Government-led and World Bank-funded GAMA Sanitation and Water Project started in 2015 as a response to the 2014 cholera outbreak, which claimed about 250 lives. It was government’s determination to improve the sanitation and hygiene situation, especially in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area, which was the epicenter of the epidemic in order to end the then seemingly perennial annual cholera outbreaks in the country.

By the time of the commissioning of the sewerage systems, the project had provided close to 50,000 household toilets to low-income households, more than 580 institutional toilet facilities, and about 16,000 new household water connections. The project had also improved and expanded four major drainage systems in Accra at the Mallam Junction, Kaneshie First Light, Gbawe, and Agbogba. Even with no scientific study yet, it is generally believed that the project is a major contributory factor to the absence of a cholera outbreak over the past seven years.



GAMA SWP Coordinator, Ing George Asiedu, takes the Minister round a photo montage of all the 38 facilities.



Minister takes a pose in front of one of the facilities at Kwadaso Presbyterian Basic School with officials from the World Bank, the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, GAMA Project staff, and representatives from the beneficiary Municipal Assemblies and schools.

The Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources, Hon. Dr. Freda Akosua Prempeh, has commissioned 38 modern gender and disability-friendly toilet facilities for selected schools in the Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Area (GKMA). The GKMA comprises Asokore Mampong, Asokwa, Ejisu, Kumasi (KMA), Kwadaso, Oforikrom, Old Tafo, and Suame Metropolitan/ Municipal Assemblies.

The 38 toilets are part of the expected total of 129 facilities being provided by the project within the GKMA. According to the Sanitary Engineer of the project, all the remaining facilities had been awarded to contractors and progress on works was around 57% at the time of the ceremony.

The Minister, in her keynote address at the ceremony, said the occasion was a partial fulfilment of a bigger dream by the government, a dream to ensure that every Ghanaian lives in a clean and sound environment, where Ghana would be adjudged among the cleanest countries in Africa if not the cleanest.

The Minister said it had always been a dent in the image of the country when access to decent toilets in schools is discussed.

“As at 2016, less than 70% of basic schools in Ghana had access to toilets for our children to use when they are in school. This compelled many children to resort to open defecation around the school or leave the

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“The Minister used most part of her address to talk about the need to maintain the facilities so that they would serve their intended lifespan and provide the necessary relief to the beneficiary schools.”

school compound to use a public toilet nearby or go back home to use a toilet and on some occasions, end up elsewhere without returning to the school,” the Minister said.

With support from the World Bank and through the GAMA Sanitation and Water Project, she said the government began a process of reversing this situation. By 2020, she said the government, through the GAMA Project, had provided 406 modern school toilets to 260 different schools in the Greater Accra Region among several other wonderful sanitation and water-related interventions.

“With the project adjudged the most impactful urban project of the decade, the World Bank willingly agreed to a government proposal to extend it beyond the 2020 deadline

to focus on the Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Area. Since 2021, what has now become known as the GKMA Sanitation and Water Project, has continued to pursue an agenda to provide 129 modern toilets to about 90 selected schools and health-care facilities in these Assemblies to provide relief for about 200,000 school children, teachers, patients, and other workers. As we talk, work is progressing steadily on all the 129 toilets, 13 of which are in selected healthcare facilities,” she said.

The Minister used most part of her address to talk about the need to maintain the facilities so that they would serve their intended lifespan and provide the necessary relief to the beneficiary schools.

“We have gathered here to commission them officially not necessarily to tell the world about what we have done but to stress on the need for the beneficiary schools and associated parents and children to appreciate the value of these toilets in the health and educational life of the children in particular, and to solicit support from all to ensure that these toilets are well maintained,” she said.

“It is one thing providing the beautiful facilities as we see here, and another thing to maintain them so that the facilities will serve their designed lifespan. There are so many schools in the country, where government and partners have provided decent toilet facilities before and yet just

a few years or even months after, they are abandoned for the children to return to the bush and other unorthodox places to defecate. As a country, we keep blaming ourselves for having a poor maintenance culture. Ladies and gentlemen, and especially the heads of the beneficiary schools, we are here today to use these new toilet facilities as a point of contact to declare that we have broken that spirit called Poor Maintenance Culture from our mentality," the minister declared.

Hon. Prempeh said it was the belief of the government that everybody would play their part so that the statement would be clear enough at the end of 2024 when the project is expected to end, that the government would not sweat to make a justification for more support to scale up to other parts of the region and to other regions.

In attendance at the commissioning ceremony in Kwadaso on 12th October 2023, were a team from the World Bank led by Anna Cestari,

Practice Manager, Water Global Practice for West and Central Africa, Chief Director. Noah Tumfo, and other Directors and officials from the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, and the Project Coordinator and Officials from the GAMA/GKMA Sanitation and Water Project, Officials from the Ashanti Regional Coordinating Council, as well as Municipal Directors of Education and Headmasters from beneficiary Municipal Assemblies and schools.

MAINTAINING SCHOOL WASH FACILITIES: NEW BENEFICIARY SCHOOLS ENLIGHTENED ON EXPECTED CHALLENGES AND BEST PRACTICES



A participant making a contribution during one of the sessions



Panelists sharing experiences on operation and maintenance with their new counterparts in Kumasi

The GAMA SWP has organized a knowledge sharing session with new beneficiaries of school WASH facilities provided under the project. The focus of the forum was to enlighten them on the expected challenges with operation and maintenance of the facilities and also share available best practices with them so that they would put the right structures in place.

The forum was necessitated by lessons derived from the parent project

between 2015 and 2020, where some beneficiary schools were compelled to lock up their facilities a few months after they started using them due to the operational challenges that they were unable to surmount at the time.

Interactions with some of the beneficiary schools had indicated that the main challenge was how to raise funds to ensure that that toilets were always clean, hygienic, and in good order. They were unable to raise

funds to buy toilet rolls, detergents, and cleaning equipment, as well as fix minor damages. Moreover, the Municipal Assemblies, official custodians of the facilities, were unable to provide enough funds for this purpose. Additionally, there was perception by some parents and some school management committees that the government had expressly banned school authorities from collecting monies from parents in the name of free basic education. There were other challenges like community vandalization of the facilities provided and absence of janitors to ensure cleanliness inside the facilities and provide timely reports on minor damages.

Addressing participants during the session held in Kumasi in September 2023, the Coordinator of the GAMA SWP, Ing George Asiedu, said the operation and maintenance challenge with institutional toilet facilities

“ *The good news was that the majority of the beneficiary schools had found a way out and their facilities were functional! The project therefore did a case study on some of those schools to document the best practices in order to share with the impending beneficiaries in both Kumasi and Accra.* **”**

was becoming a major setback in the project with the possibility of affecting the chances of attracting more funding support from the World Bank to provide more facilities to needy schools in the country. This, he said, was because it was simply not prudent to keep investing in systems that will not last long enough to solve the intended problem. He therefore advised, especially the headmasters, to assume full responsibility for the maintenance of the facilities and always explore simple and workable solutions to minor problems as they emerge.

The good news was that the majority of the beneficiary schools had found a way out and their facilities

were functional! The project therefore did a case study on some of those schools to document the best practices in order to share with the impending beneficiaries in both Kumasi and Accra.

Participants at the forum, held in two sessions – one in Kumasi and the other in Accra in September and November 2023 respectively – comprised Headteachers and chairmen of Parent Associations from all new beneficiary schools, and Municipal and Regional SHEP Coordinators. Three staff from some of the best performing schools in Accra were invited as resource persons to share practical experiences and lessons with the others. Officials from the

GAMA Project Coordinating Unit and the Ghana Water Company were also present to support the discussions. The forum facilitators took participants through a list of operational challenges to expect and the long-term solutions that the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources and the Ministry of Education were exploring, fundraising strategies for short and medium-term solutions, engagement of janitors and security officers, local production of detergents, and most especially, effective mobilization and communication with parents to support the process. Representatives from all the 192 new beneficiary schools participated in the two sessions.



A proud beneficiary of a new GKMA toilet facility

ENCOURAGING PROGRESS IN PROVISION OF HOUSEHOLD TOILETS IN KUMASI

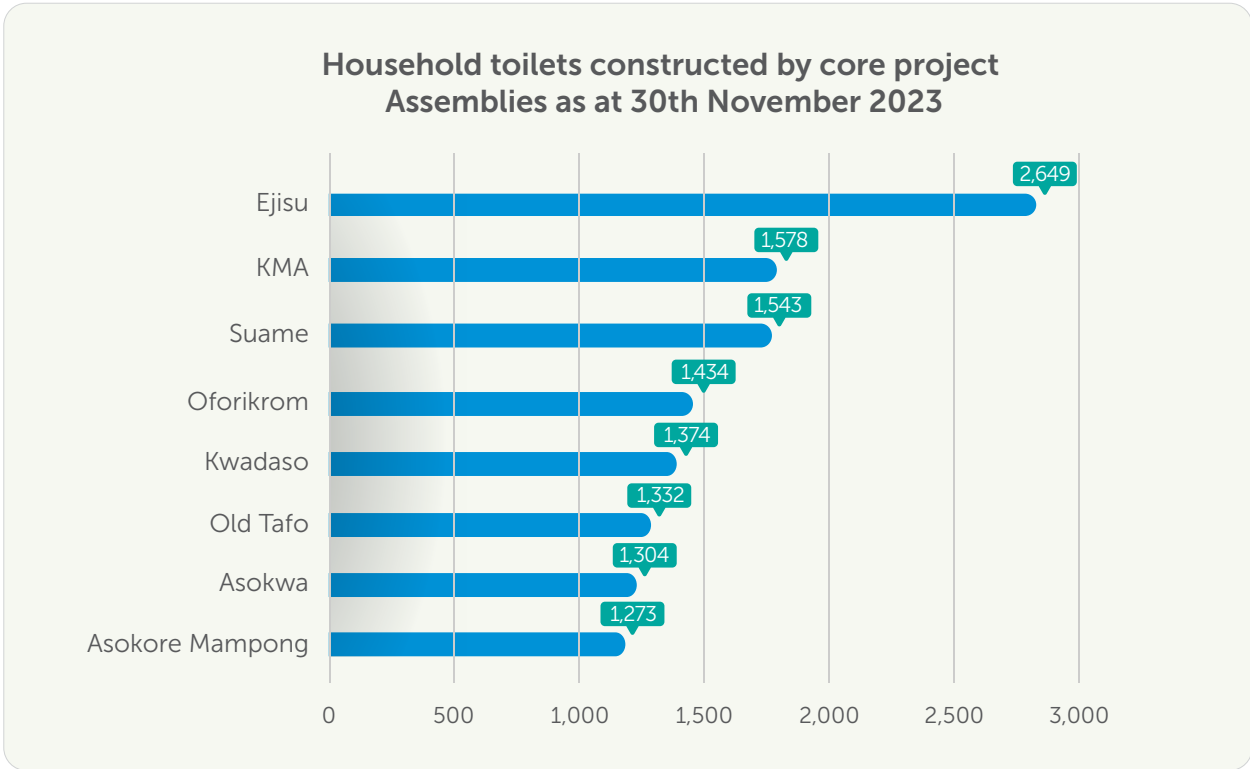
There is a clear indication that the target for the provision of household toilets in GKMA will be met if not exceeded come December 2024. "It is likely that we will meet the target about three months ahead of the deadline," says Kwadwo Gyasi, Sanitation Engineer on the project who coordinates the household toilet sub-component.

Supporting his assertion with facts, Ing Gyasi indicated that as at the end of November 2023, against the expected average monthly construction rate of 1,022 toilets, the project was already constructing a monthly average of 1,334 toilets, meaning that all things being equal, the 30,000 target will be achieved by the end of September 2024.

"Even if we should go by payment projections, we will meet the target by August 2024, four months ahead of schedule," he said.

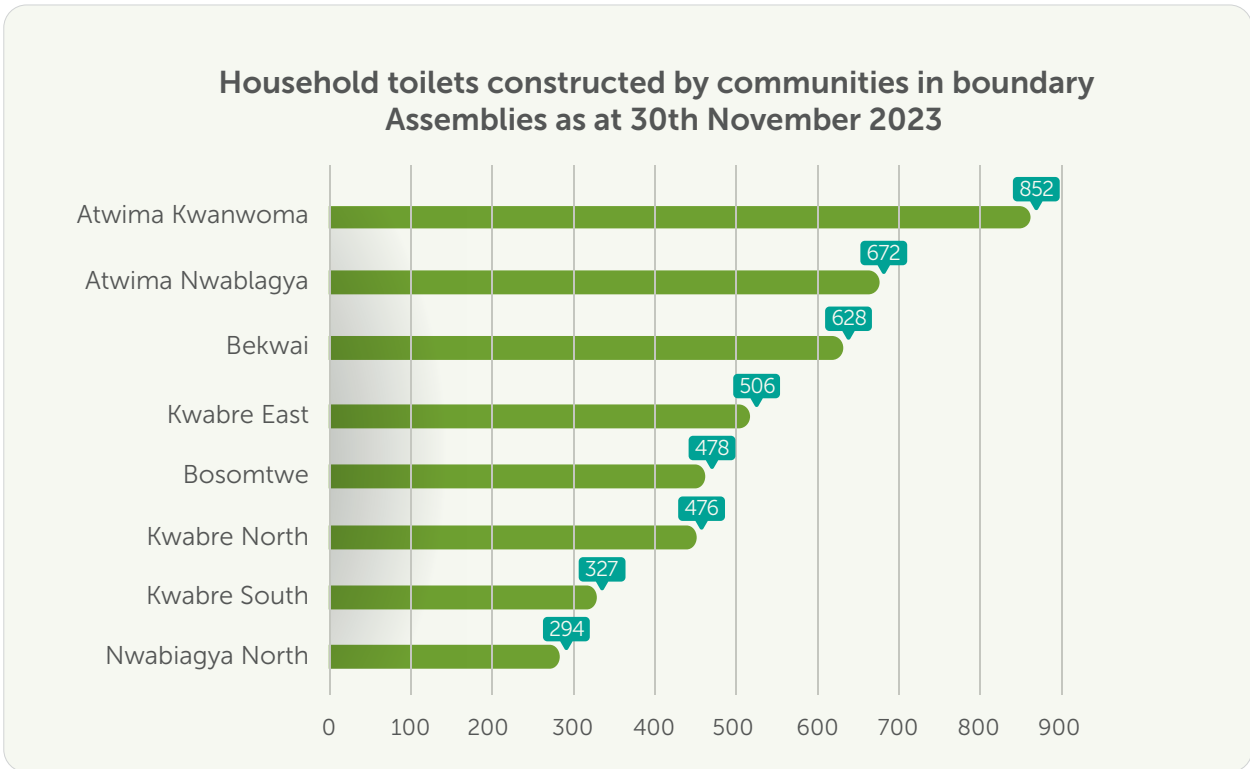
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...all things being equal, the 30,000 target will be achieved by the end of September 2024.”



Among the eight Assemblies participating in the project, Ejisu has maintained the lead right from the first month in November 2021 till date in terms of provision of household toilets. As at the end of November 2023, Ejisu led the household toilet league table by 2,649 units, leading the

second placed KMA by 1,071 more units. Even the least performing Asokore Mampong had constructed as many as 1,273 toilets, making a strong statement about the encouraging performance levels by all the Assemblies.



In 2023, the Project Coordinating Unit decided to respond positively to incessant requests by communities sharing boundaries with the selected Assemblies to allow them to access the household toilet facilities. These requests were difficult to turn down given the fact that sometimes it was even difficult to identify the boundaries between them. By the end of November that same year,

these boundary communities had contributed 4,233 units towards the overall target. This development, in fact, opened fresh debates about the reason behind limiting the project within only the eight selected Assemblies, making a strong case about the demand for household toilets in many other districts in the region.

Distribution of the target number of household toilets for the project is based on how much the respective participating Assemblies can construct within the project life and available funds. Assemblies achieve this through rigorous promotional activities and the ability of assigned service providers to respond to the ensuing demand for household toilets.

63 MORE INSTITUTIONS IN ACCRA GET MODERN TOILETS; 75% PROGRESS IN KUMASI



A completed GAMA SWP school toilet in Accra

The GAMA Sanitation and Water Project has completed 63 modern gender and disability-friendly toilet facilities and handed them to the beneficiary institutions as at the end of October 2023.

This figure is more than double the target of 30 more institutional toilets earmarked for Assemblies within GAMA under the current phase of the project! Five of the facilities were provided for healthcare facilities

and the rest for selected basic and second cycle schools.

The Sanitary Engineer on the project and coordinator of the institutional sanitation sub-component, Ing Gabriel Engmann, says focus will now be on monitoring operation and maintenance of the facilities to provide the necessary backstopping over the remaining project period.

“It is one thing providing and handing over the facilities and another with the beneficiaries maximizing their use through effective operation and maintenance. Project implementation experience has shown that many beneficiary school authorities face challenges in this area and we all risk not achieving the full potential of the facilities. It is therefore essential for

us to provide technical advice on how best to make use of the facilities,” says Ing Engmann.

As at the end of October 2023, all the

facilities had been smoothly handed over to the beneficiary schools after their defect liability periods had expired. Sixty of the facilities, including all the five for healthcare facilities,

were completely new, while the remaining three were rehabilitated old structures.

The 63 facilities were distributed in 13 Municipal Assemblies as follows:

No.	MMA	Number of WASH Facilities			Total
		Schools		HCFs	
		New Facility	Rehab	New Facility	
1	Ablekuma North	1	-	-	1
2	Adenta	2	2	-	4
3	Ayawaso East	-	1	-	1
4	Ayawaso North	1	-	-	1
5	Ga East	9	-	1	10
6	Ga North	7	-	-	7
7	Ga South	4	-	-	4
8	Ga West	5	-	-	5
9	Kpone Katamanso	9	-	2	11
10	La Nkwantanang Madina	-	-	2	2
11	Tema	5	-	-	5
12	Tema West	5	-	-	5
13	Weija Gbawe	7	-	-	7
	Total	55	3	5	63

Elsewhere in Kumasi, 57 of the planned 129 facilities had been completed, 41 of which had been officially commissioned by the sector minister

and the respective local authorities. Ing Engmann estimates the completion rate of the remaining works at 75% and expects all outstanding

activities including defect liability period by end of March 2024.

GAMA SWP CONNECTS PIPED WATER TO 5,000 MORE HOUSEHOLDS IN PROJECT AREAS



Nsuo no anya aba! Water is finally in the house. Ing Somuah Tenkorang from the Ghana Water Company Limited (left), Ing Harold Esseku from the World Bank and GAMA SWP Co Task Team Leader (second from right), and Ing George Asiedu, GAMA Project Coordinator (right) in a jubilant mood over a household's access to piped water at home in Kumasi.

Five thousand low-income households have gained access to new piped water connections from the Ghana Water Company Limited through the additional financing phase of the GAMA Sanitation and Water Project.

According to Ing Somuah Tenkorang, Coordinator of Component Two of the project, this number of new connections alone is expected to bring treated piped water right to the doorstep of some 40,000 people and relieve them of their daily stress with access to drinking water, while several more thousands will benefit

from improvements in pipelines generally.

Ing Somuah said 2,000 of the new connections are in Greater Kumasi

“*...this number of new connections alone is expected to bring treated piped water right to the doorstep of some 40,000 people...*”

and 3,000 in Greater Accra while procurement for the next phase of connections was already on-going to ensure that the project meets its target of 10,000 new household connections by the end of the current phase of the project.

Water supply under the GAMA SWP falls under component two of the project, which focuses on improvement and expansion of the water distribution network in selected low-income urban communities. Interventions in piped water supply include installation of transmission mains, booster pumps, acquisition and installation of meters, and other facilities required to ensure that water reaches the target low-income communities and households. This is done within the context of the implementation of an integrated water supply masterplan developed and funded by the project. Another major objective of Component Two is improvement of operational efficiency of the Ghana Water Company Limited, with particular focus on the Low-income Customer Support Department.

During the parent project implemented between 2015 and 2020, ten thousand eight hundred low-income households in GAMA received new piped water connections and combined with improvements in pipeline works, more than 420,000 people in GAMA gained access to safe drinking water on their premises.

GAMA SWP TO FACILITATE INTRODUCTION OF BIO-DIGESTER SLUDGE EMPTYING SERVICE



A professional bio-digester emptying activity

Very soon, users of bio-digester toilets will have access to professional emptying service, according to Ing Kwadwo Gyasi, Sanitation Engineer of the GAMA SWP.

Ing Gyasi says while the project progresses with the plan to construct a bio-digester treatment plant in GAMA in partnership with the Ashaiman Municipal Assembly and Safi Sana, discussions are also on-going with selected partners to develop a scheme to provide professional

bio-digester sludge emptying and other services to households.

“The service will be linked to a digital platform that will facilitate easier access to professional emptying service providers by households, and we are already in talks with prospective partners for this,” says Ing Gyasi. Bio-digester toilets take a longer time to get full. However, from project implementation experience, due to factors such as construction defects, poor soil structure, and bad

user practices, some of them can get full earlier than envisaged and would need to be emptied more regularly. Since the use of bio-digesters in Ghana is a recent phenomenon, there are no known professional entities providing emptying services for this toilet system. Households have therefore had to rely mainly on informal artisans and neighbourhood plumbers to help them empty their toilets. Some of them end up damaging the facility and/or unprofessionally handling and disposing of the sludge.

Establishment of a professional emptying service is part of the plans to develop a service chain for bio-digester toilets from construction through containment, maintenance, sludge emptying, transportation, to treatment and reuse. It is expected that by the end of the current phase of the project in December 2024, this emptying service would have been well established, at least in Accra and Kumasi.

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“Establishment of a professional emptying service is part of the plans to develop a service chain for the bio-digester toilet.”

WHAT OUR BENEFICIARIES IN KUMASI ARE SAYING

The GAMA SWP, popularly and simply referred to in Kumasi as GKMA, is steadily making progress with all project components in Kumasi. The trust in the project by the GKMA public is steadily mounting as more and more households and schools are getting and enjoying the facilities that were promised them. Beneficiaries from all fronts cannot stop talking about their new facilities and how they are enjoying them. Now let's listen to just three of them:



Naimat no longer carries heavy loads of water on her head.

Little Naimat Mohammed, a class four pupil at Suame Kotoko in Kumasi, no longer carries a bucket load of water on her head and she cannot hide her joy. A couple of months ago, Naimat and her mother had to carry heavy loads of water on their head, cross a busy road across the neighbourhood to buy water in buckets for drinking and other household chores.

She still remembers and deeply regrets the day that she slipped and fell while carrying water; she not only spilt the water but had a cut on her leg from a broken tile.

"I couldn't go to school that day and for a couple of days. The day that I managed to go to school, some of my classmates also made fun of the way I struggled to walk. Now look at what has happened in the house. We just turn a tap on the wall inside the veranda, clean water then flows through the hose that we have connected directly from the tap into the drum. That is all we do to get water now!"

Recounting how her household water situation changed, Naimat said one day her mother told her that she had heard an announcement in the neighbourhood that a certain project was 'making water promotion' in the Suame Kotoko neighbourhood so she went and registered and paid just 500 cedis. "And a few weeks later there was water in the house!" She said beaming with joy. She ended her narration by showering praises on the government and everybody involved in the project. She, however, prayed the Ghana Water Company to ensure that water always flowed through the pipe.



Edmund still remembers his first day in the new school toilet.

Edmund Owusu-Ansah, School Prefect of Nyankyereniase MA Primary School in the Kwadaso Municipality, fondly recounts his first day experience on the new school toilet facility provided by the GAMA SWP in 2023.

“Everything was wonderful. When I sought permission from my class teacher to visit the toilet, he gave me a chit, which I presented to the Janitor at the toilet. We had been told that the Janitor uses the chit to track children who damage or mess up the toilet. She gave me a piece of toilet roll and I entered. Hmm. Everywhere inside the toilet was tiled so beautifully and the whole place was so neat and orderly. No smell! I opened one of the chambers and I saw a beautiful water closet with a squat plate. After conveniently finishing the ‘task’ I dropped the used toilet roll into the beautiful litter bin placed beside the toilet inside the chamber. I pressed a knob on the cistern,

and it flushed the toilet so easily.

There are about four or so handwashing facilities in the walkway inside the toilet, so I went straight to wash my hands in the one closest to the chamber that I used. There was already liquid soap placed close to each of the handwashing facilities. For the first time in my school life, I just turned on the tap and water flowed freely for me to wash my hands after using a toilet.

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Pupils from this school are very grateful to the government and everybody who made it possible for us to enjoy a true toilet.”

I quickly remembered what happened elsewhere on the public toilet nearby, where we used to go before this toilet was provided, you would have to first pay one cedi to the attendant. He would give you a piece of newspaper instead of toilet roll to use after defecating, the soap provided was hard – not liquid – and you would have to take a container to fetch water from a large container to manually flush the toilet before you leave. The most dangerous moment was when you had to cross the busy road in front of the school before accessing that toilet.

After enjoying everything inside the new toilet for the first time, I thanked the Janitor and began to leave, but before I left, I saw her enter the toilet to ensure that I did not leave any mess behind. That explains why the place was and is always so neat and hygienic. I then said to myself, this is the toilet every school child deserves!" Pupils from this school are very grateful to the government and everybody who made it possible for us to enjoy a true toilet."

Maame Theresa no longer risks crossing that stream to go to toilet.

Maame Theresa Frimpomaa lives in a large compound house with her family and a couple of tenants at Asuoyeboah in the Kwadaso Municipality.. She keeps showering blessings on the Government of Ghana and the World Bank for making it possible and easy for them to have access to two clean household toilets.



"We used to cross this stream and climb up that hill to defecate in the bush. That was like a normal daily practice over here in the past but now I can say that era is past and gone. Look, my son, it was so terrible when you had to go to toilet during or even after rain. Crossing this stream became too difficult and even risky. I once slipped and fell into the stream all because I wanted to go to toilet. Sometimes, the mere hassle of going to toilet would leave you thinking for so long whether to go or not to go. Yet when you are compelled to go what do you do? You take the risk and dare whatever happens.

Providing a toilet for the house was too expensive for us and the only option available was to cross the stream, climb the hill, and use the bush over there. Now, with these two facilities right here inside the house, going to toilet looks like a luxury in this house. It was all joy when one day my husband said he had heard about a toilet project in this community, where we had to pay only 1,200 cedis for a complete water closet toilet. It was just like a joke, but we decided to try it out and went to pay for two units and bingo! Look at the toilet over there. The guys are genuine, and I would urge everybody in Asuoyeboah to seize this opportunity to own a toilet at home.



Excited school toilet beneficiaries.



Excited household water beneficiaries.



A moment with **Ing Gabriel Engmann** Sanitary Engineer

In this edition of the GAMA SWP AF News, we put Ing Gabriel Engmann in the Spotlight. One of the long-serving project specialists, he leads and co-coordinates Component One of the project with focus on provision of institutional sanitation facilities, sewerage systems, and drainage development. In his line of duty, he has helped the project to provide 598 modern gender and disability-friendly toilet facilities for schools and healthcare facilities across the Greater Accra and Greater Kumasi Metropolitan Areas. The project has also constructed, rehabilitated, and

expanded two major sewerage facilities in Ashaiman and Tema, as well as rehabilitated and expanded some major priority drainage facilities in parts of Accra including Kaneshie First Light, Mallam Junction, Gbawe, and Agbogba.

Ing Gabriel Engmann is a seasoned engineer with a strong background in civil and geohydrological engineering. He earned his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Science and Technology (now Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology) in Kumasi.

He developed interest in working on projects and proceeded to pursue a master's degree in project management at the University of Ghana. His commitment to and interest in working on engineering projects and his desire to improve his learning and skills in project management inspired him to complete the globally recognized certification as a Project Management Professional (PMP). You may now enjoy the full conversation between the production team and Ing Engmann:

GSN: How did you join the project, when and in what capacity?

GE: Before I joined the project, I was working with AngloGold Ashanti, Obuasi Mine, as the Environmental Manager. I had been working there for five years and I believed I had contributed my quota and felt it was time to move on to a new challenge. So, in the last quarter of 2016, I was reading the Daily Graphic and I saw the advertisement for a Sanitary Engineer on the GAMA Sanitation and Water Project and I applied. I was shortlisted for the interview in January 2017 and in March 2017 I joined the project as the Sanitary Engineer.

GSN: What specific role do you play in the Project?

GE: As the Sanitary Engineer on the project, I am involved and responsible for feasibility assessments, reviewing engineering designs for water and sanitation facilities for institutions and sewerage systems for low-income urban communities and contract management. I also directly supervise and coordinate the activities of project consultants and contractors and report on all activities related to institutional sanitation, sewerage, and other related civil construction activities under the project.

GSN: How critical is your role in the success of the project?

GE: My role is to coordinate and manage the implementation of the Institutional Sanitation sub-component of the GAMA-AF Sanitation and Water Project. This is one of the most critical deliverables of the project alongside household toilets and water supply. I play a crucial role in planning, designing, implementing, and facilitating the operation and maintenance of the WASH facilities in beneficiary institutions (schools and healthcare facilities) as well as environmental sanitation planning and implementation. My work involves liaising with Supervising Consultants and Contractors to deliver high quality construction of WASH facilities to low-income beneficiary institutions. I am involved in a lot of stakeholder engagement throughout the life cycle of project implementation

and participate in planning, sensitization, training and directing beneficiaries to adopt sustainable approaches that will ensure that institutional sanitation and sewerage facilities provided are well maintained.

GSN: How is your typical day at the office like?

GE: As a Sanitary Engineer, my typical day at the office can vary based on the specific activities I am working on and can involve office work, field work and project stakeholder meetings. On a typical day I review the status of ongoing projects, analyze data, collaborate with consultants, contractors, and key project stakeholders. Some days may involve participating in meetings with stakeholders to discuss project progress, concerns, activities, and the way forward. Often, I undertake field visits and inspection of project sites to oversee construction activities and pay attention to quality assurance. Report writing and documenting findings, contract administration, project progress and recommendations also form a key part of the main activities I undertake at the office.

GSN: How is your typical day in the field like?



GE: A typical day in the field is very involving I set off with my colleague assistant by 8:00am and we spend the entire day inspecting ongoing construction works in several beneficiary institutions and communities, and ensure they align with contract specifications and quality standards. On the field we have series of meetings with Supervising Consultants and Contractors to discuss progress, resolve site issues and sensitize beneficiary stakeholders on future activities involving operation and maintenance of the facilities. There have been many occasions where we had to physically demonstrate how concrete is measured and mixed to attain a workable mix that meets engineering standards.

GSN: What are your most interesting moments as a member of the project team?

GE: Finding innovative approaches to solving project bottlenecks has been intriguing for me on the project. Working with my colleagues and meeting with consultants and contractors have provided me with opportunities for continuous learning and skill development regarding

project design, implementation and management. I have enjoyed management meetings at the office and open discussions especially when we go on a retreat or workshop out of Accra. I have also enjoyed brainstorming sessions on the project and preparations towards World Bank missions.

GSN: What will you fondly remember after the project has ended?

GE: "When I look back and think about the impact that these modern toilet facilities are making in the daily school lives of children who hitherto found simple access to a toilet a nightmare; when I imagine what the Ashaiman and Bankuman Sewerage Systems are making in the lives of thousands of households who had to practice open defecation or spend huge sums of money and queue at public toilets; how some of the drainage facilities have managed to reduce flooding in parts of Accra to the relief of people whose rooms previously got flooded with every rainfall, I say wow! This is what God has done through the GAMA Project Team and I am glad to have been a part. Another area I will fondly remember is the routine meetings and encounters with colleague project staff, consultants, and contractors. The project has indeed brought me close to several entities and personalities and I believe some of these networks and relationships will live with us forever."



SUSTAINABILITY OF SCHOOL WASH FACILITIES: EXISTING OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE MODELS

INTRODUCTION

The important role of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in the school context cannot be overemphasized. The absence of adequate and appropriate WASH facilities in a school impact negatively on the quality of education that pupils receive. The GAMA SWP has since 2015 worked towards increasing access to improved WASH services at the school level in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area. The GAMA SWP has since its inception, constructed 598 gender conscious and disability inclusive toilet blocks for both Basic and Senior High schools in Accra and Kumasi.

A key feature of the GAMA SWP is the emphasis it places on sustainable operation and maintenance of the WASH facilities once they are fully handed over to the individual beneficiary schools. An elaborate process, involving user education, establishment of a WASH Facilities Management Team, and a Facilities Management Plan that includes an agreement on the model that each beneficiary school will adopt in operating and maintaining the facility, is undertaken to facilitate sustainable

operation and maintenance of the installed WASH facilities. This process is meant to ensure that facilities provided are sustained to enable beneficiaries derive the expected full benefits from them. In this article, we outline the commonest documented operation and maintenance models applied by different beneficiary schools to sustain their facilities.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE (O&M) MODELS

The GAMA SWP requires every beneficiary school to clearly indicate how it will properly operate and maintain the WASH facilities to be installed in their school. Ordinarily, schools would rely on their Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) to fund O&M of their installed WASH facilities. School authorities would appeal to the PTA for support at PTA meetings to address any defects, bills or challenges that arise from the use of the facilities.

However, in 2019, the Ghana Education Service (GES) announced a ban on collection of PTA levies. This generally crippled the structured funding support that PTA's

provided schools, especially for O&M of WASH facilities. This forced school level stakeholders to come out with a variety of management options for ensuring proper operation and maintenance of their installed WASH facilities. Two common characteristics of these options are that, firstly, none of them is based on a commercialization of the installed WASH facilities. The Ghana Education Service (GES), which superintends over pre-tertiary education in Ghana, frowns upon any attempt by a public school to commercialize any aspect of its operations. Secondly, parents play a very central role in funding facilities management in schools.

It must be emphasized that operation and maintenance of school WASH facilities in public schools, just like all other facilities in the school such as classroom blocks, staff bungalows, desks, library etc., is a government responsibility. It is because government support at the moment is simply insufficient that the schools have had to explore innovative 'temporary' solutions to sustain the facilities.

Model 1 - SMC/PTA Led Model

The School Management Committee (SMC) is the governing body at the basic school level. This body is made up of key school community stakeholders, and they work closely with the headteacher to ensure day-to-day running of the school. The Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) is a voluntary association of parents and teachers at the school, who come together to deliberate on academic improvements and the welfare of pupils.

The SMC/PTA led Model is characterized by the SMC working closely together with the parents' body to take full responsibility for the management of the installed WASH facilities. The SMC/PTA raises all the necessary funds required for operating and maintaining the facility. They directly engage the services of a janitor who does daily cleaning of the facility, under the supervision of the teachers. All maintenance actions, including repairs and replacements, desludging, and utility bills are funded directly by the SMC/PTA. The SMC/PTA mobilizes funds directly from parents, either as dues or as ad-hoc contributions when needed or both. Experience from the GAMA SWP shows that more than 95% of beneficiary public schools have adopted this model to operate and maintain their facilities, and in majority of cases, this model works perfectly.

Model 2 – School-led with Pupils Cleaning Model

The Headteacher, working closely with the school staff, oversees the operation and maintenance of the facility. This model engages the pupils to clean the facility under the supervision of their teachers based on a roster developed for the purpose. Funding is mobilized mainly through appeals to parents and other sources such as vendors on the school compound available to the headteacher. It usually mainly covers the cost of disposables and some minor repairs. This model has been adopted by a number of Senior High schools.

Model 3 - WASH Facilities Management Team Model

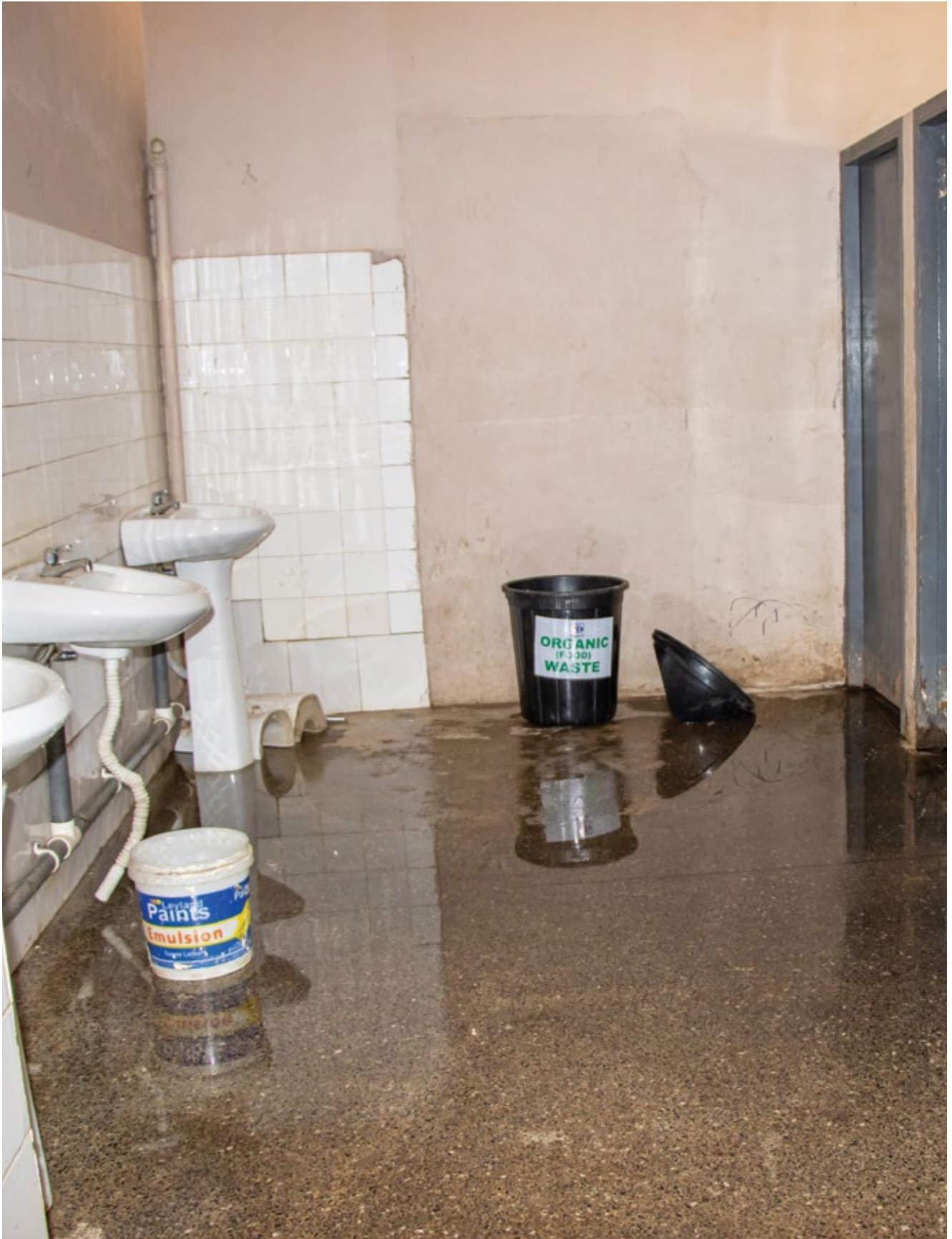
The WASH Facilities Management Team (WFMT) is a school-level body made up of pupil representatives and some teachers led by the School-based Health Coordinator. The WFMT supports the headteacher directly in day-to-day operation and maintenance of the facility. The members of the Team are given basic skills to identify and repair minor plumbing faults that arise and report major issues for redress by technicians when they occur. Pupils take up the cleaning of the facility based on a roster with teachers and members of the Team supervising. Since funding is very minimal and drawn mainly from school's Capitation Grant and internally generated funds (IGF), there is heavy emphasis on preventive maintenance. At the beginning of each term, pupils are requested to bring consumable items such as toilet rolls, soap, brooms and scrubbing brushes for use.

Model 4 – Mission-led Model

Schools that have affiliation with a faith-based or religious body (mainly Christian or Islamic) are described as mission schools. The faith-based/religious body supports the running of the school and takes responsibility for the maintenance of the WASH facilities. Usually, this responsibility covers providing funds to cover all aspects of operation and maintenance of the facility, including the wages of a janitor. This support is complimented by voluntary contributions from parents.

Model 5 - Private Schools Model

This category of schools is privately owned and operate as business enterprises. In this respect, they charge school fees which are used to run the school. Included in the school fees are charges meant for maintenance of school facilities, including WASH facilities. The responsibility for ensuring that WASH facilities are clean and functional rests with the school authorities. These models described above are operational at the basic school level. In Senior High Schools, the students are predominantly responsible for cleaning of WASH facilities and fall under Model 2 indicated above. The PTA raises funds, through voluntary contributions from its members, to support school authorities to keep WASH facilities functional. Students provide their own consumables as well as cleaning tools.



A poorly maintained school toilet facility.



A well maintained school toilet facility



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