

SERVICE DELIVERY AT SCALE: ADOPTION OF SYSTEMS STRENGTHENING IN PROMOTING HOUSEHOLD TOILETS IN LOW- INCOME URBAN COMMUNITIES IN GHANA

GAMA SWP
PROJECT

Brief

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GAMA SANITATION AND
WATER PROJECT



A happy household toilet beneficiary family in Kumasi

INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR) has been implementing the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area Sanitation and Water Project (GAMA SWP) with funding from the World Bank since 2015. The project has, as at the middle of 2022, facilitated the provision of more than 40,000 household toilets benefiting more than 350,000 low-income urban dwellers with improved household toilets. More than 232,000 school pupils are also benefiting from improved school toilets, while more than 400,000 beneficiaries are enjoying new water supply connections. Due to its initial implementation successes, the GAMA SWP

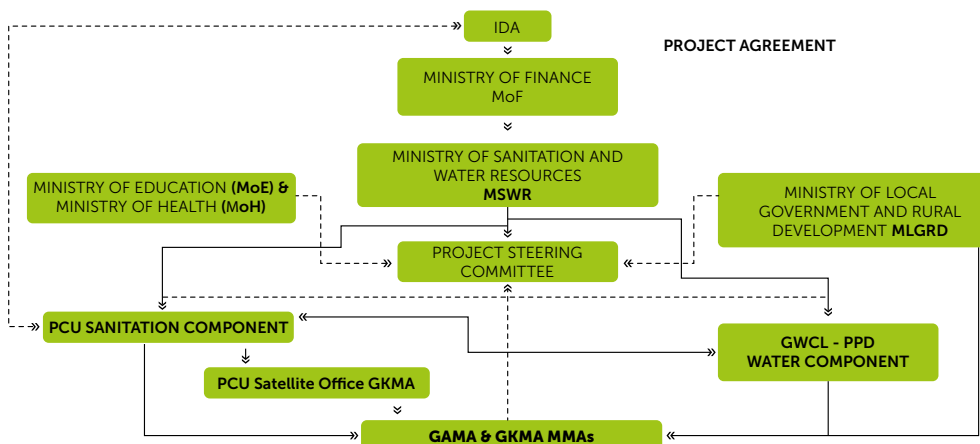
has received additional financing to scale up its implementation approach to Greater Kumasi since 2021, benefiting eight more Metropolitan/Municipal Assemblies (MMAs).

Overall, the project achieved all its targets for GAMA and indeed exceeded most of them by about 50% as at the end of 2020. Project staff attribute the successful project implementation to the adoption of a combination of 1) an innovative governance system, 2) innovative operational strategies in the field, and 3) effective technical backstopping from the World Bank. This brief describes some of the key strategies that facilitated the successful service delivery at such a scale, covering 24 Metropolitan and Municipal Assemblies (MMAs) in GAMA and currently eight MMAs in Greater Kumasi.

EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

The project is managed through a carefully thought-out governance system comprising very strategic public institutions and Civil Society Groups. The Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR) hosts the project and provides managerial and administrative oversight, liaising with the World Bank as the main financier and the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Finance is responsible for the overall financial management, in charge of all disbursements in relation with the project upon receipt of requests from the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU). The Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, through the respective MMAs, directly implement the project in communities with technical support from the PCU and identified Sub-Project Implementers (contractors).

There is a Project Steering Committee comprising high profile representatives from the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, the Project Coordinating Unit, Traditional Authorities, and Civil Society Groups. The Committee is chaired by the Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources, meets at least once a year, and vested with the authority to provide strategic direction, approve operational strategies, workplans and budgets of the project and to oversee an overall successful implementation of the project.



EFFECTIVE OPERATIONAL STRATEGY



MCE of Oforikrom, Hon Abraham Kwame Antwi, personally leading the Household Toilet Team to promote toilets at Ayigya

The Project Coordinating Unit, with technical support from the World Bank, has developed very effective project implementation strategies, the secret to the overwhelming successes. The project has a focus on low-income urban communities where household toilet promotion has been characterized by lack of prioritization by households, limited space for toilet construction, limited household ability to bear the full cost of constructing a toilet, and limited ability to pay upfront, in addition to being unattractive to financial institutions and large-scale construction companies. The MMAs also have limited capacity to sensitize the citizenry as well as enforce the construction of household toilet with existing laws and regulations. To overcome some of these hindrances, the PCU developed the following three simple operational strategies:

HOUSEHOLD TOILET FINANCING STRATEGY

- Subsidy as an incentive for low-income households to own a toilet facility by making it affordable. With this project, government absorbs 70% of the total cost of a household toilet; households pay 30%.
- Convenient payment platform for beneficiaries to save towards a toilet in installments.

SANITATION MARKETING STRATEGY

- Empower MMAs to lead behaviour change campaigns and promotion of household toilets in low-income urban communities
- Make the MMA a one-stop-shop for all sanitation needs especially for low-income areas. Thus, prospective owners of household toilets get all the information and technical support from their MMAs

FACILITY DELIVERY STRATEGY

- Adopt the BIO-DIGESTER toilet system to circumvent the physical space and cost challenge
- INCENTIVIZE large scale service providers (contractors) to serve low-income households - a venture hitherto unattractive to large-scale private companies
- SUPPORT small scale service providers to scale eg.,
 - Guarantee for loans
 - Fast payment for work done
 - Regular capacity-building training

In addition to these strategies (though not necessarily a project invention but a normal practice of the World Bank), one of the major secrets to the success of the GAMA SWP is the technical backstopping from the World Bank. In addition to the monthly and quarterly progress summary reports that it receives, reviews, and provides feedback, the Bank embarks



Officials from the World Bank on a Technical Mission to the Project Coordinating Unit in 2022

on a Technical Mission twice a year to monitor progress with each agreed deliverable including progress with financial management. The mission usually includes a field visit as well. The Bank uses the mission to critique every activity and decision, queries any slow progress and provides vivid feedback on their findings from the mission. This practice greatly empowers and encourages the PCU to review its strategies where necessary and in turn connects with the MMAs to step up efforts in the field.

CONCLUSION

Effective systems for household toilet promotion in low-income urban communities need multifaceted and integrated approaches: They require an effective governance structure, location responsive technology choices, continuous institutional capacity development, practical financing mechanisms, incessant and effective demand-creation, law-enforcement, and continuous monitoring and evaluation.



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