PROGRAM ON WATER GOVERNANCE

INSTITUTIONAL AND POLICY MAPPING OF THE WATER SECTOR IN GHANA

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OVERVIEW

The urban water landscape of Ghana

- The government of Ghana's vision regarding water is stated to be "**sustainable water and basic sanitation for all by 2025**" which, for practical purposes, would mean that "all people living in Ghana have adequate, safe, affordable and reliable access to a basic level of water service, practise safe sanitation and hygiene and that water resources are sustainably managed" (Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing (MWRWH) 2014).
- **Ghana halved the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water by 2015**, in line with targets for water outlined in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but **failed to achieve the MDG for basic sanitation** (Target 7C) (Government of Ghana 2015). Even with these improvements, water access, affordability, and **quality continue to be predominant concerns**, in both rural and urban areas, including for the GAMA (Greater Accra Metropolitan Area).

Estimates of access to improved sources[1] of drinking water

	Ghana (Total)	Ghana (Urban)	Ghana (Rural)
1990	56 %	84 %	39 %
2015	89 %	93 %	84 %

Table 1 source: UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO), 2015

[1] "An improved drinking water source is one that, by the nature of its construction, adequately protects the source from outside contamination," the list of improved sources includes: piped household water connection located inside the user's dwelling, plot or yard, public taps or standpipes, tube wells or boreholes, protected dug wells, protected springs, rainwater collection (UNICEF & WHO, 2015).

WATER GOVERNANCE TRENDS

Ongoing Challenges

- The Greater Accra Metropolitan Region (GAMA) has a **population of 4.3 million** (Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) 2014) with a **growth rate of 3.1% per year** (reference period 2000-2010; GSS 2012). **Ongoing urbanization, population growth, and shifts associated with climate change** all pose considerable challenges to water supply infrastructure, as well as for other water-related goals.

Supply and Affordability

- **Supply deficits, water rationing and high prices of reliable water storage systems** force lower-income households to rely on informal vendors and community standpipes to obtain daily water (Peloso & Morinville 2014). As of 2015, the GWCL, the entity in charge of urban water provision in Ghana stated that it **no longer had a supply deficit for the GAMA system** (author interviews 2015). Our survey conducted in 2012 suggested that in relatively underserved areas, **nearly half of the population relies on indirect water sources from nearby vendors** (Harris et al. 2016).

Climate Change and Pollution

- The Government of Ghana relies on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to mainstream environmental sustainability measures in all policies, plans and programmes (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MFEP) 2010). Future strategies to deal with pollution, natural resources and climate change impacts include the **need to establish a climate-resilient and climate-compatible economy**, based on low carbon-oriented growth (Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) 2013).

WATER POLICY FRAMEWORK

Water sector objectives are largely captured in the **National Water Policy (NWP)** (MWRWH 2007), the **National Environmental Sanitation Policy (NESP)** (2010) and the **Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA)** (2010/2013) (MWRWH 2014).

- The NWP embraces the principle of a fundamental right of all people without discrimination to safe and adequate water to meet basic human needs while recognizing the economic value of water.
- The NESP embraces the principle of environmental sanitation services as a public good.
- Furthermore, both polices include the principle of subsidiarity (MFEP 2010).

WATER INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

- The **Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing (MWRWH)**, through its Water Directorate (WD), is responsible for **providing leadership for sector activities in policy development, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation.** The key agencies of the MWRWH related to water are the Water Resources Commission (WRC), Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL) and Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) (MWRWH 2014).
- In addition, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MoF), the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Health/ Ghana Health Service, the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) all have important functions relevant for the water sector (MWRWH 2014).
- The **Public Utility Regulatory Commission (PURC) regulates the urban water sector.** Its responsibilities include reviewing and approving tariffs as well as monitoring the GWCL and other secondary and tertiary water suppliers (in addition to other functions for electricity and other sectors). In addition to working to ensure that tariffs and rate hikes are reasonable, PURC **also works to ensure financial sustainability of the urban water system.** To this end, PURC has worked since 2013 to set tariffs for full cost recovery (MWRWH 2014).
- The **Ghana Standards Authority (GSA) sets drinking water standards** for water services in Ghana (MWRWH 2014).
- The **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)** was established to, amongst others, **protect water resources** and regulate activities within catchment areas including effluent standards (MWRWH 2007).
- The **Water Resource Commission (WRC)** is responsible for **water resources regulation and management**, implementing the Integrated Water Resource Management Strategic Plan (2011-2015) (MWRWH 2014) and granting water rights (Government of Ghana 1996).
- The **Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL)** is a state-owned limited liability utility and is responsible for **urban water supply throughout the country**. A study by the PURC (2005) concluded that the **majority of the poor are not served directly by the GWCL**, but rely on informal services or secondary and tertiary sources (MWRWH 2014). Relatively impoverished localities and peri-urban areas largely remain without a direct connection to the GWCL network. Reasons for this might include the fact that **residents do not have land titles or residents cannot afford the upfront connection fees** (MWRWH 2012).
- The **Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA)** is responsible for **facilitating delivery of water and sanitation services** in rural areas and small towns (MWRWH 2014).
- The **Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs)** are the highest local political authorities mandated to **provide basic infrastructure and services**

to support social and economic development. In practice, the MMDAs play a **minor role in the urban water supply**, which is dominated by the GWCL (Adank et al. 2011). It should be noted that regional district offices of the GWCL are not accountable to local assemblies, but rather to the GWCL headquarters which operates under the Ministry of Water Resources.

- **Communities** participate in **planning and managing their water supply systems** (e.g. stand-pipes and water kiosks (Adank et al. 2011) and water resources through their elected Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) Committees, Local Water Boards, Water and Sanitation Development Boards, Unit Committees and Area Councils (MWRWH 2014; Morinville & Harris 2014).
- Various **research institutions and initiatives**, e.g. the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Water and Sanitation Monitoring Platform, National Learning Alliance, provide **critical inputs into policy formulation, planning of water and sanitation services** delivery and water resource management (MWRWH 2014).
- **National and international NGOs**, e.g. the Water Citizens Network, and CHF-Ghana **promote water and sanitation projects** and engaging in policy making. ISODEC (The Integrated Social Development Center) is one NGO currently working to improve the situation of water and sanitation throughout the country, and is also **actively engaging to promote citizen involvement in key water governance questions**, as well as to promote the idea of the Human Right to Water and Sanitation in the Ghanaian context.
- **The Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS)** serves as an advocacy organization, as well as an **umbrella organization** that brings together smaller NGOs and interest groups working on WASH issues for coordination and for lobbying efforts.
- **Donors and international organizations**, e.g. World Bank, are involved in the **development of the Ghanaian water sector** and have a strong influence at the policy level (Fuest et al. 2005). Many have been highly critical of this sort of external involvement, considering it as a threat to Ghanaian sovereignty and democracy (Yeboah 2006).
- **The private sector** plays a role in the delivery of goods, services and works in the water sector (MWRWH 2014). Important for the example of Accra, **Aqua Vitens Rand Limited (AVRL)** is a consortium between South Africa's Rand Water and Vitens from the Netherlands) operated in Accra from 2005-2011. Failing to realize anticipated improvements during that period, and with a general sense that stakeholders were excluded from decision-making processes, the **government of Ghana decided against renewal of the contract at the end of their five-year term** (Adank et al. 2011; Morinville 2012). As reported by Adank, p 25, AVRL argued that they did improve the system, including reductions in illegal connections and increased revenue to the water company. They also noted ongoing challenges, including having to go through the national procurement system, as well as the fact that they did not own the system, suggesting that they were not able to make the required capital investments.
- **Alternative water delivery**: As the GWCL only **provides water to a portion of urban residents in the GAMA** (estimates vary, but are often close to 50%) and

while the service for those with access is often unreliable, there are many modes of informal service delivery and vendors are important to everyday provision of water (Peloso & Morinville 2014). While often falling short of regulating informal water tankers, PURC launched the **Water Tanker Service Guidelines** (2008), which provides for registration of water tankers and quality standards for water storage and delivery (PURC 2008). Tanker service points were also established by the GWCL to support low-income areas without direct connections to the GWCL network. Nevertheless, **tanker water is generally more expensive than water directly delivered** by the GWCL (MWRWH 2014). Sachet Water is an important source of drinking in Accra at present (an estimated 70.9% use sachet water for drinking needs, according to the General Household Survey Round 6). Sachet water is not regulated by the government and significantly more expensive on a per unit basis than most other water sources. Work by Morinville (2012) and Stoler et al. (2013, 2015) has suggested that in some ways the **sachet water industry also significantly undermines the ability of the GWCL to regulate** and manage urban water infrastructures, in part due to the fact that many sachet water providers are drawing on GWCL piped water to source their business. In large part, the sachet industry also remains unregulated with respect to quality and health considerations.

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INSTITUTIONAL MAP

The Figure below graphically represents some of the key institutions in the water sector for GAMA (compiled by Thessa Beck).

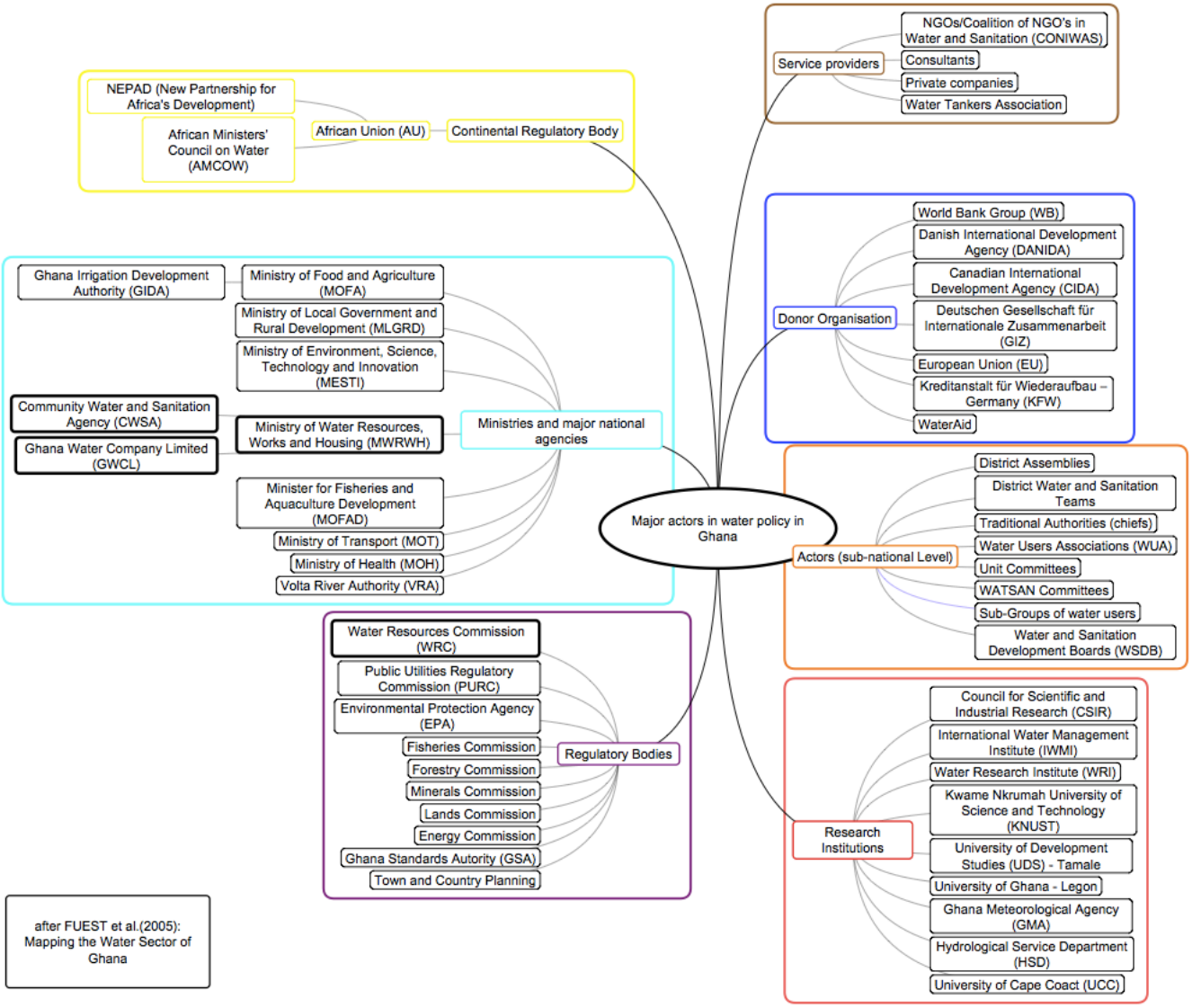

Figure 1: Map of the Water Sector of Ghana

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