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**GWSC ASSISTANCE PROJECT**

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**COMMUNITY LIAISON PROGRAMME:  
STRATEGY DISCUSSION PAPER**

**VERSION # 8**

**WARDROP-LMB**

**Tamale  
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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

One of the main objectives of the GWSC Assistance Project is to facilitate the transfer of responsibilities for the management and operation of water systems, including operation, maintenance and cost recovery to the communities involved in the Project. The strategy for accomplishing this objective is to assist all Project communities to establish Community Water Management Systems.

This paper consists of the following: (a) an examination of the national context and general background within which the GWSC Assistance Project's Community Water Management Programme will operate; (b) a presentation of the main features of the Community Management Strategy; (c) a description of the rationale for the Strategy, outlining the main components of the corresponding programme, including the structure of the programme, functions and responsibilities of the partners - the Communities and GWSC, (d) an implementation plan.

## **1.1. BACKGROUND AND NATIONAL CONTEXT**

The Government of Ghana's decentralization programme is designed to make local governments more autonomous, more responsive to local needs and technically and financially capable of providing services for the local population. This is being achieved by giving the country's 110 District Assemblies primary responsibility for planning and administering their own development programmes, including collecting basic taxes. In this decentralized approach individual communities are expected to take the lead in decision making, financing and implementing development projects based on their particular needs. While the programme is intended to end dependency on central Government, it also has the potential of establishing internal self-reliance and sustainability of local development initiatives.

At the regional level, several Government of Ghana and other donor assisted projects have provided credence to this decentralization policy. The Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Cost of Structural Adjustment (PAMSCAD) has assisted villages throughout the rural areas of Northern Ghana to raise funds and carry out water and community infrastructure projects.

Throughout the Upper Regions of Ghana, the Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation, with assistance from CIDA and UNDP-World Bank, has embarked on a series of rural water projects whose common aim is community self-management. In the Northern Region, NORRIP, with assistance from CIDA, is carrying out a number of village level water, health and community development

activities aimed at building local capacity in the management of their own development.

For all of these projects, communities receive support from district staff and line ministries in order that they may build their own capacities for management of activities.

It is within this context that the GWSC Assistance Project seeks to transfer management responsibilities to the communities.

## **1.2. OBJECTIVES OF THE COMMUNITY LIAISON STRATEGY**

### **1.3. GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

The general objective of GWSC's Community Liaison Programme is to establish strong links with the communities it serves, with the goal of facilitating full community control of the management, operation and maintenance of water systems in all but six communities presently involved in the Project. In the six communities of Tamale, Yendi, Bolgatanga, Bawku, Navrongo and Wa, the objective is to facilitate a strong partnership in decision making between the communities and GWSC, while retaining control over operation and maintenance within the latter.

#### **1.3.1 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

In pursuit of the general objective of the programme, the following specific objectives will be carried out:

- Articulation of a Community Management Policy by GWSC and the Project Communities, through a Partnership Forum;
- Establishment of Community Water and Sanitation Management Boards (CWSMB):
- Legitimizing and linking the Community Water and Sanitation Management Boards with established legal and institutional frameworks, such as the District Assembly System.
- Design and elaboration of Community Management Systems and Operations;

- Consultations with community water management structures to determine the training needs of personnel and other community members involved in the transition to full community management;
- Training, as required, in the six large communities where GWSC will retain primary operations and maintenance management responsibilities.

## **2 PRINCIPLES OF THE PROGRAMME**

A number of principles will guide the formulation and implementation of the Community Liaison Programme. These are:

### **2.1. PARTNERSHIP**

The provision of potable water in all Project communities will be sustained by a partnership between the communities and the Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation. This partnership principle will be adhered to in the community management policy formation and the design and implementation of basic water system rehabilitation.

### **2.2. COMMUNITY WILLINGNESS AND ABILITY TO MANAGE**

The decisions pertaining to the management of their water systems will be left to the communities. The Project and GWSC will facilitate the process of decision making by assisting the communities to analyze their experiences with community participation, and recommending options for their future role in the management of the water systems. As proposed in the methodology for Community Liaison (see Inception Report), this willingness to manage must be expressed in terms of the communities' readiness to invest in the supply of their desired service levels, as well their ability to take full responsibility for the cost of operation and maintenance of their water systems.

### **2.3. CAPACITY BUILDING**

Once communities are determined to manage their water systems, a crucial principle of the Community Management Programme will be to establish and strengthen the communities' capacity for carrying out their functions. Through the Project, GWSC will facilitate the provision of technical and financial support for this purpose.

### **2.4. REALISTIC GOALS AND TARGETS**

The Community Liaison Programme will set realistic targets. In all but six large urban water systems, the Project will work towards full community control of management operation and maintenance.

For communities the six urban systems GWSC will develop a collaborative relationship with each community, with a view to making joint decisions about operations and cost recovery. Here, GWSC will retain the control of the system, until a viable community management system is mutually negotiated between the partners.

### **2.5. GENDER EQUITY**

The institutions and processes of transferring the management responsibility to communities will be sensitive to gender equity considerations. This means that all proposed community management policies will be assessed in terms of their impact on the distribution of benefits and costs to different segments of the community. The ultimate objective is to facilitate the full participation of women and men in community management, without resulting in undue costs to any one gender group. The Project will also ensure that all data collection is gender desegregated, to facilitate the monitoring of any differential impacts on the gender groups.

## 2.6. THE PARTNERS

It is important to understand who the partners are in this move towards Community Management of Water Systems.

## 2.7. THE COMMUNITY

As a key Partner, The Community needs to be given a distinct identity. Community is defined here as the accredited representatives of communities within the service area of GWSC piped water system in the towns earmarked for rehabilitation in the GWSC Assistance Project. The main components of the community relevant to this notion are:

- new structures established to promote the decentralization policies, notably the District Assemblies;
- traditional authority structures notably those that have demonstrated leadership in community development initiatives;
- voluntary community organizations with experience in community projects;
- womens groups;
- commercial groups and cooperatives which manage their business successfully, and have a keen interest in the sustainability of the water systems;
- individual community leaders with proven experience in community mobilization, leadership and other management and technical skills relevant for water systems operation and maintenance.

## 2.8. THE GHANA WATER AND SEWERAGE CORPORATION (GWSC)

Presently, GWSC has the mandate for supplying and distributing water to communities throughout the country. As a key partner in the Community Liaison Programme, the corporation will devote its energies to promoting the concept and facilitating the process of community management. Relevant sections of the GWSC involved in the Community Liaison Programme are:

- senior management of the Corporation involved in policy formulation,
- technical department and personnel involved in the installation, rehabilitation and routine operation and maintenance of water systems,
- commercial departments and personnel involved in revenue collection, customer services and cost recovery;
- public relations departments involved in the promotion of safe water and other public and community relations.

### **3**

## **RATIONALE**

The rationale for developing local capacity for community management rests on the fact that both partners stand to gain significant benefits, the benefit include:

### **3.1. THE COMMUNITY: GHANA WATER AND SEWERAGE CORPORATION**

- an assurance that the mandate of GWSC to provide safe potable drinking water for all Communities will be sustained by a self-interested, motivated and trained community;
- an improvement in GWSC operations by focusing management and financial resources in the six big systems. (Annex 1 outlines the financial implication of making communities responsible for operation and maintenance cost of the small remote systems.
- the creation of a meaningful and reliable partnership with the large commercial communities, such that GWSC provides a variety of specialized services.
- a central role in making critical decisions pertaining to the very operation of the water systems. Whether they get water or not, and how much water they get, how reliable and at what cost - will be decided by the communities;
- an opportunity to develop human resources within the communities thereby providing employment opportunities through community management;
- an opportunity to mobilize and retain financial resources within the communities for present and future investment in their water systems development and expansion.

## **4 THE COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY: EVOLVING A DYNAMIC MODEL**

The Community Management Strategy and Programme seeks to move the Project communities from passive beneficiaries to active managers and implementors of their water systems and the GWSC from active implementors to being facilitators and monitors of water supply services. In order to understand the transition from the current status of Community-GWSC relationship to that aspired to under Community Liaison, it is important to specify the functions of each participant in the programme.

### **4.1. COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT FUNCTION**

The distinctive feature of community management is the nature of decision making and the locus of responsibility for executing those decisions. In the proposed community Management system, the Project Communities will be empowered to strongly influence the development of their water systems initially, and eventually to control their operations, maintenance and cost recovery.

The decision to rehabilitate the basic service must involve the community, in that it will only proceed when the community demonstrates willingness to manage the operation and maintenance of the resulting water systems;

Under this scheme, the Communities will have the:

- right and responsibility to make all decisions pertaining to the operations and maintenance of their water systems;
- authority to implement these decisions;
- ability to enforce the decisions

#### **4.1.1 COMMUNITY ROLE** Communities Must:

- participate in the decision on the type of improvements to be made to the basic systems, within the funds and resources available for the Project;
- be prepared to pay the costs of any additional services they choose, beyond the rehabilitation of the basic systems;
- demonstrate their ability and willingness to manage the water systems by raising the equivalent of one year's operation and maintenance costs, as an insurance fund to ensure cost recovery;



- take responsibility for maintaining the facilities they have chosen;
- undertake, through a contract with the GWSC to take over responsibility for routine day-to-day administration of the systems, including tariff collection and water systems operation and maintenance;
- undertake the monitoring and redress of system losses and other water wastage through leaks;
- in the six large water systems mentioned above, the communities must participate actively in decision making, at the level of the Water Board and through the District or Metropolitan Assembly.

#### 4.1.2 COMMUNITY OBLIGATIONS

In community-managed water systems, users identify and mobilize resources. A Community that is unwilling to use its available resources, however limited, for this purpose or that is unwilling to obtain them from elsewhere, can hardly be in control of its system.

#### 4.2. GWSC ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Overall, GWSC will provide technical and financial assistance to support and enhance community management. In addition, GWSC will also undertake other specialized functions, including:

- primary operation and maintenance responsibility for the six large water systems mentioned above;
- promotion of community consultation and participation in management decisions pertaining to these six systems;
- supply of basic and essential spare parts and consumables to communities managing their water systems on a fee-for-service basis;
- assisting communities managing their systems to deal with technical difficulties in water systems operation beyond the communities capability on a fee for service basis;
- coordinating the resolution of unforeseen and unexpected technical circumstances, accidents and other major technical malfunctions of the water systems;
- undertaking long-term and future replacement strategy and programmes, including planning for major plant expansion and

rehabilitation. This function will be negotiated and broached with Government and donors on behalf of the communities;

- monitoring of water quality, specialized diagnostic tests, and other technical industry standards common to all water systems
- assisting with the training of communities' technical and financial personnel in water systems operation, maintenance and overall management, including cost recovery.

### 4.3. STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

The emphasis of the Community Management Programme will start from the community.

#### 4.3.1 COMMUNITY LEVEL STRUCTURE

#### 4.3.2

At the community level, a Community Water and Sanitation Management Board (CWSMB) will be established. This Board will have the Responsibility, Authority and Control over all decisions pertaining to the development, operation and maintenance of the community water system.

Composition of the Board:

The maintenance will comprise between 7 and 9 voting members, and not more than two ex-officio members, to a total of between 9 and 11 members. The following is a general guide to the constitution of the Community Water and Sanitation Management Board (CWSMB):

- one dedicated and accomplished community leader (male or female) who has led several successful community development activities. The individual must possess good communication negotiation and leadership skills. This individual could serve as chairman of the maintenance, although any other members are eligible for this position, by consensus of the Board.
- one representative (preferably a literate woman), with proven skills and aptitude in financial matters. This individual will serve as Treasurer of the maintenance
- one representative, preferably a female school teacher or nurse from the community and based in the community, to serve as Secretary of the Board;

- two community water organizers (one man and one woman) widely recognized in the community for their organizational skills and abilities. Preference should be given to individuals who have previously led initiatives and activities relating to the community's water system;
- one representative with technical skills and a high aptitude for matters relating to machine tools, agricultural implements - tractors, ploughs, etc, bicycle repair and plumbing;
- one representative from the District Assembly. In communities which are District Assembly centres, this individual could be the Chairman or a member of the Social Infrastructure Committee of the Assembly. In smaller communities one of the representatives could be an Assembly member, a representative from the Chief's preferably, the Chief's Secretary or Chief Linguist.

Annex 2 describe the Terms of Reference for the Community Water and Sanitation Management Board.

#### The Board Executive

The Board shall constitute a four member Executive. These will include:

- the chairperson (could be the women' group representative or the treasurer.
- the women's group representative or "D",
- the secretary, and
- the treasurer.

Annex 3 describes the Terms of Reference for the Executive of the CWSMB.

#### Gender Representation on the Board

One of the purposes for defining the parameters of representation in the Board is to provide a gender balance, while maintaining functional relevance. The expectation in the above candidates for the Board is that at least 4 - 5 of the members will be women, with at least two of these being on the Board Executive.

#### Institutional Location of the Board

The Community Water and Sanitation Management Board needs to be anchored within an institution. The most logical location is the District Assembly.

Presently, all District Assemblies have Social and Infrastructure Committees which deal with issues pertaining to the supply and maintenance of basic utilities. This committee could then be the channel by which the CWSMB obtains legal status, in order that it may establish firm authority over water policies in the communities.

#### 4.3.3 STRUCTURE AT THE PROJECT LEVEL

At the level of the Project, the Community Management Programme will be managed by a Community Liaison Team. The team will consist of a senior project staff, the Community Liaison Coordinator, three Regional Community Liaison Workers and their GWSC counterparts.

The Community Liaison Coordinator will report to the Project Manager and through the counterparts of GWSC Project Manager, to the three Regional Directors of GWSC. In addition the Community Liaison Coordinator will have day to day responsibility for the work of the Community Liaison Workers and their GWSC counterparts.

A Community Liaison Advisor (short-term) will provide advisory services to the Community Liaison Team and the Project Manager. He will also provide general administration of the three regional Community Liaison Workers.

The three regional Community Liaison Workers and the GWSC counterparts shall be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the Community Management Programme. Annex 4 describes the Terms of Reference for the Community Liaison Teams.

#### 4.3.4 ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Table 1 indicates the organization chart for the Community Liaison Programme, linking the Community Water and Sanitation Management Board to the Community Liaison Team.

**FIGURE 1**

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE COMMUNITY LIAISON PROGRAMME**

Annex 1

**COST IMPLICATIONS OF TRANSFERRING MANAGEMENT  
RESPONSIBILITY FROM GWSC TO COMMUNITIES**

Terms of Reference of the CWSMB

**5 GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

In order to facilitate the full transfer of management responsibilities of water systems from GWSC to the communities, the general objective of the CWSMB is to establish a responsible and representative body, in which rests all authority and responsibility for the management of the community water system, including operations maintenance and cost recovery.

**6 MANDATE**

The CWSMB will be responsible for the planning, implementation and supervision of all activities relating to the community water system. They will hire or contract technical and professional staff from GWSC and elsewhere to assist them in fulfilling this mandate.

**Reporting Relationship**

The CWSMB will be responsible to the District Assembly with jurisdiction over the Community in which the Board is situated. On a functional basis, the Board will work closely with the Social and Infrastructure Community of the District Assembly.

**SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

- prepare, with advice from GWSC and the Project staff, detailed needs assessment of the community's water requirements;
- produce plans for any rehabilitation and expansion of their water system;
- participate in the assessment of the feasibility of these plans by technical teams from GWSC and the Project;
- establish the necessary policies and systems to facilitate community management;
- promote water use and the concept of community management within the community;
- identify candidates within the local community for training in technical and other aspects of water management;
- undertake the monitoring of progress in community water management.



## Annex 3

### Terms of Reference for the Executive Committee of CWSMB

#### **8 GENERAL OBJECTIVE**

In order to facilitate the smooth operation and institutional strengthening of the CWSMB, a Board executive will be established, comprising 3-4 members. The general objective of the CWSMB Executive is to provide leadership and identity for the Board.

#### **9 MANDATE**

The Executive will be responsible for the implementation of decisions and actions approved by the Board.

#### **10 REPORTING RELATIONSHIP**

The CWSMB Executive Committee will be responsible to the CWSMB. On a functional basis, the Board will work closely with the Community Liaison Team.

## 11 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

The specific objectives of the CWSMB Executive will be the same as those of the Board, including the provision of leadership and initiation of Board actions.

### 11.0.1 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

To implement the Community Management Strategy, an incremental Community Strategy will be adopted. This strategy means that communities will be given a set of criteria to meet, on an incremental basis, before full water systems rehabilitation and full community management can be established. The following steps have been in "hurdles" that the community have to pass.

#### *Community Willingness to Participate Determined by:*

- level of participation in all pre-project meetings and consultations;
- level of cooperation in all pre-project surveys, including how easily and readily they compiled household listings; the extent of cooperation in population assessment surveys; the level of cooperation and participation of community leaders in the Consumable-economic and willingness to pay survey.

#### *Community Willingness to Pay Determined Through*

- willingness to pay survey results;
- discussions with leaders of community and womens groups.

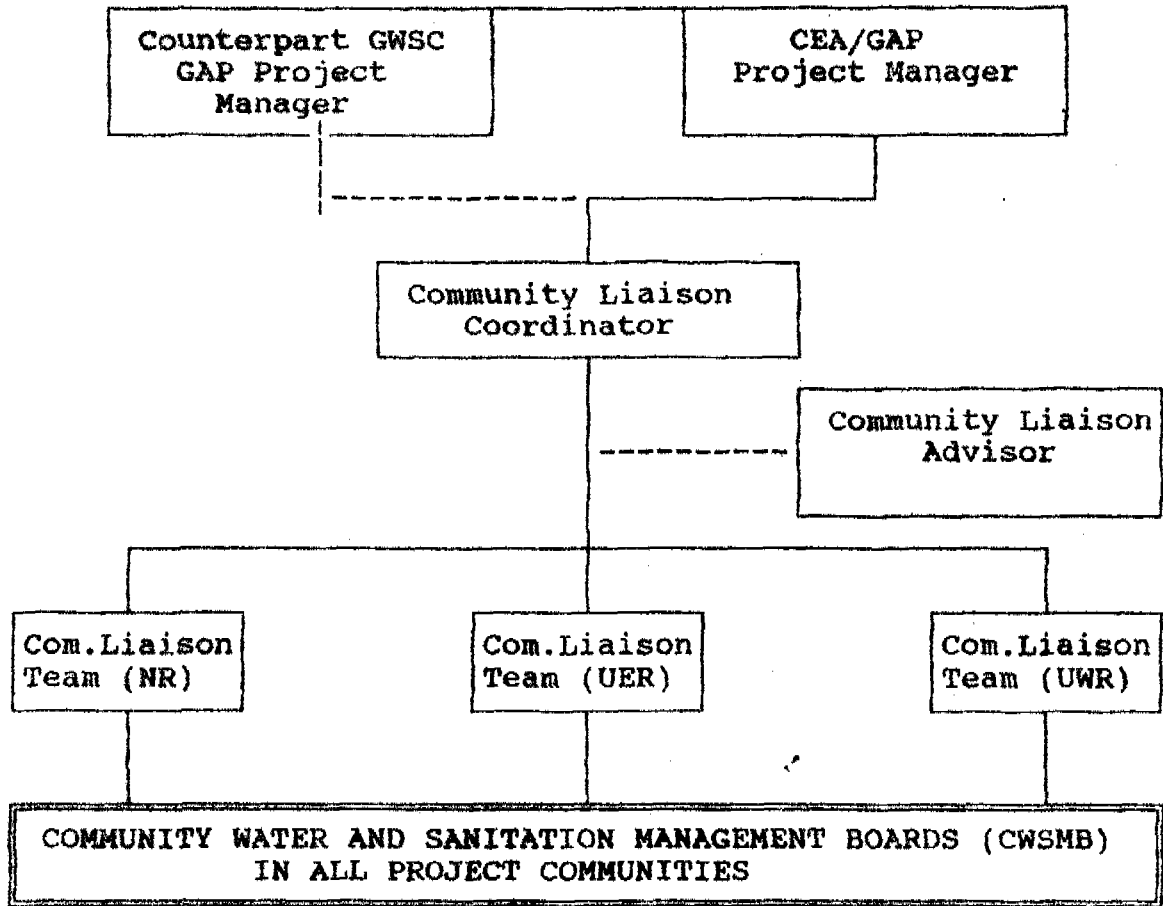
#### *Community Willingness to Manage, Determined Through*

- level of interest and cooperation in selecting appropriate members of the Community Water and Sanitation Management Board;
- level of interest and cooperation in the review of preliminary design;
- level of interest and cooperation in reaching agreement on community's level of financial contribution which it retains.

*Community Ability to Manage, Determined Through*

- **successful mobilization of the Water Management Insurance funds;**
- **decision on the level of user fees to be collected;**
- **decision on the user fee collection system for the community;**
- **level of cooperation in identifying training needs and in selecting individuals for training on various aspects of Community Water Management Operations and Maintenance.**

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE  
GWSC COMMUNITY LIAISON PROGRAMME**



- - - - - Advisory relationship
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reporting Relationship