

**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**

**GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN RURAL WATER AND SANITATION  
SERVICES DELIVERY IN THE DANGME WEST DISTRICT**

**SUZZY ABAIDOO**

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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SERVICES DELIVERY IN THE DANGME WEST DISTRICT

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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## **DECLARATION**

### **Candidate's Declaration**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Suzzy Abaidoo

### **Supervisor's Declaration**

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Professor Stephen Bugri Kendie

## **ABSTRACT**

Gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation services delivery has been found to be one of the ways to ensure sustainable services. Despite its advantages, the challenges of effective gender mainstreaming into rural water and sanitation still remain. The main objective of the study was therefore to examine the challenges and propose practical strategies for enhancing gender mainstreaming.

The study combined different methodologies including a review of relevant literature and existing data, focus group discussions and key informant interviews. Data collected during this study were electronically and manually recorded for analysis.

The study shows that, while there has been significant progress in getting the female members of the management committees to participate in decision-making concerning the management of services at committee meetings, there still remains the challenge of women's participation at community meetings due to cultural and religious norms, lack of cooperation by some men especially husbands.

It is therefore, recommended that continuous and consistent sensitisation and awareness creation should be provided by the District Water and Sanitation Team with technical support from the Greater Accra Regional Water and Sanitation Team on the important roles of women in water and sanitation . This should also be targeted to men. Periodic training is also recommended for women to build their capacity to participate in water planning activities.

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## **DEDICATION**

Dedicated to my mother and special friend Monica Ama Duncan

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFD	Agence Francaise de Developpement
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CWSA	Community Water and Sanitation Agency
DA	District Assembly
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DO	Desk Officer
DWSP	District Water and Sanitation Plan
DWST	District Water and Sanitation Team
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAD	Gender and Development
GoG	Government of Ghana
GPRS	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy
GSGDA	Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda
GWA	Gender and Water Alliance
IDA	International Development Agency
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Office
KFW	Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau
LI	Legal Instrument
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MMDA	Metropolitan Municipal and District Assembly

MS	MicroSoft
NCWSP	National Community Water and Sanitation Programme
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
RCC	Regional Coordinating Council
RDC	Rural District Council
RWST	Regional Water and Sanitation Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNIFEM	United National Development Fund for Women
UWI	University of the West Indies
WATSAN	Water and Sanitation Committee
WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organisation
WHO	World Health Organisation
WSDB	Water and Sanitation Development Board
WSP	Water and Sanitation Project
WSS	Water Supply and Sanitation

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Background to the Study**

In most societies, women have the primary responsibility of managing water supply and sanitation services, being in charge of determining sources and hygienic quality. Water is needed not only for drinking, but also for cleaning, washing and food production. Women and children are principally the ones who draw water for household chores, transport it and store until needed. They often travel long distances in search of water, which limits their time for other productive activities. In eastern Uganda, research found that women spend an average of 660 hours per year collecting water for their households, which represents two full months of labour. Cumulatively, one estimate suggests that some 40 billion hours a year are spent collecting water in sub-saharan Africa-equal to a year's labour for the entire workforce of France (UNDP, 2006). In India, it is estimated that women fetching water spend 150 million work days per year, equivalent to a national loss of income of 10 billion Rupees (UNIFEM, 2004). It is generally agreed that a minimum of 20-40 litres of safe water is required per person per day to meet minimum drinking and sanitation needs (UNIFEM, 2004)

Women are also responsible for informal health care and education, therefore caring for persons who fall sick as a result of poor water quality, and

suffer a lot of trauma from heavy water loads. Thus, water provision and for that matter the water and sanitation sector becomes very relevant for women in fulfilling their practical gender needs. When women's access to water is restricted due to distance or time constraints, it leaves them with no choice than to accept lower quality water. This becomes an alarming alternative, given that 80 percent of all illnesses are transmitted by contaminated water (UNIFEM, 2004).

The situation is not different from sanitation. While men participate in the decision- making concerning the type of latrines to construct, women are the ones who take responsibility for cleaning and maintaining these latrines. The latter also have an important role in educating their families and communities as a whole, on good hygiene practices such as hand washing after the use of the latrines and at other critical times. Evidence suggests that their involvement is one of the major issues that make these ventures more likely to succeed (IRC, 1998). It is therefore important that their skills and knowledge are also tapped when decisions with regards to the provision of water and sanitation services are being made and thus take part in decision-making as well.

The importance of involving both men and women in water and sanitation management has been receiving global attention. The 1977 United Nations Water Conference at Mar del Plata, the International Drinking Water and Sanitation decade (1981-90) and the International Conference on Water and the Environment in Dublin in 1992, recognise the central role women play in the management and safe guarding of water (United Nations, 2005).

Declarations at all these international conferences support gender mainstreaming in water and sanitation projects. However, as Gender and Water



Alliance (GWA) report revealed, it takes more than ratification or signing of Declarations, to put the globally accepted ideas into extensive practice. Only a few countries like South Africa and Uganda have translated these globally accepted ideas or commitments into practical action, so as to ensure the full participation of both men and women in water and sanitation projects (International Water and Sanitation Centre, 2004).

This situation is no different from what pertains in water and sanitation projects in Ghana. In Ghana, the will to mainstream gender is there, since there are now committed organisations like the Common Wealth Human Rights Initiative, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Association for the Advancement of Women in Africa and the National Council on Women and Development, pressing towards this cause. There seems to be, however, a lack of coordination and concerted effort to move gender approaches down through the decentralised institutional chain. Very often, there are cultural barriers especially in some developing countries like Ghana and India. Women representatives may be prevented by cultural norms from expressing their opinions in public meetings that include men, even when their numbers are guaranteed through quota requirements. In Ghana for example, the Community Water and Sanitation (CWSA, 2010) stipulates that Water and Sanitation Committees or Boards managing Water projects or sources must have, as a requirement, not less than 40 percent women representatives on such committees in rural water supply and sanitation projects.

Access to safe water supply and basic sanitation is a fundamental need and a human right. It is important for the dignity and health of all people, and a means

to reduce poverty. The achievement of Target 10 of the Millennium Development Goals, which is to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015, is significantly dependent on the achievement of gender equality in water and sanitation management. This would in turn, help to empower women to be in control of issues that concern them, thereby helping to achieve Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals, which is to promote gender equality and empower women (United Nations, 2005). The active participation of women and men in rural water and sanitation services delivery becomes very crucial in improving the health of people and helping to reduce poverty.

A World Bank evaluation of 121 water projects found that the effectiveness of a project was six to seven times higher where women were involved than where they were not (Narayan, 1995). Again a study by IRC of community water supply and sanitation projects in 88 communities in 15 countries in 1998 found that projects designed and run with the full participation of women are more sustainable and effective than those that do not involve women as full partners (Wijk-Sijbesma, Mukherjee & Gross, 2001).

Empowering women therefore to perform their gender roles efficiently and effectively by having a nearby pump that conveniently supplies enough safe water for the family, is therefore important for achieving the national and international targets for water and sanitation and secure sustainability in their use and management. This would also enable women to identify and grasp new opportunities for themselves, to grow in confidence and attain a greater sense of personal dignity (Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative, 2006).

In Ghana, the government considers the provision of potable water and sanitation for all as important for faster economic growth and development. This is featured in its development agenda like the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy II (GPRS II) and the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA, 2010-2013), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that Ghana subscribes to. All of these documents give high recognition to water and sanitation. In view of the commitments to achieve the targets set in these documents, the Government of Ghana has undertaken various sector reforms with the aim of improving the efficiency and sustainability of water systems and services provided. One of the key principles guiding rural water provision is to ensure gender mainstreaming at all levels and stages of sector activities (CWSA, 2010). This implies that participation in decision-making regarding the provision of rural water and sanitation should be taken by both men and women. From the initial planning of these projects through implementation to monitoring and evaluation, women and men should be given equal platforms and be encouraged to make an input.

In spite of the fact that gender mainstreaming in water and sanitation delivery is incorporated in the GPRS I and II, NEPAD, the National Water Policy in Ghana, and CWSA's Sector Guidelines-General, according to Apusigah (2007) in her article entitled "Gender Mainstreaming, the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy or is it?" it is evident that gender mainstreaming has not been given adequate attention in practice. Furthermore, one of the key challenges facing the water and sanitation sector in Ghana, according to CWSA (2010), is the ineffective mainstreaming of gender issues at all levels of project implementation.

In terms of physical numbers for instance, within sector institutions like CWSA, the balance is skewed against women.

By Act 564 (1998), the Government of Ghana mandates the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) to facilitate the implementation of rural/community water and sanitation. The facilitating role is seen through the following:

- Recommending policies to the Ministry of Water Resources, Works and Housing and defining strategies, procedures and standards for rural water and sanitation delivery,
- It also provides backup services to District Assemblies in the development and implementation of the District Water and Sanitation Plans (DWSPs),
- It monitors the effectiveness of sector policies and guidelines and initiates reviews where necessary,

At the national level, the CWSA Head Office has men occupying most of the decision making positions (Directors of Planning and Investment, Technical Services, Finance, and Human Resource). The situation is no different at the regional levels. Apart from the Greater Accra regional director of CWSA who is a woman, all other regional directors are men. Therefore when it comes to decision-making, men are more privileged.

At the community levels, Water and Sanitation Committees (WATSANs) and Water and Sanitation Development Boards (WSDBs), which are in charge of the planning and management of water and sanitation projects at the community level, also have more men than women members. An example can be cited in the Dangme West district where the WSDBs for the 3-District Piped Scheme (a water

supply project that draws water from the Volta Lake, treats it in Aveyime and supplies to 120 communities across three districts namely North Tongu in the Volta region, Dangme East and Dangme West in the Greater Accra region) and the Osu-Doku Piped Scheme (water supply project for the Asutsuare and Osuwem Area Councils in the Dangme West district). These Boards have three women out of a 20-member Board and two women out of a seven-member Board respectively.

The CWSA (2010) requires that not less than 40 percent of members be women and 60 percent be men. These membership quotas in themselves do not highlight gender equality which should have been 50 percent each for men and women. These arrangements for women's participation do not guarantee meaningful participation because in most communities, women are reluctant to bring their opinions to the fore in mixed groups, due to cultural constraints and lack of information on a range of policy options.

According to Laryea, Dotse, Fiasorgbor & Ampadu-Boakye (2008), some other specific reasons given for the inadequate gender mainstreaming include the following:

- Women are often reluctant to take up positions in the management committees due to local beliefs, customs and opinions that they are inferior, a notion they have unconsciously accepted;
- Women discourage their fellow women from taken part in the management of the rural water and sanitation services;

- That the numerous roles performed by women as mothers, wives, daughters and income generators limit their time for active participation in decision-making concerning the management of water and sanitation services;
- Women consider their involvement in such organisations as adding to their already heavily-loaded domestic and other chores; and
- In some cases, the men see the involvement of women in such local organisations as a threat to their social status and tend to discourage them.

Since women and girls are the ones mostly affected by poor water supply and sanitation, it is important that policies, programmes and plans concerning such projects give women equal opportunity and encourage them to include their input. However most often, efforts to improve water supply and sanitation services have a tendency to overlook the important role played by women. While women are often the direct users of water, especially in the household, men traditionally have a greater role than women in decision making concerning the water and sanitation services, especially in developing societies. Leaving women out of the project design may result in inadvertently increasing the women's burden. For example, in East Nepal the tap-stands and tube-wells of the improved water services "are located along the roadside where women cannot bathe freely and wash their clothes comfortably for fear of being seen by men. In order to avoid this, women in Hiel village in East Nepal, carry water all the way to their homes, several times each day, spending significant amounts of time and energy to do this. This, unintentionally, increases their work load. In three villages on the Tarai Plains (Motipur, Magarajadhi and Gajedi) in West Nepal, women reported waiting until dark to undertake these activities. All these women complained that

the surveyors had not involved them in designing the tap stands or tube wells (Chandra, Regmi and Fawcett, 2001)

It is important therefore that both men and women are fully involved in Water Supply and Sanitation programmes where communities decide what type of systems they want and are willing to help finance. Involving both women and men in these projects make sense since the benefits from mainstreaming gender in Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) sector will not only accrue to women but to men and the society as a whole.

### **Problem statement**

Since women and girls are the ones mostly affected by poor water supply and sanitation, it is important that policies, programmes and plans concerning such projects give women equal opportunity and encourage them to include their input. However most often than not, this is not the case. In the Dangme West district, women are not well represented on the Water and Sanitation Management Committees, even though they are the ones who are affected when due to improper management, the facilities do not function. According to the District Planning Officer, although efforts are always been made to involve women, it has been very challenging. The women do not present themselves to be voted unto the water and sanitation management committees. Furthermore at community meetings especially during the planning stages, only a few women attend these meetings and these women do not contribute to the discussions at the meetings. Thus concerns that women would want addressed by the project may inadvertently not be considered in project implementation. The issue concerning

the ineffective mainstreaming of gender issues in project implementation is also captured as a sector challenge by CWSA (2010). This study therefore seeks to identify some of the difficulties that continue to hinder the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming policies in the Dangme West district.

### **Objectives of the study**

The general objective of the study is to examine how gender mainstreaming is approached in the Dangme West district towards effective water and sanitation delivery. The specific objectives are to:

- describe gender mainstreaming approaches in rural water and sanitation delivery in the Dangme West district.
- describe the gender roles in terms of rural water and sanitation services delivery in the Dangme West district.
- identify the factors that hinder gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation services delivery in the Dangme West district.
- examine the willingness of women to participate in decision making at the various stages of the water and sanitation project cycle in the Dangme West district.
- explore the outcomes of involving women as well as men in decision-making concerning the management of rural water and sanitation services in the district under study.
- recommend practical ways of improving gender mainstreaming in water and sanitation services delivery in the Dangme West District.



## **Research questions**

Questions that this study sought to address were:

- How is the Dangme West district Assembly mainstreaming gender in rural water and sanitation services delivery in the district?
- What are the gender roles in terms of rural water supply and sanitation services delivery in and the Dangme West district?
- What are the main challenges hindering the implementation of gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation services delivery in the district under study?
- What is the level of willingness of women to participate in decision-making concerning the management of rural water and sanitation services in the Dangme West district?
- What are some of the outcomes in involving men as well as women in decision-making in the management of rural water and sanitation services delivery in the district?
- What strategies would be adopted to enhance the effective implementation of gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation services delivery in the Dangme West District?

## **Organisation of the study**

The subject matter, the background to the study, the problem statement, the objectives of the study and the organisation of the study are dealt with in Chapter One.

Chapter Two follows with the literature review. It gives an overview of the theories and approaches to gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation delivery. Definitions of relevant concepts and words relating to gender mainstreaming in the rural water and sanitation sector are provided. It also examines factors that enhance effective gender mainstreaming, some suggested ways of involving women in the water and sanitation project cycle and discusses some challenges to gender mainstreaming. The chapter finally gives a historical overview of approaches to gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation delivery in Ghana and gives some experiences in mainstreaming gender in water and sanitation delivery.

Chapter Three introduces the study area and the methodology used to conduct the exercise. This chapter explains the research design used. This includes the population, sample, data collection and data analysis techniques.

Chapter Four presents the data and discusses the findings in relation to the literature as reviewed in chapter two. This enabled the researcher to give a summary of the study, highlighting the findings, drawing conclusions and making recommendations in chapter Five.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the study. It looks at the concepts of gender and gender mainstreaming, the rational and approaches to gender mainstreaming and factors that enhance its effectiveness in rural water and sanitation delivery, challenges to mainstreaming gender and strategies for effective gender mainstreaming in water and sanitation delivery. It also includes some experiences of gender mainstreaming in water and sanitation delivery and gender mainstreaming approaches in Ghana.

#### **The concepts of gender mainstreaming**

Gender refers to the roles and responsibilities of men and women that families, societies and cultures create. It is related to how people are perceived and expected to think and act as women and men, because of how society is organised and not because of the biological differences. Gender, therefore refers not simply to women and men, but to the relationship between them and the way it is constructed socially (GWA, 2006)

The roles and expectations of gender are learnt and can therefore change overtime and these roles and expectations also vary within and between cultures. Gender roles depend on political status, class, ethnicity, physical and mental

disability, age, religion, culture and the geographical, economic and political environment in which people live. These roles set the standard, and influence the identities of people apart from sex differences. For example, while only women can give birth which is biologically determined, biology does not determine who will raise the children or do the domestic chores (a gendered behaviour). Gender describes the set of qualities and behaviours that society expects from men and women. This forms the social identity of men and women. Applied to social analysis, the concept of gender is vital since it reveals how women's subordination to men is socially constructed. In this vein, the subordination can be changed or ended. It is not biologically predetermined, neither is it fixed forever.

A gender approach to any developmental issue therefore implies that, responsibilities, roles and attitudes of both men and women are taken into account, since both sexes do not necessarily have equal access or control over resources, and that work, benefits and impact may be different for the different groups. This approach thus requires open-mindedness and aims at the fullest participation of men and women.

### Gender equality

Gender equality means that the different behaviours, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favoured equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female (ILO, 2000). It therefore means that women and men enjoy the same status and given the same or equal opportunities to realise their full potentials and

human rights and therefore contribute to national, economic, cultural and political development and benefits equally from the results. This is achieved by mainstreaming gender or making gender concepts and approaches part of all developmental policies, programmes and projects. It is therefore essential for all developments and necessary for poverty eradication. In the Water supply and sanitation subsector, it means that women and men share control, contributions and benefits equitably and fairly.

#### Gender equity

The International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC, 2004) defines gender equity as a process of being fair to men and women. ILO (2000) also defines gender equity as fairness in the treatment of women and men, according to their respective needs. This may therefore include equal treatment or treatment that is different but which is considered equivalent in terms of right, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

To ensure fairness, measures should be made to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevented women from having the same opportunities as men. In the water sector for example, the role of women in water supply and sanitation should be recognised along with those of men. The result of the process of gender equity is gender equality.

#### Gender analysis

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> Caribbean Conference on Comprehensive Disaster in 2008, the University of the West Indies (UWI), Centre for Gender and Development Studies

in Mona defined gender analysis as the process that helps to assess the differential impact of development policies and programmes on groups of males and females. Basically gender analysis asks questions like ‘who does what, has access to and control over what, benefits from what for both sexes in different age groups, classes, religions and ethnic groups. Gender analysis of sex disaggregated data can guide interventions that promote gender equality and equity.

ILO (2000) also defines gender analysis as a tool to diagnose the differences between women and men regarding their specific activities, conditions, needs, access to and control over resources and access to development benefits and decision-making.

Gender analysis also means that in every major demographic, socio-economic and cultural group, data are separated by sex and analysed separately by sex. A gender-focus-that is looking at men and women separately, is needed in every stage of the development process. One must always ask how a particular activity, decision or plan will affect men differently from women, and some women or men differently from other women and men (Parker, 1993)

### Gender mainstreaming

The Economic and Social Council (1997), defines gender mainstreaming as the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences, an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal

spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal being to achieve gender equality (UNESCO, 1997 in GWA, 2003)

Gender mainstreaming has also been defined as the re-organisation, improvement, development and evaluation of policy processes, so that a gender equality perspective is incorporated in all policies at all levels and stages, by the actors normally involved in policy making (Council of Europe, 1998).

Gender mainstreaming is an internationally acceptable strategy for promoting gender equality, and therefore not an end in itself, but a means to ensuring that gender perspective and attention to the goal of gender equality, are central to all activities including policy development, research, advocacy, legislation, resource allocation and planning and implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects (UN Women, 2001). This is to ensure that women as well as men can influence, participate in and benefit from development efforts. Considerable evidence has shown that the integration of a gender-sensitive approach to the development and management of water and sanitation projects leads to greater efficiency, effectiveness and equity. A fundamental principle of a gender-sensitive approach is the fact that, it does not just focus on changing the role of women, but emphasises on the need to enhance women's involvement in decision-making, and management of development programmes and for that matter water programmes.

The importance of gender mainstreaming as a means to ensure gender equality was established through the Beijing Plat Form for Action in September 1985. For each of the strategic objectives identified at the Beijing Conference,

reference was made specifically to the importance of mainstreaming gender. For example the chapter on women in power and decision-making, specifically addresses the mainstreaming strategy, thus:

In addressing the inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision making at all levels, governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men respectively (UN Women, 2001)

The importance of gender mainstreaming provoked the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to adapt a resolution on gender mainstreaming in July 2001 which calls for the Council to ensure that gender perspectives are taken into account in all its work including the work of its functional commissions.

While gender mainstreaming is very essential in securing human rights and social justice for women as well as men, it has also been recognised that incorporating gender perspectives in all areas of developments and at all levels, ensures the achievement of other social and economic goals. Mainstreaming can reveal a need for a change in goals, structures, strategies and actions to ensure that both men and women can influence, participate and benefit from development processes. The objectives of gender mainstreaming are as follows:

- To reduce gender inequities that may exist in a given project,
- To encourage both men and women to participate in project activities; ensure that their specific needs are satisfied, that the benefit from the project, impacts positively on their lives,



- To create the conditions for equitable access of men and women to project resources and benefits,
  - To create the conditions for equitable participation in project implementation and decision-making processes,
  - To ensure the sustainability of developmental projects,
- (IFAD, 2000)

In order to achieve its objectives regarding gender, a project should ensure that:

- There is a strategy for gender mainstreaming,
  - Staff have an awareness of gender sensitive issues,
  - The project incorporates methods which will facilitate mainstreaming gender.
- (IFAD, 2000)

### **Rationale for gender mainstreaming**

The rationale for gender mainstreaming is to help identify where and what kind of inequities exist between men and women with regards to legal rights, access to productive resources, personal development and political participation. Very often but not always, women are more disadvantaged due to the fact that men dominate in most societies, which are often based on a patriarchal structure. Due to these existing disadvantages, it is not enough to provide equal access to services for men and women. Special conditions should be created to give the disadvantaged group opportunities to participate, thus filling the existing 'gender gaps'. Gender inequalities in most societies therefore require differentiated treatment of men and women beneficiaries.

Since gender relations are a social construct, and can be changed, it therefore becomes the responsibility of development agents to support the transformation of communities towards more democratic and equitable societies. Projects could consequently be used as instruments for the implementation of national and international policies, and could be created to induce or strengthen the processes of change. Although societies are based on traditions and customs, these will eventually change with time. This is also true for gender relations. Development projects therefore should ensure gender-mainstreaming in all activities in order to contribute to the creation of a more equitable society and ensure the sustainability of development projects (IFAD, 2000).

### **Approaches to gender mainstreaming**

Over the years, development agents have tried to bridge the gender gap between men and women and improve the status of the latter by adding on women specific projects to existing activities, since in most societies, women were the ones most disadvantaged. Women in Development (WID) was initially the approach which was used.

WID is that approach which aims to integrate women into existing development process by targeting them often in women-specific activities. In the case of many projects, gender was regarded as synonymous with women, while 'mainstreaming gender' was understood to mean gaining women's participation in project activities, without consideration to the fact that women face more and different types of constraints on participation than men. This approach therefore targets women and focuses on activities exclusively for them, thus excluding them

from mainstream development activities. The idea being, to make women more efficient producers and to increase their incomes. It thus often fails to investigate how women are already involved in reproductive, productive and communal activities (UNESCO, 2000)

Although many WID projects have improved health, income or resources in the short term, because they did not transform unequal relationships, a significant number were not sustainable (UNDP, 2006). This has therefore led to the creation of small-scale productive activities exclusively for women, rather than strengthening their participation in the main development process. Another result of this approach is the disproportionate increase in women's workload, with no substantial economic or social gains.

Due to the failure of the WID to achieve gender equity in the development process, the Gender and Development (GAD) approach was introduced. This approach focuses on intervening to address unequal gender relations, which prevents equitable development and which often keep women out of full participation in the development process. The approach seeks the participation of both men and women in decision-making and in the sharing of benefits. In other words, the GAD approach shifts attention from a women-centred approach and is more integral and focuses on the relationship between men and women, their differences, inequalities and similarities and tries to provide solutions for the creation of a more equitable society. This shift fits with the move to mainstream gender concerns, instead of integrating women's concerns. In its reference manual on 'Gender Mainstreaming in Development Planning', the Commonwealth Secretariat describes the shift as follows:

In an effort to respond to the needs of women, the Women in Development (WID) policy framework emerged in the mid 1970's. This sought to add on women specific projects to existing activities. Failing to address the system and causes of gender inequalities, this approach tended to view women as passive agents of development assistance, rather than as active agents of transforming their own economic, social, political and cultural realities. The Gender and Development Framework emerged in response to these flaws. It recognises that improving the status of women is not a separate, isolated issue but needs to be addressed by taking into account the status of both men and women, their different life courses and the fact that equal treatment will not necessarily produce equal outcomes (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1995).

The focus of this approach is thus on the social, economic and political relations between men and women and tries to address the inequities that may exist in order to:

- Transform these relations into more equitable ones
- To improve their access to development opportunities provided by projects (IFAD, 2000)

The shift towards a gender approach suggests that the women are not only the focus. However, the focus of this approach is on women since they are generally disadvantaged. Consequently, this strategy aims to tackle the imbalances that confront women through changes that affect both women and

men and their relationships. This may be a way of avoiding funding women-specific issues and also direct the focus from women.

Again, this approach aims at changing existing situations into ones where more justice and equality prevails, but also takes into account existing roles, attitudes and responsibilities of men and women. Accordingly, it becomes an effective way to give more opportunities to women and to have men share the burden and recognise the women as equal partners. It also provides a way for men and women to recognise and re-value existing patterns, and to identify possible efforts to improve the imbalance between men's and women's work, control and benefits.

A gender and development approach also improves more participatory and democratic management and decision-making and provides more stable social conditions for developmental projects. This approach also seeks to prevent the overburdening of women and re-emphasises the need not to reinforce automatically traditional roles, implying that men should also be addressed since they are required to change their attitudes and behaviour to support this (IFAD, 2000).

### **Gender mainstreaming issues in rural water and sanitation delivery**

According to the UN (2005), within the next 20 years, freshwater will become the most important strategic resource, essential for sustaining life and achieving sustainable development. It has being argued that its control, will be a source of power and the key to economic development, and it will be one of the root causes of socio-political stress. The global commitments made in the areas of

water and sanitation do not specifically address the equitable division of power, work, access to and control of resources between women and men. It is therefore, important to mainstream gender perspectives into every aspect of the development and management of water and sanitation to ensure that the specific needs and concerns of women and men from all social groups are taken into account and that the availability of safe water and basic sanitation is sustained (UN, 2005).

In most cultures, women and girls are primarily responsible for the use and management of water supply and sanitation at the household level. Over the years, women have been the ones to find water, store and use when it is needed. They also have been the ones to manage and maintain sanitation facilities and educate children on hygiene. Consequently, women and girls are often obliged to walk several hours every day in search of water, while men are rarely expected to perform such tasks.

A 2002 UNICEF study of rural households in 23 sub-Saharan African countries found that a quarter of them spent 30 minutes to an hour each day collecting and carrying water, and 19 percent spent an hour or more (UN, 2005). With availability of good quality water and sanitation facilities closer, comes greater self-esteem, better school attendance by girls and less harassment of women, since less time is spent in fetching water. However in almost all cases, decisions about the location and design of water and sanitation facilities are made without the effective involvement of the female users who have a greater stake in this regard. In spite of their number and their major roles and responsibilities in relation to water and sanitation, women often have no voice and no choice in decisions about the kind of services they need or are receiving.

The basic aim of rural water supply and sanitation service is not just to build pipe systems and construct boreholes or build toilet facilities, but it is to ease the burden of those who have to fetch water from unsafe and faraway sources and clean these toilet facilities. Access to these facilities, which are a basic human right, also improves health, boost production and consequently help to alleviate poverty. For this to happen and for the positive results not to fade away, the projects must function continuously, be used and must be a part of a process of social change. In Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, nearly 1.2 billion people in rural areas have no access to improved water supply and nearly 2 billion have no access to improved sanitation facilities (WHO/UNICEF, 2000)

Research and practical experience has shown that one of the most important ingredients for effective, efficient and equitable management of water supply and sanitation services is to involve both men and women equally in consultation processes as well as in the management and implementation of water-related services. A gender approach shows that women and men have a distinctive tasks and responsibilities in water (UNDP, 2006)

When women and men share decisions in water and sanitation management, it results in better use of time, money and other resources, including human resources; a greater genuine involvement and commitment of water users; and increased creativity for conserving scarce supplies and low-cost sustainable solutions can be identified. When empowered, the dignity of women and poor water users is improved through giving them a voice and a choice. Their participation will also lead to efficiency (UNDP, 2006).

A gender approach to water and sanitation management also leads to effectiveness of the water systems since women are the main water users throughout the world, being responsible for the provision of adequate water and sanitation for their families, they have valuable and complementary knowledge and expertise just like men do. The specific responsibilities women have in water for different purposes, give them expertise which is vital in the search for the most cost-effective decisions and management. Both groups (men and women) should therefore be involved in the planning and execution of water and sanitation programmes.

Furthermore, a gender approach to water and sanitation issues ensures equity. Efforts to attain sustainable development will succeed if the needs of all water users are addressed. These include women farmers, female-headed households (currently one third of the world's households) and those running small businesses. Women and children spend countless hours in carrying water over long distances and looking for places for sanitation. Convenient access to water and sanitation would improve women's health and would enable women and girls to take advantage of educational and training opportunities that can help them combat poverty (UN, 2005).

The benefits of a gender approach to water and sanitation necessitated statements made in 2001 at the Inter-ministerial Conference on Freshwater in Bonn, Germany, where government representatives responsible for the management of water resources stated in their final declaration:

Water resources management should be based on a participatory approach. Both men and women should be involved and have an



equal voice in managing the sustainable use of water resources and sharing of benefits. The role of women in water related areas needs to be strengthened and their participation broadened (WEDO, 2003)

### **Factors that enhance effective gender mainstreaming in water and sanitation**

It is not enough to have just a single gender person focusing on the issues of gender mainstreaming. It is therefore important that issues of gender in Water and Sanitation are tackled right at the institutional level. This is one of the factors that will enhance effective gender mainstreaming. At this level a gender perspective means, developing strategies for changing the unequal relations of men and women to resources and decision-making. Comprehensive strategies should be developed in national, regional and international institutions including government, donor and civil society organisations. Structures should therefore be put in place to ensure effective gender mainstreaming. In other words gender mainstreaming should not be treated as an add-on or side stream. Right from policy making through planning to implementation, issues of gender mainstreaming should be factored in. However, care must be taken to ensure that the process is not hijacked by a few women activists.

Gender analysis is also one of the most important factors that ensure effective gender mainstreaming. It is the first step in gender-sensitive planning for promoting gender equality (ILO, 2000). Gender analysis is an examination of women's as well as men's roles, resources, needs and priorities and helps to identify use patterns disaggregated by sex as well as gaps between men and

women in terms of ownership, representation and access. The resulting sex-disaggregated data and statistics should inform the development process or policy formulation process with appropriate measures to close the existing gaps between men and women. In this regard, training in gender analysis becomes very vital. The objective is not trying to make everyone in an organisation a gender expert but to equip staff with the basic analytical tools that will support the utilisation of gender and social analysis.

Furthermore, for gender mainstreaming to be effective, there should be gender-responsive budgets. This involves the analysis of national budgets from the perspective of their impact on women and men, boys and girls (UNDP, 2006). Analysing budgets from a gender perspective is integral to gender mainstreaming. If gender issues are built into policies and projects, it should reflect in the resource allocation, without which outcomes are not likely to deliver substantive equality for women. Budgets therefore become a critical tool for mainstreaming.

The rationale behind gender budgeting is that because of the different locations of men and women in society and in the economy, no budget line is neutral. By obtaining gender disaggregated data on such issues as water use patterns, as well as gaps between men and women in terms of control of water systems, representation on water and sanitation systems management teams and access to water resources and sanitation, a picture emerges as to whether or not a budget line item on water and sanitation is actually addressing gender disparities in this sector; and by so doing contributing to the empowerment of women. Gender budgeting involves both an analysis of allocations between sectors and within sectors to determine their impact. Gender awareness for men is also critical

in ensuring effective gender mainstreaming. It is as important to women's empowerment as is providing women with the support and confidence to develop and realise their capacities. Capacity building and sensitisation initiatives on the effects of gender inequalities should also target men. This is due to the fact that there could be increase in family violence as the men's reaction to power changes within the relationship. Men therefore also need to be the target of gender issues in water and sanitation services.

According to IRC (1992:23), men may oppose the provision of new facilities over which women have greater control, and which may afford them greater autonomy. Different strategies could therefore be used by the men to prevent women from participating in decision-making concerning the management of these services. Some of them could be to arrange meetings at times that are not convenient to the women or not informing them when meetings are taking place (Kivela, 1985).

According to Baden (1999), the problem of opposition against women's participation may not come from only men but lies more generally in patriarchal attitudes. Parents, mothers-in-law and even women themselves may initially resist the shift of gender roles implied in new forms of women's participation in WSS activities. Thus early consultation with men, particularly community leaders, and attempts to promote positive attitudes towards women's active participation among them are important. Where women are involved in separate activities or training, the potential advantages should be explained to the men as well as the women and/or complementary or parallel activities organised for the men (Baden, 1999).

Another factor that needs consideration in ensuring effective gender mainstreaming is the issue of culture. Attempts to mainstream gender can be potentially hampered or destabilising if strategies are formulated and implemented in a manner that is inappropriate to the local cultural context. Local traditional cultural norms should therefore be a major concern when issues of gender mainstreaming are being considered or when a gender perspective in development issues is being considered.

### **Strategies for the involvement of women and men in rural water and sanitation services**

Community participation strategies in the delivery of rural water and sanitation services do not necessarily guarantee women's participation. This is in spite of the fact that women and girls in developing countries like Ghana are sometimes involved in the management of these services, at the household and community levels. This is due to the fact that in some instances, it is difficult or unacceptable for women to express their opinions in public. Lessons learnt from the failure of many water and sanitation projects has increased the attention given to the role of women in WSS activities in recent years.

For example, in India, compost pits located outside villages went unused, and women continued to deposit waste near their homes - even when fined for doing so - because they did not wish to be seen carrying loads of refuse to the outskirts of the village. If there had been consultation with women, perhaps this problem could have been avoided (Narayan, 1995).

It is therefore now recognised widely that WSS projects that involve women from the early stages of the projects are likely to succeed and that women's involvement produces better results (IRC, 1992). Specific and practical strategies are needed to encourage women to participate effectively in the management of these services. These strategies should seek to involve women in all the stages of the project cycle and also to ensure that women's participation does not lead to an increase in their workload without bringing them any clear benefits.

According to the CWSA, (2010), the stages in the project cycle are as follows:

- Community mobilisation and Sensitisation;
- Health and Hygiene Promotion;
- Participatory Planning, Design and Construction;
- Operations and Maintenance; and
- Monitoring and Evaluation.

In order to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in rural water and sanitation projects it is important that the District Assembly (DA) adopt strategies to involve women as well as men in the stages listed above. Suggested strategies to ensure that this is done are discussed below:

#### Community mobilisation and sensitisation

This is the stage in the project cycle where the communities after having expressed interest in becoming beneficiaries of water and sanitation services, are assisted to form management committees to be responsible for the management of

the service and to ensure that facilities provided are managed in a sustainable manner. At this initial stage, conscious efforts should be made to encourage women to take up positions on these committees since women initially are not willing to take up such roles due to their multiple roles as women, wives and daughters. Furthermore, women in some cultures have the belief of being inferior to men and will in most cases allow men to take all the decisions with regards to rural water and sanitation among other development projects. It is therefore important at this stage for the District Water and Sanitation Team (DWST) within the District Assembly, to direct the communities to appreciate the crucial role women play in water and sanitation and the importance of having them take up positions on the management committees for water and sanitation services. CWSA (2010) requires the user committees to have at least forty percent of their membership as women.

Furthermore, through focus group discussions, women can be helped to take up positions such as chair persons, secretaries, financial secretaries, vendors and caretakers in addition to the traditional role of being the treasurers. Women should also be encouraged to be assertive within the acceptable socio-cultural limits. The selection of women into these positions should however be based on competence in addition to the gender-equity basis. Also, since illiteracy especially among women is high (UNDP, 2006), it is necessary to employ a variety of participatory approaches and tools that are pictorial.

## Health and hygiene promotion

The provision of water and sanitation facilities does not necessarily translate into good hygiene practices and improved health. The integration of health and hygiene promotion with water supply and sanitation delivery becomes important to derive maximum benefits; however that is no remedy for poor project design. The active involvement of women, in discussing health and hygiene issues, in jointly identifying problems and in developing appropriate solutions becomes necessary at this stage (Baden, 1999). Men and children should also be involved in the promotion of health and hygiene. The Gender and Water Alliance (2006) argues that all family members need to be aware of hygiene issues to make it work. It further mentions that for hygiene programmes to be more gender-sensitive, it needs to also target men and boys through culturally appropriate channels.

According to Baden (1999), the use of group discussions and personal contact is more effective than one-way information flows through lectures, films or other mass media. This will ensure that promotional programmes results in a positive change in hygiene behavior which will eventually lead to health benefits. Laryea et al. (2008) mentions the use of women extension officers or development officers as front line workers as one of the ways of involving women at this stage. It is believed that when rural women receive information from women extension workers, it has a number of positive impacts on them including offering an avenue for them to bring out their views and also help in identifying solutions to common problems.

Rural women are also likely to pass the information received from the women professionals or extension workers to their fellow women and counterparts. Laryea et al. (2008), cite an example of women passing on information to their colleagues after a sensitisation workshop organised by women professionals for the women members of the WATSAN committees, during the implementation of the UNDP Water and Sanitation Project in Ghana.

#### Participatory planning, design and construction

Due to the patriarchal nature of most rural communities, women are consciously or unconsciously sidelined during the planning stage, especially when it comes to acquisition of land for the siting of the facilities. This is because women in most developing countries do not have ownership rights to land. Women's opinions and preferences however, should be considered when sites for water and sanitation facilities are being identified, and these should be incorporated into the technical options for better decisions to be made, since women use these facilities more than the men.

Furthermore, women are more likely to pass on the practice of good hygiene to their children. Consequently, it is important that in the design of these facilities, women's concerns are taken into consideration. In water and sanitation projects, these include the ease of pumping or fetching the water, ease and cost of maintenance of systems and the availability of spare parts. With regards to basic sanitation or toilet facilities, it includes the height of the pedestal, type of seat, size and type of enclosure, lighting and location.



Although community members and especially the women may lack the technical competence in getting directly involved in the actual designing of the facilities, it is important that informal participatory methods like the use of pictures are used for the different types of designs being proposed. This will ensure that the communities and especially the women are well informed and participate in the choice of the designs. These issues determine the use or non-use of the facilities (Perret, 1985).

#### Operations and maintenance

The sustainability of water and sanitation services depends to a large extent on effective and efficient operations and maintenance. This is the stage in the project cycle where structures are put in place to ensure that the services are functional and in use. Examples of activities that go into operations and maintenance of the services include the following:

- reading of water metres;
- pump operation and greasing of pumps;
- cleaning of the water collection points;and
- book-keeping, routine maintenance and repairs among others.

According to the WHO (2000), professionals are now realising that the implementation of operations and maintenance function of water and sanitation services is not just a technical issue but has a gender aspect as well. Due to women's involvement in the collection of water, they are usually aware of breakdowns, leakages, and other problems when they occur. Also, because they are most of the times at the water collection points, they are in a better position to carry out routine maintenance. Furthermore, when trained, women especially the

older and married ones, tend to have a lower turnover than men. This may not be the case with trained younger or unmarried women who may leave the community when get married (PROWESS/UNDP, 1988). It is therefore important to involve more women in the technical aspects of operations and maintenance on the same terms as men doing equivalent work.

A study in Bangladesh of the performance of women hand pump caretakers concluded that ‘after 15 months of maintenance by women, the condition of the pumps was found to be as good as that of the pumps maintained by trained project mechanics’ (Bilqis, 1991). A cost-benefit analysis of a hand pump maintenance system using women mechanics concluded that, although training cost for women were three times higher than for men, the reduction in incidence and duration of breakdowns saved considerable resources and thus overall, the economic efficiency of the project was enhanced (IRC, 1992).

#### Monitoring and evaluation

During monitoring and evaluation, women have always been known to play important roles. Since women use the water and sanitation services on a daily basis, they are able to identify certain aspects of the services which men are unaware of. The state of the pipes or pumps, reservoirs or water quality issues such as excess iron or fluoride and their impacts are noticed early by women before men. Development workers could therefore increase the education of women on such issues in order to ensure the sustainability of the services. Consequently, development workers could take advantage of voluntary

associations, Faith-based organisations and community-based organisations as avenues to promote education on improving the involvement of women.

### **Challenges to gender mainstreaming**

Since the 1977 United Nations Water Supply and Sanitation Conference in Mal del Plata and during the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (1981-1990), the importance of involving both women and men in the management of water and sanitation has been recognised at the global level (United Nations, 2005). The principles endorsed at the International Conference on Water and the Environment in 1992 recognised the major role played by women in the provision and management of water. This was followed by the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 which spelt out approaches to Freshwater Management in chapter 18 of Agenda 21 (United Nations, 1992). This includes several references to the capacity building, education and participation and mobilisation of women as managers and decision makers of water resources and sanitation.

Principle 20 of the Rio Declaration states: “Women have a vital role in environmental management and development. Their full participation is therefore essential to achieve sustainable development” (United Nations, 2005). During the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, governments agreed to support capacity-building for water and sanitation infrastructure and services development, ensuring that such infrastructure and services are gender-sensitive (UNDP, 2006).

Regardless of the above commitments, efforts at mainstreaming gender issues into rural water and sanitation seem to be far from being a reality. There are certain factors or challenges that are hindering the potential and value of women to be recognized and harnessed at all levels of the water and sanitation project cycle. These could be categorised into cultural factors, institutional capacity and lack of technical skills for concrete participation. These factors are next discussed.

### Cultural factors

The extent of involving women in water and sanitation projects is greatly influenced by cultural beliefs especially in developing countries. According to most cultural norms in especially Africa and Asia, women are not to speak in public meetings. Young (1993) mentions that in most cultures, the pervasive beliefs of male superiority is very common. These hamper the participation of women in public meetings and form women's views of themselves, forcing them to accept their inferiority. Therefore, where they are even invited, they are normally expected to sit at the back where they can hardly hear. Laryea et al. (2008), also mention that women are often reluctant to take up positions on the water and sanitation management committees due to local beliefs, customs and opinions that they are inferior, a notion, women have unconsciously accepted. This is accordingly expressed visibly in the composition of local and national water and sanitation management committees and decision-making structures.

Though women are primarily responsible for water supply and sanitation in the household, at WATSAN committee meetings the men outnumber them. Men are elected to the management committee since, according to cultural norms,

that is their roles. However, according to several studies, women are usually keenly interested in any discussion to do with water and willing to contribute knowledge, labour and time to participate in projects, aimed at improving water supply and sanitation (World Water Vision, 1999)

Furthermore, where societies are segregated and secluded due to religion, it is often difficult if not impossible for women to attend predominantly male meetings. Male household Heads represent the family and in most cases where communication is gender-segregated, the male family members keep information pertaining to water and sanitation to themselves. A study conducted by Water Aid, Nigeria on challenges in mainstreaming gender in water and sanitation in 13 communities spread over the Plateau, Bauchi and Benue Programmes in Nigeria, revealed that men's relationship with women or their wives is according to the teachings and principles of their religion and that whichever position the woman occupies today is basically due to the practice and beliefs of the religion (Ogbodo, 2003).

The unfairness to women with regards to public participation, which is seen as a cultural norm, even in matters which affects women most and where women have more experience and expertise than men, is one of the most serious challenge to women's involvement in water and sanitation management. This cultural bias has been deep-rooted in the minds of both men and women for centuries and therefore not easy to change. Therefore, for modern water and sanitation management system to utilise fully the traditional knowledge and concern displayed by women, it is important and necessary to address these cultural hurdles. However, according to Young (1993:135), since the masculinity

and femininity characteristics of men and women are acquired through long term socialisation, which starts almost at birth and continue well into adulthood, it is not easy to change and violate these characteristics. Again, one of the conclusion made by Water Aid, Nigeria and partners during a study into challenges in gender mainstreaming in their programmes, was the fact that mainstreaming gender into water and sanitation has to be gradual since it might be difficult to change the position of women in a hurry due to culture and tradition.

In addition, women are tasked with multiple responsibilities as gender roles. Given the demands of collection of water, fuel wood and the responsibility of looking after children, sick family members, livestock and cooking meals, it becomes difficult for women to have the time to attend meetings, not to talk about contributing to decision-making with regards to the services. Further implication of the responsibilities of women on effective participation in rural water and sanitation delivery can thus be seen by analysing the 'Triple Roles' concept by Moser (1995). These are discussed below:

Reproductive: Childbearing and rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks undertaken by women, including the care and maintenance of the workforce (husband and working children) and the future workforce (infants and school-going children).

Productive: Work done by men and women for payment in cash or kind. These include both market production with an exchange value and subsistence or home production for actual use or potential exchange value.

Community managing work: Activities undertaken primarily by women at the community level as an extension of their reproductive role. These include

provision and maintenance of collective resources; water, health and education. Work is voluntary unpaid and undertaken in addition to the other roles. It rarely includes levels of decision making and formal community politics - this is often the role of men who get paid in cash, status or power.

IRC (1992) therefore mentions that, when creating new roles and responsibilities for women or when extending exiting ones, like asking women to participate in the management of the services, it is essential to ensure that, their workloads are not increased without bringing them commensurate economic or social benefits in terms of income or status gains. In Far Western Nepal, for instance, in 99 percent of households, women did all the household tasks, and in 94 percent they alone fetched water (84 litres per day). It was no wonder then that women representation in irrigation systems management committees was only 7 percent (World Water Vision, 1999).

#### Institutional capacity

Lack of institutional capacity to mainstream gender also poses a challenge to effective gender mainstreaming. Training in all levels of project management is vital for effective gender analysis. However, staff within most organisations lacks the knowledge or the necessary tools for effective gender mainstreaming. A study conducted by Water Aid and Partners in Nigeria to understand the current status of gender, in a bid to mainstream gender in all aspects of programme development in Nigeria, revealed that only 20 percent of all project staff in one of the study areas had been trained. The trained staff was therefore trainers in gender. It further revealed that, the little effort made in mainstreaming gender at all levels were largely donor driven. Key informants in some of the study areas mentioned

that they were asked to make sure half of the water and sanitation committee members were women (Ogbodo, 2003). Furthermore, Water Aid (1999), in its Briefing Paper on “A Gender and Development Approach to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Programmes”, it is mentioned that in most cases, government officials and staff, development agencies and their supporters and advocates think they are ‘doing gender’ yet this conviction may in practice be little more than the uncoordinated effort of a few ‘enlightened’ field based staff. It further reveals that this idea of ‘doing gender’ is often very much removed from the reality and is led from the ‘top’ leaving field staff with inadequate expertise and knowledge.

#### Lack of technical skills for concrete participation

In most cases, water and sanitation projects involve introducing and maintaining new technology and construction work. These activities are perceived as men’s, and therefore women are not given the training necessary to equip them to enter these fields, or the women themselves do not take interest in pursuing such training.

Furthermore, women’s lack of or lower access to education results in lower confidence to participate in decision-making in development issues. The United Nations (1995) reports that among the world’s 900 million illiterate people; women outnumber men two to one. This lower access to education also prevents women from occupying managerial, engineering and policy-making levels of society. Again, according to Manuh (1998), the lack of access to formal education and training has been identified as a key barrier to women's



employment and advancement in society. She reveals that female illiteracy rates in Africa were over 60 per cent in 1996, compared to 41 per cent for men.

Manuh (1998) mentions that in many African countries, parents still prefer to send boys to school, seeing little need for education for girls. In addition, factors such as adolescent pregnancy, early marriage and girls' greater burden of household labour act as obstacles to their schooling. It also reveals that the curriculum is also suffused with gender biases and leads girls into stereotypical "feminine" jobs in teaching, nursing and clerical work. Few women are found in scientific or technical education where they could develop better skills to secure better paying jobs.

A research by Sudman (1998) revealed that the Water Education Foundation is involved with 661 major public and private water agencies. According to her, of these agencies, there are only 24 women general managers. Again her research revealed that the National Association of State Drinking Water Administrators, which is an association of highest drinking water officials in each of the 50 states of the United States of America, has only three women state administrators.

In Ghana for example, out of the 10 Regional Directors of the Community Water and Sanitation Agency, only the Greater Accra Regional Director is a woman. There is therefore the likelihood that decision making concerning water and sanitation would overlook the importance of ensuring that inputs from women to the projects are taken into consideration.

## **Experiences of gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation delivery**

In developing countries, water is essential for sustainable development and poverty alleviation. However, at the end of 2002, about 18 percent of the world's population (1.1 billion) lacked access to safe drinking water, while 40 percent of the world's population (2.6 billion) lacked access to improved sanitation services (United Nations, 2005). It is against this background that gender mainstreaming becomes one of the very important factors in ensuring increase access to both safe drinking water and sanitation services, in a bid to meet national and international targets. The examples below show how gender mainstreaming helped to increase access to potable water and sanitation services and proper management of the water systems, thereby decreasing water-borne diseases and empowering women in certain rural areas in Africa.

Mabule village in South Africa- Women in Sanitation and Brick making Project.

Mabule village is located in the Southern district of South Africa. It comprises of 450 households with its men being generally migrants as at December 2006. The men's absence leaves the women with the full responsibility of caring for the children, elderly, feeding the family as well as water and firewood collection. In this village, there was a high incidence of diseases such as cholera due to their unhygienic environment and unavailability of suitable sanitation facilities.

The nearest water source was 10km away and for women and girls, it had become difficult to use the sanitation facilities due to poor construction and

hygiene. Open defecation by boys and men worsened the already unhygienic environment and made it difficult to change the situation.

The Mabule Sanitation Project responded to the problem in collaboration with the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF), the community and an NGO which seeks the empowerment of women. Brick-making to produce raw materials for the construction of latrines became an important component of the project. At the governmental level, DWAF made a decision to fund sanitation projects only where there was gender-balance in decision-making.

The community elected a committee that managed the project. Women who had completed a health and hygiene training programme filled 8 out of the ten positions. An analysis of the gender division of labour helped the community to understand the importance of women contributing to community development as well as to projects. The outcomes were seen in terms of improved health, women's empowerment and community development. Specifically, the following was observed:

- Clean latrines, not to mention dignity and privacy for all individuals when going to the toilet.
- Increased in the acceptance of women leadership and collaboration between men and women.
- The ability of women to manage a full project cycle.
- Finally, the brick project employs ten people (four men and six women) and provides the community with affordable bricks. This has consequently increased other related income generating activities and incomes for both men and women.

The key factors to the success of the project were the following:

- The community was sensitised to gender issues
- The interest of both men and women were built into the project
- The project created an environment that enabled women's participation.

The main obstacle was that the community did not initially support the idea of women leading the development project and also some husbands did not approve of their wives participating, especially in a sanitation activity, as in that part of South Africa it is taboo to talk about sanitation issues (United Nations, 2006).

Gender mainstreaming in water supply and sanitation in Manzvire village, Chipinge District in Zimbabwe

Water Supply systems installed soon after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 were often supply-driven and not sustainable. Consequently, women spent much of their productive time walking long distances for water for their families. This also adversely affected girls' enrolment which worsened as a result of an increase in dropout rates at puberty, due to lack of sanitation facilities in most schools.

In view of the problems which existed in the water sector and the sustainability of facilities, the government of Zimbabwe undertook a water sector reform in 1993. In these reforms, women's participation in project activities was encouraged, given the critical links between gender, water and sanitation. Four years later, the Chipinge district adopted a Community-based Management approach to water resource management and introduced it into some of its Wards including the Manzvire village.

Manzvire is a village in the Chipinge district which is located in the Manicaland Province, southeastern of Zimbabwe. Manzvire village had a population of just over 5,500 with 514 households at 2003. About 290 households had access to individual Ventilated Improved Pit Latrines and 180 had access to Pit Latrines. At least 45 households were said to have no access to any form of decent sanitation but were allowed temporary access to their neighbours' facilities. The village has no surface water, with the closest water source approximately 15 kilometres away. People use boreholes and shallow wells as sources of water supply. The village had 10 bore-holes with at least eight reported to be functional. HIV/AIDS and rural/urban migration contributed to at least 80 percent of the households being headed by females or orphans.

In 2003, UNICEF helped the Chipinge Rural District Council (RDC) to rehabilitate water supply systems, mainly bore-holes. Due to high external contracting costs, RDC adopted a community-based approach and targeted funds for community mobilisation and training workshops for local well sinkers and latrine builders. In Manzvire, the women selected the technology to be used and the site locations. The women also established savings and credit with revolving funds to purchase the locally available spare parts and greasing materials, with their male counter parts asked to make contributions to the fund where necessary. The women also opened a Post Office Savings Bank account to deposit these community funds. Some of the outcomes are as follows:

- Women have become actively involved in decision-making and now feel strongly that they are equally effective agents of change with the men,

- Since the maintenance work is done by women and on voluntary basis, the operation cost is significantly reduced,
- Though the funds provided by UNICEF were supposed to rehabilitate 15 boreholes, the active participation of women in operation and maintenance of the systems saw the rehabilitation of 60 boreholes,
- Women now have more time to engage in other productive activities,
- Girls stay much longer in school, since they do not have to spend so much time fetching water,
- Better hygiene behaviour is practiced,
- The health of the village of Manzvire has improved with a significant reduction in diarrhoeal diseases.

Some of the key success factors are:

- Village Health Workers trained by the Ministry took on the task of educating and disseminating information to the general public on health and good hygiene practices.
- Consequently, in the village of Mansvire, health clubs and other community-led initiatives have been initiated.
- The success of the project can also be attributed to the effective leadership of the councilor and to the traditional leaders who solved disputes when they were called upon to do so.

The main obstacle was the fact that male-headed households and the husbands felt threatened and disapproved of their wives' involvement initially. However an awareness creation of the benefits of training both men and women helped the men to accept the fact that women were equally agents of change.

Consequently, the men showed their acceptance by assisting with other household work when their wives were attending community meetings and training (United Nations, 2006).

#### Gender - sensitising a rural water project in Samari Nkwanta village in Ghana

Samari Nkwanta is a village in the Ejura-Sekyedumasi District in the Ashanti region of Ghana with 560 inhabitants as at 1992. The community has farming as its main source of livelihood. Before the water project, women in this village worked on the average 19 hours per day, while men worked around 12 hours per day. During the dry season when the community's regular source of water dried up, women and girls had to walk about three to four miles over dangerous terrain to bring water to their families. Many girls had to abandon schooling to search for water.

In 1992, the Ghana Rural Water Project was started as a result of a serious infestation of Guinea Worm, which had existed in the village for decades. With the help of the project, two boreholes fitted with hand pumps, two public Ventilated Improved Pit Latrines and a Urinal were supplied.

The project has brought about a more equitable sharing of power between men and women especially in the water and sanitation committees. Women also have enough time to spend with their families and for other productive activities (save on the average 5 hours per day). Girl attendance in schools has also increased from 43 percent in 1995 to 53 percent in 2005 and Guinea Worm is eradicated among the entire water- user group and farming practices have been improved due to reliable access to water. Additionally, the use of the participatory

and gender mainstreaming approaches contributed significantly to an increase in recognition of the equality of roles of both women and men on the WATSAN committees. It also gave both men and women in the community a real ownership of the water and sanitation resources.

Some factors accounting for success were the following:

- A gender sensitisation and mass awareness promotion was used at the start of the program.
- Ensuring that both men and women were represented equally on the WATSAN committees and received relevant training to support their participation on the committees.
- Ensuring both female and male users were responsible for the water system's maintenance and operation.
- Promoting sensitivity to both women's and men's concerns in the community.

The main obstacle to this was the fact that, regarding traditional gender roles, the male-dominated societies that prevailed in some moslem communities in Ghana was prevalent in Samari-Nkwanta. The women assumed that it was not right for them to seek other roles in the management of their water and sanitation resources, and discouraged other women from taken up such roles that were perceived to be for men. This obstacle was however overcome by a decision to consciously involve both men and women in the drilling, leading to the re-evaluation of existing gender roles by the community and given equal access training to women in water systems operations and maintenance and environmental sanitation methods (United Nations, 2006).



## **Gender mainstreaming approaches in rural water and sanitation services delivery in Ghana**

The management of rural water and sanitation services in Ghana started as the responsibility of government when in 1965 an Act of Parliament (Act 310) established the Ghana Water and Sewerage Corporation (GWSC) to be responsible for both rural and urban water supply. During that period, rural water provision was mainly boreholes fitted with hand pumps and hand-dug wells (VanEss, 2010), and their management did not involve the beneficiary communities or women. The government through GWSC staff provided the planning and design in-house and implementation was done by GWSC project staff. Furthermore, beneficiary communities did not contribute to capital cost or operations and maintenance of the facilities. According to Kendie (2002), the CIDA rural water supply project in the then Upper region in Ghana (now Upper West and Upper East regions) in the early 1970s, is an example of this approach.

However the challenges associated with total government responsibility in the management of rural water and sanitation services delivery therefore required a shift in management towards more community involvement. Community management of rural water and sanitation services then became the leading concept in rural water supply and sanitation in Ghana.

The Agence Francaise de Developpement (AFD) Rural Water Supply Project in the Central Region between 1991 and 1998 had the community being involved in the management. This involved community sensitisation and the opening of bank accounts by communities, out of which they paid for repairs of

the pumps. This was the onset of some degree of participation by beneficiaries towards the management of rural water and sanitation services.

Other donor projects in rural water and sanitation delivery which included the small towns' pipe schemes, between 1993 and 1994 saw increasing participation of beneficiary communities in the management of such facilities. These were demonstrated through the following:

- Formation of community management committees namely WATSANs and WSDBs
- Trained pump caretakers at community levels
- Community contribution to capital cost
- Participatory planning at community levels
- Training of area mechanics
- Communities took full responsibility for the operations and maintenance

Due to Government of Ghana's recognition of the importance of involving women in rural water and sanitation service delivery and also the fact that community participation did not guarantee women's participation, the National Community Water and Sanitation Programme (1994) developed strategies or approaches to ensure that gender is mainstreamed into rural water and sanitation delivery activities. These strategies are as follows:

- That at least not less than 40 percent of members of the WATSAN Committees or Water Boards are women,
- That extra effort is made during community mobilisation to target identifiable groups especially women E.g. Market Queens,
- That women are encouraged to be Water Vendors,

- Training of female pump operators and to undertake minor repairs,
- Creating awareness on the need for women to participate in the planning and management of rural water and sanitation services.

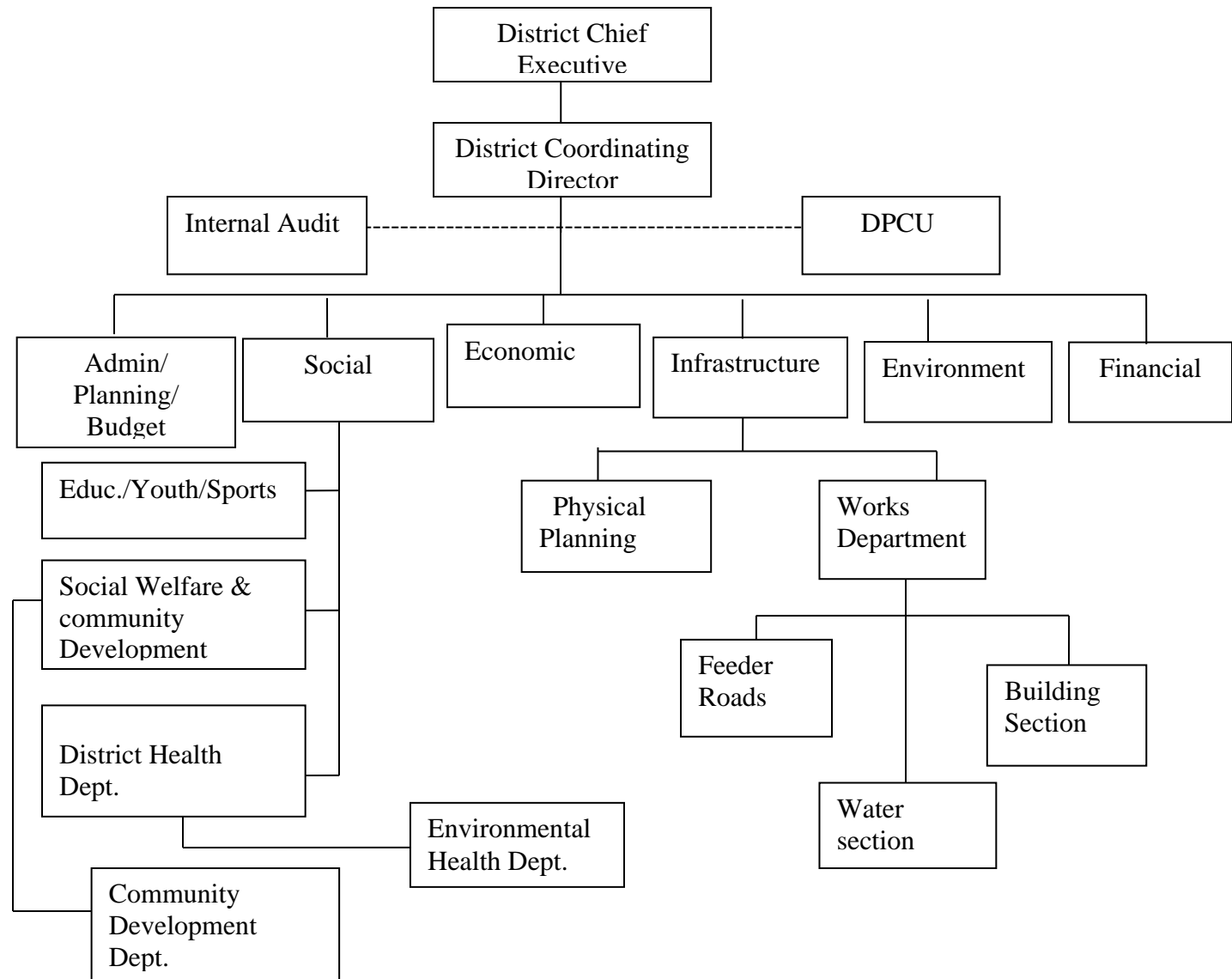
### **Management of rural water and sanitation services in Dangme West District**

The management of water and sanitation services in the Dangme West district is the responsibility of the District Assembly and the beneficiary communities. These communities form management committees called Water and Sanitation Committees (WATSANs) and Water and Sanitation Development Boards (WSDBs). The formation of these committees are facilitated by the project staff with support from the DWST to ensure that the NCWSP (1994) rules regarding the formation of water and sanitation management committees are adhered to, one of which is ensuring that at least 40 percent of the members are women. The structure and specific roles and responsibilities of the key players in the management of the water and sanitation services in the Dangme West district are discussed below:

### **Roles and responsibilities of the Dangme West District Assembly**

The Dangme West District Assembly is responsible for the overall implementation of programmes including water and sanitation and the development of the communities within their jurisdiction. This is in accordance with Ghana's decentralisation policy as stipulated in the 1992 Constitution and Act 462 of the Local Government Act of 1993. The Dangme West District Assembly works through its District Water and Sanitation Team (DWST) to

promote water and sanitation projects in the communities. A Desk Officer (DO) for the District's Water and Sanitation Projects has been appointed by the Assembly to coordinate the activities of the DWST. The DWST with the support of the Water and Sanitation Desk Officer prepares and submit annual work plans and budgets for the approval by the District Assembly (DA). The Team is composed of an Environmental Health and Sanitation Officer, a Community Development Officer and a Technical Officer (CWSA, 2008). The DWST is not a formal unit within the District Assembly structure. Its creation was necessitated during the implementation of the NCWSP (1994) when there was the need to have a focal point at the district level. This arrangement became necessary since CWSA, which is mandated to facilitate the provision of rural water and sanitation, is not represented at the district level. The DWST is therefore the contact for all water and sanitation projects and assists the District Assembly in the implementation of its water and sanitation projects and also serve as a liaison between the regional CWSA offices and the beneficiary communities. Currently, a new structure has been created for DAs with water coming under the District Works Department (DWD) and is being piloted in a number of districts. Figure 1 shows the Dangme West district departmental organogram.



**Figure 1: Dangme West district departmental structure**

Source: Dangme West District Assembly

The specific roles and responsibilities of the Dangme West District Assembly with regards to the management of rural water and sanitation services in their area of jurisdiction as stipulated in the Sector Guidelines–General (CWSA, 2010) are the following:

- To prepare District Water and Sanitation Plans in line with the Medium Term Plans of the Assembly,
- To monitor operation and maintenance of systems in terms of financial, technical and administrative performance,
- To periodically audit WSDB and WATSAN committee accounts,
- To review and approve community tariffs,
- To approve bye-laws for the operation of WSDBs and WATSANs,
- To provide technical approval for WSDB plans,
- To disseminate information on water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion,
- To support the District Works Department/DWST to provide technical support to WSDBs and WATSAN committees,
- To let, manage and monitor contracts at the district level

### **Roles and responsibilities of water and sanitation development boards**

According to the CWSA's National Community Water and Sanitation Programme (1994), an underlying principle governing the management of rural water and sanitation services is the community ownership and management principle. Communities which demand and are provided water and sanitation facilities become the ultimate beneficiaries of the facilities and are responsible for

their operations and maintenance. All communities with water sources elect voluntary groups known as Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) committees. These committees are for communities with population less than 2,000. For small towns with population between 2,000 and 50,000, the committees are known as Water and Sanitation Development Board (WSDB). The WSDBs are found in communities served by small towns' pipe systems, where water is supplied to households through piped systems or Stand Pipes in the various communities under the scheme.

Over the years, the composition of the WSDBs has evolved. However, in 2008, the Government of Ghana (GoG) through the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) promulgated a model bye-law for the establishment and operations of WSDB. According to the model bye-law the WSDBs will hold the water systems in trust and manage for and on behalf of the District Assembly (MLGRDE, 2008). Its composition is as follows: The membership of the Board shall not be less than 10 and not more than 15 members, of whom one-third shall be women and at least one-third shall be representatives of the Assembly or Town/Area Council. The Assembly however, shall determine the total number of each WSDB, based on the number of constituencies. The constituencies shall include the following:

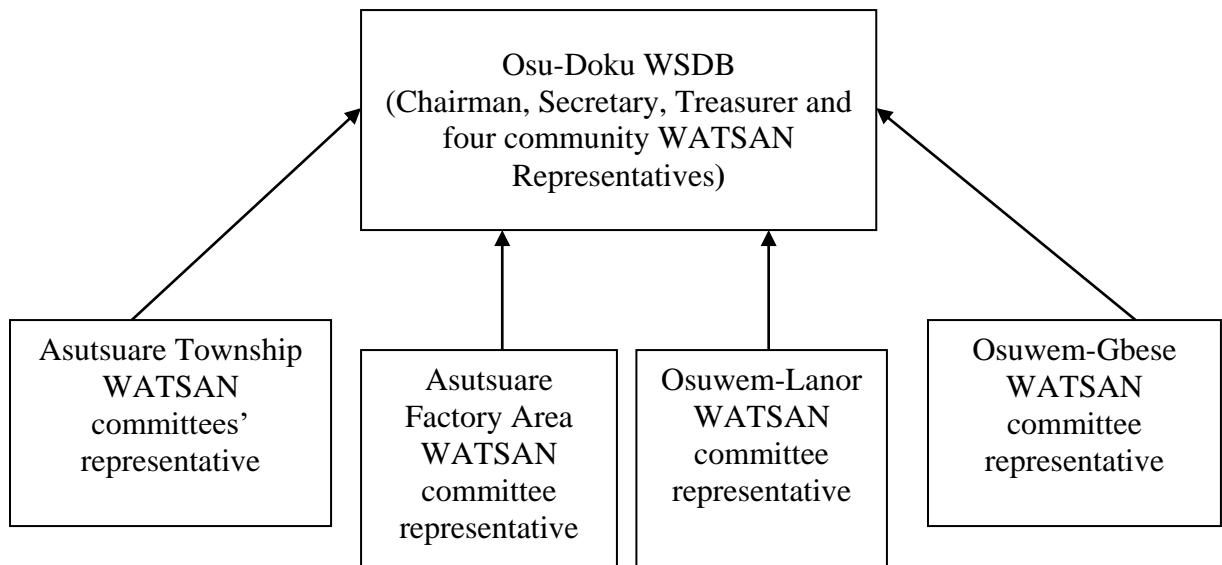
- WATSAN committees established in designated neighbourhoods of the area or communities as may be duly understood to be representative of the area or communities
- The elected Assembly members of the area or the community
- The Town/Area Council members of the area or community

- Water user groups
- Women's organisations

In Dangme West district, the Osu-Doku and three-District WSDB were formed before the promulgation of the model bye-law. Therefore their compositions do not conform to the model bye-law, with memberships of seven and 20 respectively.

The model bye-law has now been adopted by the Dangme West District and has therefore become the district's bye-law. The WSDBs in the district are composed of a chairperson, secretary and treasurer. These form the executive members. The others are WATSAN committee members representing areas within the jurisdiction of the WSDB. The Osu-Doku WSDB for example has the three executive members and four representatives of WATSAN committees in four communities within the Asutsuare and Osumen Area Councils which is known as the Osu-Doku area and is served by the Osu-Doku piped system. The communities whose representatives form part of the Osu-Doku WSDB are parts of Asutsuare township, Asutsuare factory area, Osuwem- Lanor and Osuwem-Gbese. There is no formal organisational structure for the WSDBs. Figure 2 however could describe the management structure of the Osu-Doku WSDB.





**Figure 2: Description of the structure of Osu-Doku WSDB**

Source: Field Data

The specific roles and responsibilities of the WSDB are in line with the Rural Communities and Small Towns' Guidelines (CWSA, 2008). These are the following:

- Preparation and execution of plans for the provision of improved water supply and sanitation facilities.
- Mobilisations of funds to pay for operations and maintenance costs
- Setting of tariffs.
- Setting of application procedures, connection and re-connection fees for service connections.
- Ensuring the sustainability of facilities provided.
- Collection of technical data, on the management of the water supply system.
- Preparation of financial records for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and provide records to DA and CWSA for inspection.
- Auditing of financial records internally.

- Presentation of report on management of water supply system twice yearly to the entire community (town).
- Facilitation or promotion sanitation and hygiene education activities in the towns.

### **Roles and responsibilities of water and sanitation committees**

Water systems in the small communities are managed by the WATSAN committees. These committees are mainly found in the small communities with small water systems like boreholes or hand-dug wells. The WATSAN committees are made up of a chairman, secretary and treasurer. The other members are organiser(s), hygiene educator(s). The Volivo WATSAN committee for example has a seven-member committee comprising the chairman, secretary, treasurer, two hygiene educators, and two organisers. The Atrobinya WATSAN committee also has a seven member committee comprising of a chairman, secretary, treasurer, two hygiene educators, one organisers and one member. The Kewum, Dawa and Someh communities each have a seven-member WATSAN committee comprising the chairman, secretary, treasurer, one hygiene educator, two organisers and one member. The WATSAN committees have no organogram.

The roles of the WATSAN committees are in line with the Rural Communities and Small Towns' Guidelines (CWSA, 2008). These are the following:

- Ensuring cleanliness at the location of the water systems.
- Setting of tariffs.
- Assisting in hygiene education in the communities.

- Keeping proper accounts of proceeds from the sale of the water.
- To mobilise funds to pay for operations and maintenance costs.
- To set application procedures, connection and re-connection fees for service connections.
- To ensure sustainability of facilities provided.
- To collect technical data, on the management of the water supply system.
- To prepare financial records for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and provide records to DA and CWSA for inspection.
- To audit financial records internally.
- To present report on management of water supply system twice yearly to the entire community.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

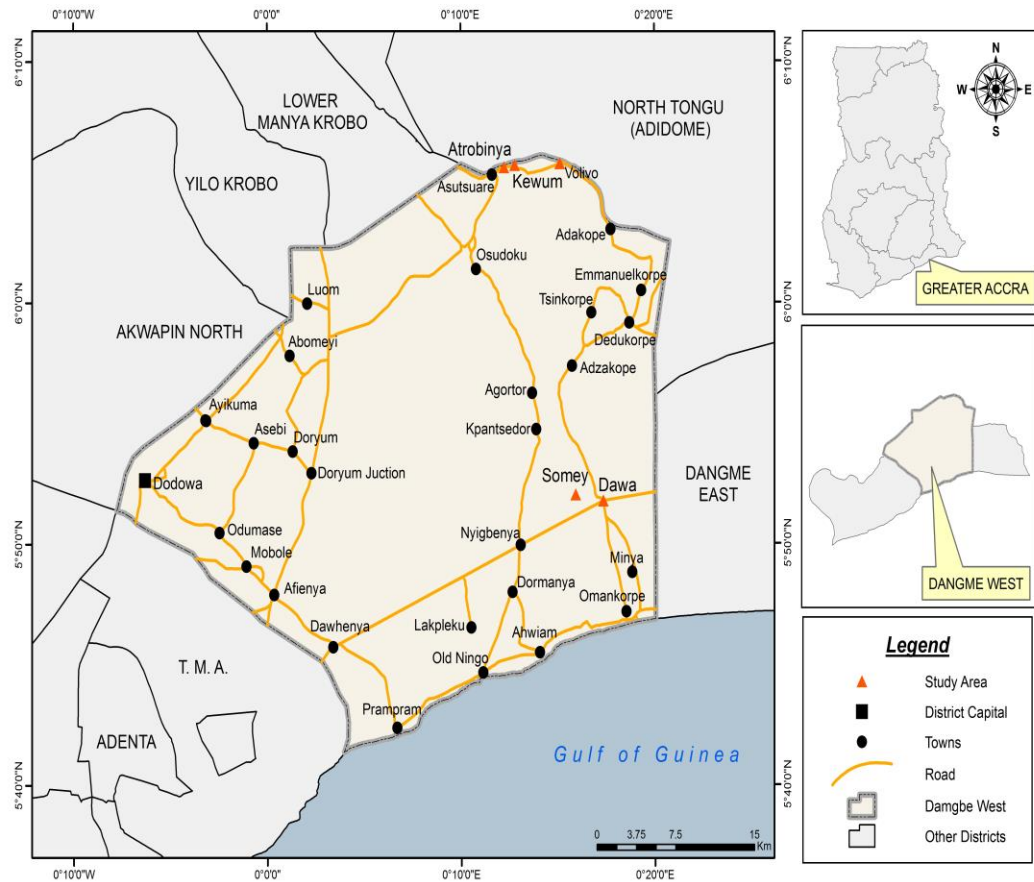
### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter introduces the study area, focuses on how data was gathered and analysed during the study. It gives the details of procedures, instruments and tools be used to gather and process data into useful information for writing the dissertation.

#### **Study area**

This study focused on the Dangme West district of the Greater Accra region. The district is situated in the south-eastern part of Ghana. It has a total land area of 1,442 square kilometres making it the largest among the five districts in the Greater Accra Region, with a land size which represents 41.5 percent of the regional land area (MLGRD, 2006). In 1988, the district was carved out of the former Dangme District, as a result of a national re- demarcation exercise carried out in relation to decentralization reforms in the country. It shares boundaries with the Yilo Krobo District on the North-West, North-Tongu District on the North-East, Akwapim-North on the West, Tema District on the South-West and Dangme-East District on the East.



**Figure 3: A map of the Dangme West district**

Source: Geography Department, University of Cape Coast

The district's population according to the Ghana Statistical Service (2002) stood at 96,809. Out of this 48.2 percent were males and 51.8 percent females. However, with a growth rate of 2.1% per annum, which has not changed over the last 3 censal periods (1970, 1984 and 2000), it is estimated that the district population stands presently at 107,532 (MLGRD, 2006).

The choice of Dangme West district as the study area was due to the fact that it is the largest district in the Greater Accra region in terms of land size and also the district with the second largest CWSA water and sanitation interventions within the Greater Accra region and have all the types of water systems namely:

the urban water systems managed by Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL), the Small Towns' Piped Schemes and the boreholes fitted with hand pumps. The district therefore presented an excellent opportunity for obtaining reliable data on the different types of water systems and their management. Lastly, it was also selected based on its close proximity to the researcher thus minimizing the cost of data collection for the study.

### Climate

The south-eastern coastal plain of Ghana, which encompasses the district under study, is one of the hottest and driest parts of the country. Temperatures are however subjected to occasional and minimal moderating influences along the coast and altitudinal influences affected by the Akwapim range in the northwest (MLGRD, 2006).

Temperatures are basically high for a greater part of the year with the highest during the main dry season (November-March) and lowest during the short dry season (July-August). The maximum temperature is 40 degrees Celsius. Rainfall is generally low, with most rains very inconsistent in nature and coming mostly between September and November. Mean annual rainfall increases from 762.5 milliliters on the coast to 1220 millilitres to the North and Northeast, close to the foothills of the Akwapim range (MLGRD, 2006)

### Topography

The district forms part of the Accra plains. The relief is generally gentle and undulating, a low plain with heights not exceeding 70 metres. The plains are

interspersed in isolated areas by a few prominent isolated hills, outliers and knolls scattered unevenly over the area (MLGRD, 2006).

#### Vegetation and soils

The predominant vegetation type found in the Dangme West District is of the short grass savannah interspersed with shrubs and short trees. A portion of the vegetation remains dry for most parts of the year particularly towards the south, except for the short rainy season. The effects of seasonal bushfires that affect most parts of the district especially during the dry season, further depreciate the quality of the vegetation. The major types of soil in the district are the black clays in the large central to eastern parts. When wet, they are highly elastic but become hard and compact when dry and crack vertically from the surface. This makes the soil unsuitable for hand cultivation. Other soil types include those consisting of grey-brown soils loamy for about 15-30 centimetres at the surface then suddenly changing to impervious clay which contains lime concentration below a depth of 60 centimetres (MLGRD, 2006)

#### Drainage

The general pattern of drainage in the district is dendritic with most of the streams taking their source from the Akwapim range, which also serve as a watershed and then flow in a north-west to south-west direction into lagoons on the coast.

Most of the streams flow over a fairly low terrain and have carved wide valleys for themselves, which are left dry for most parts of the year. The seasonal

nature of most of the streams caused by high temperatures and equally high insulation levels has encouraged the creation of a number of artificial dams and ponds of varying size. Ground water potentials in the district are quite low and saline. A greater part of the district therefore relies on pipe-borne water from Kpong (MLGRD, 2006)

#### Water supply

Water supply and sanitation services in the Dangme West district is the responsibility of the District Assembly in accordance with the Local Government Act, 462 of 1993. There are 231 communities in the district as indicated in the 2000 population and housing census. Water is supplied to the communities by Ghana Water Company Limited systems, Small Towns' Piped Schemes (water is pumped from a mechanised borehole or water source into an overhead reservoir and distributed to metred homestead or stand pipes) and boreholes fitted with hand pumps. The small towns schemes serve communities with a population between 2,000 and 50,000 referred to as small towns and the boreholes fitted with hand pumps serve communities with population less than 2,000. These are referred to as rural communities (CWSA, 2010). The coverage of water supply in the district is 75 percent (CWSA, 2010). The district has two small towns' piped schemes. These are the 3-District piped scheme (a water supply project that draws water from the Volta Lake, treats it in Aveyime and supplies to 120 communities as at 2010, across three districts namely North Tongu in the Volta region, Dangme East and Dangme West in the Greater Accra region), and the Osu-Doku



piped scheme (water supply project serving some communities in the Asutsuare and Osuwem Area Councils in the Dangme West district).

Out of the 231 communities, 33 communities are served by the 3-District piped scheme and four communities are served by the Osu-Doku piped scheme. The four communities are parts of Asutsuare township, Asutsuare factory area, Osuwem Lanor and Osuwem Gbese. These Small Towns' Piped Schemes are managed by the Water and Sanitation Development Boards (WSDBs). There are 16 communities served and managed by GWCL. These are Prampram, Kodiebe, Doryumu, Dawanya, Mobole, Asutware, New Ningo, Afienea, Agomeda, Ayikuma, Adumse, Mataheko, Old Ningo, Watreko, Dodowa, Congo. With regards to rural community systems, there are 85 communities in the district served by boreholes fitted with hand pumps

### **Study design**

This was a qualitative study which was mainly descriptive and non-interventional. It sought to inform the researcher's understanding on gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation delivery in the Dangme West district. The study combined different qualitative methodologies: a) review of existing data and information that lend support to the benefits of mainstreaming gender in rural water and sanitation delivery; and b) key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and non-participant observation. The use of the review of existing data and information and the qualitative methods was to complement each other and reinforce the outcome of the analysis.

## **Population and samples**

The study population comprised WATSAN committees in the Dangme West district, opinion leaders recognised by the District Assembly, Assembly persons, desk officer for water and sanitation at the Dangme West District Assembly and core staff of the Greater Accra regional water and sanitation team.

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample that was involved in the study. The basis for the use of the purposive sampling technique was basically to trace information-rich sources. The six separate groups of stakeholders (WATSAN committees, District desk officer for water and sanitation, District water and sanitation team, core members of the Greater Accra regional water and sanitation team, assembly members and opinion leaders) were deemed to be knowledgeable and experience in rural water and sanitation services delivery and the participation of both men and women in the delivery processes in the district.

Five WATSAN committees were purposively selected from among the 122 WATSAN committees in the district for Focus Group Discussions. These were the Dawa, Someh, Volivo, Kewum and Atrobinya WATSAN committees. The choice of these communities was informed by the fact that four of them namely Dawa, Volivo, Atrobinya and Kewum reflect the different types of rural water systems in the district, which are the Small Towns Piped system and Rural Communities' system. Someh, which is also served by a Small Towns Piped system, was however purposively selected at the request of the DWST because it is a predominately moslem community. This therefore presented a unique

opportunity for collecting information on the potential influence of religion on gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation management.

The key informants were also purposively selected for face-to-face interviews from among the Assembly persons and Opinion leaders for the sampled communities, Dangme West district water and sanitation team and core members of the Greater Accra regional water and sanitation. The Dangme West district desk officer for water and sanitation was also selected. The key informants from the District Assembly and Greater Accra Regional office of the CWSA were selected based on their positions, knowledge and experience in rural water and sanitation services delivery and the roles they have played in mainstreaming gender into their activities. These were the Greater Accra regional Extension Coordinator, the Community Development Officer of the District water and sanitation team and the desk officer for water and sanitation at the District Assembly.

The assembly men and opinion leaders were selected because they have been involved in most of the development activities including water and sanitation in the communities and have also stayed in the respective communities for a considerable length of time, and could analyse water and sanitation issues before and after the installation of the facilities, with specific reference to outcomes of women's participation in decision-making concerning the management of the water and sanitation services delivery. They are also normally part of the community leadership and therefore the first point of call when communities are being selected for development programmes. Furthermore, two community members were purposively selected for face-to-face interviews from

two of the communities namely Atrobinya and Someh, basically due to their length of stay in their respective communities. These were a retired traditional birth attendant from Atrobinya and a female trader from Someh.

Participants for the FGDs were those members of the WATSAN committees who were available. Due to usually busy schedules, some of the members could not participate. Out of a seven – member (three men, four women) WATSAN committee in Someh, five (two men and three women) were able to participate fully in the focus group discussion. Six members (three women and three men) out of the seven-member (four men and three women) WATSAN committee in Dawa were able to participate in the focus group discussions. Also five members (two women and three men) out of seven members (four men and three women) of the Volivo WATSAN committee were available for the focus group discussions. Participants for the focus group discussions from the Atrobinya WATSAN committee were five (two women and three men) out of a seven-member (four men and three women) committee. Focus group discussions with the Kewum WATSAN committee were made up of five members (one woman and four men) out of a seven-member (four men and three women). Table 1 gives the summary of the number of participants who were available for the focus group discussions out of the total number of members for each committee.

**Table 1: Number of participants for focus group discussions**

WATSAN committee	No. of members	No. of participants in FGD
Someh	7	5
Dawa	7	6
Volivo	7	5
Atrobinya	7	5
Kewum	7	5

Source: Field data

### **Data collection**

Qualitative data collection methods were used to obtain field data. These were focus group discussions, face-to-face interviews and non-participant observations. These methods were combined in order to enrich and validate data collected to ensure accuracy of the findings of the research. These different methods and the basis for their choice are next discussed:

#### Focus group discussion (FGD)

Six separate FGD sessions were undertaken in the five selected communities. One each in four of the communities (Volivo, Dawa, Atrobinya and Kewum) and two in one other community (Someh). Participants of the FGDs were members of the WATSAN committees in their respective communities. The women members of the Someh (a predominately moslem community) WATSAN committee were purposively sampled for another FGD apart from that which was held, involving the male members of the committee. This was done to find out the

claim by their male counterparts about the women's unwillingness to participate in decision-making even when they are given the opportunity.

The basis for the FGD was to give the researcher an insight into members' attitudes, feelings, beliefs and reactions about the equal participation of both men and women in rural water and sanitation activities in their various communities. It was also to give an opportunity for the researcher to assess how women and men interact in mixed group meetings. This is difficult to assess with a one-to-one interview only, questionnaire survey or by observation. The FGD was also an opportunity for participants to interact, pose questions to one another and to redefine their own views as the discussions progress. A FGD guide was used to direct the discussions in order to obtain the relevant information necessary for the study. Additionally, in organising a separate FGD for each committee, information obtained from each individual FGDs were analysed in a comparative manner. In spite of these benefits, the researcher had very little control over data produced. This was made worse by the local language that was used. This made it difficult for the researcher to understand what was being said by the discussants and therefore had to rely on an interpreter. Vital information might have been lost during the translation into the English language.

#### Face-to-face interview

Extensive interviews were held with 10 key informants (three women and seven men). This was done in order to discover their views, insights and perceptions about women's as well as men's equal participation in the management of the water and sanitation services in the communities. It was also

to gain their perceptions on the factors if any, that continue to hinder or that are perpetuating inequalities between men and women in the management of the services. The interviews were also to enable them to suggest ways to address any challenge to mainstreaming gender effectively from their perspectives. The key informants were selected from the Greater Accra regional office of CWSA, the Dangme West District Assembly and the communities under study.

### Observation

This method was used to collect information during regular meetings of the WATSAN committees in the five communities. This was to give the researcher first hand information on the participation of women on the management committees in terms of the non-verbal communication and discerning feelings and behaviours.

The issues on which data was collected were on the existing gender mainstreaming approaches in rural water and sanitation services delivery in Ghana and Dangme West district. Data was also sought on the gender roles in terms of the supply of water and sanitation services in the five communities selected. Furthermore, data was collected on how women are involved in water and sanitation project cycle and in the management of these services. Again, data was sought on the main challenges in mainstreaming gender in the district and the outcomes of involving women as well as men in decision-making concerning the management of the services in the communities sampled. Finally, data was collected on the strategies in enhancing gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation services delivery.

A member of the Dangme West District Water and Sanitation Team was chosen to assist in the collection of data. This was based on her ability to understand the Dangme language and her experience and knowledge in dealing with the WATSAN committees and the communities. She also has knowledge in appropriate protocols and procedures to follow before and during the field data collection. She was briefed on the purpose of the study and how to apply the techniques used in the study for data collection. A tape recorder was used to record the proceedings and later transcribed.

For ethical considerations, permission was sought from the Desk Officer for Water and Sanitation at the District Assembly and others from whom data was collected, to document and record discussions. They were assured of confidentiality of the information they gave.

### **Data sources**

The data used in the research was drawn from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was sourced through focus group discussions, interviews and by non-participant observation.

The secondary data consisted of published works that the researcher reviewed. Much of the data which was used in this research was collected from the Community Water and Sanitation Agency, Head Office and the Greater Accra Regional Office, the Dangme West District Assembly, CD-ROMs and published documents on the World Wide Web.



## **Data analysis**

The analytical framework of the study provided indicators for ways of mainstreaming gender in rural water and sanitation delivery. The analysis was done by matching the observed gender mainstreaming approaches on the ground against the set indicators for effective mainstreaming in order to identify the gaps and reasons for them.

Firstly, all data was categorised according to the type of methods used for the collection. Each type was then critically studied, to observe or obtain evidence from the other types. In addition, the data was sorted, categorised into themes used in data collection and re-read to cross-checks facts and conflicting data.

## **Limitations**

Discussions and interviews held with members of the various committees and some of the community members were done in the local language. The eventual translation into English language may have led to some distortions of the information given in the local language.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the results of the study, based on the specific research objectives set in Chapter One. It begins by describing the gender mainstreaming approaches adopted by the district under study and continues with a presentation of data collected and also discusses the findings under each of the six specific objectives

#### **Gender mainstreaming approaches in Dangme West district**

This section outlines and discusses results of the first research question, based on responses received from the extension services coordinator interviewed at the Greater Accra regional office of CWSA, the desk officer for water and sanitation and the community development officer at Dangme West District Assembly. It outlines key strategies adopted by the Dangme West district to mainstream gender in the provision of rural water and sanitation services.

#### **Approaches**

Face-to-face interview held with a key informant at the Greater Accra regional office of CWSA revealed that approaches used by the district to ensure that gender is mainstreamed into the provision of rural water and sanitation are

outlined in the Sector Guidelines-General (CWSA, 2010). According to him, these strategies are as follows:

- At least not less than 40 percent of members of the WATSAN committees or WSDB are women.
- Extra effort is made during community mobilisation to target identifiable groups especially women e.g. Market Queens.
- Women are encouraged to be Water Vendors.
- Female pump operators are trained to undertake minor repairs, and
- Awareness creation on the need for women to participate in the planning and management of rural water and sanitation services.

It was further stated that the district ensures that beneficiary communities are educated on gender issues during the community mobilisation phase of rural water and sanitation projects. According to the interviewees, WATSAN and WSDB female members are given leadership training to enable them participate effectively in the management of the services. Beyond this, it was mentioned that the district adopts gender-sensitive methods in decision-making throughout the project stages such as:

- Women representatives being part of signatories to all community agreements.
- Making special efforts to inform and encourage women to attend and participate in community meetings.
- Organising separate meetings for men and women to address their special needs and concerns and incorporating their separate views in final decisions.

At the Dangme West District Assembly, the key informants mentioned that the district adopts direct and indirect interventions to ensuring that women in

the district are given the opportunity to participate effectively in the management of the services like their male counterparts.

One direct approach used by the district is ensuring that at least 40% of members of the WATSAN committees are women and reserving certain positions on the committees for women. These positions include the position of the Treasurer, Organiser and Hygiene Educator. Thus, for a seven-member committee, at least three of the members should be women. This process is facilitated by the DWST with support from the RWST. This is done by getting the communities especially the men to understand the important roles women play in water and sanitation services delivery and therefore the need to get them to participate in the decision-making and also management of the services. In addition the DWST encourages women to be water vendors in the various communities. In this regard, the key informant mentioned that vendors in all the five communities under study have women as water vendors.

Furthermore, the District Assembly assists in providing leadership training for the female members of the WATSAN committees. This is aimed at building the skills and knowledge of such women, to enable them to be assertive and also to help them to perform their roles effectively on the committees. In mobilising the communities, as one of the first stages in the project cycle, efforts are made to engage more women in the discussions. Women groups like the market women association are therefore targeted.

Beyond these direct approaches or interventions, the district also adopts indirect approaches or interventions. The desk officer for water and sanitation at the Dangme West District Assembly, a key informant, mentioned that the

Assembly supports female role models within the communities. They are supported financially by the District Assembly to acquire formal education and other skills like dress-making and beads-making from women training centres. Their growth and development are monitored by the Assembly to ensure that they do not fall out of the programme. According to him, the rationale behind the role model concept is to showcase to other females in the communities that they can also aspire to what the role models are. The concept is also to encourage females to be confident and assertive and to contribute to the development of their communities.

The Assembly men in Dawa, Volivo, Atrobinya and Kewum and key informants in the communities under study, confirmed that the district made efforts to ensure that gender is mainstreamed into the provision of water and sanitation in their various communities. They mentioned that women's groups were met during the education and sensitisation by the DWST at the initial stages of project implementation. The education and sensitisation bordered on issues relating to the need for water and sanitation services, the benefits the communities would derive from the services and the need for both men women to understand their various roles in the management of the services. They added that the women were also encouraged to offer themselves for positions on the WATSAN committees.

Beyond offering themselves for WATSAN committee positions, the women were and are still being encouraged to attend community meetings regularly. According to them, the women were also offered training on leadership and how to be assertive and to also participate effectively in the management of

the water and sanitation services. Asked whether any girl or woman has benefited from the role model concept adopted by the District Assembly as an approach to mainstreaming gender in the district, they said their various communities are yet to benefit from such support from the district. Again, they confirmed that water vendors in Atrobinya, Kewum and Dawa communities where they represent, are all women.

The focus group discussants in all the five communities, community members in Someh and Atrobinya and Opinion leaders in Volivo and Someh shared similar views as key informants at the District Assembly. From the FGDs, it emerged that the District Assembly makes efforts to involve women in water and sanitation activities. They however mentioned that the lack of refresher courses for the women, following the initial training on leadership is of great concern. Tables 2 and 3 give the summaries of the views of key informants and focus group discussants on the approaches adopted by the District Assembly to mainstream gender. The above-mentioned tables can be found in Appendix C.

Responses from key informants and discussions held during all the five focus group discussion sessions confirms that the Dangme West District Assembly has approaches or strategies in place to ensure that gender is mainstreamed into rural water and sanitation services delivery in the district and that special efforts are being made to encourage them to participate effectively in the management of the services.

## **Gender roles in rural water and sanitation delivery**

This section discusses responses to research question two, based on the following sub-headings: gender roles in rural water and sanitation and the participation of women in rural water and sanitation projects.

### **Gender roles in rural water and sanitation in Dangme West district**

Key informants from both the Greater Accra regional office of the CWSA and the Dangme West District Assembly and discussants in all the five WATSAN committees FGDs shared the view that women and girls in the district and the various communities visited are responsible for water and sanitation at the household level. They are the ones who go in search of water for cooking, cleaning, watering of backyard gardens, washing and bathing. With regards to sanitation and hygiene, the women teach the children about good hygiene practices, like hand washing with soap after the use of the toilets and before handling food. The discussants in the five communities admitted that society expects these roles in the households to be performed largely by women.

With regards to whether women, having been made aware by the DWST of their roles in the management of rural water and sanitation services in the communities and on the WATSAN committees, contribute to discussions in relation to the management of their various services, the key informants from CWSA regional office and the District Assembly and discussants from Volivo, Dawa, Atrobinya and Kewum responded positively. They mentioned that though their participation at the moment is not as expected, it had improved over the

period, with education and sensitisation of the need for women to participate in the decision-making.

In Someh however, the male members of the WATSAN committee mentioned that their female counterparts do not contribute to discussions during committee meetings even when they are given the opportunity to talk. “Our women do not talk when we come for meetings and we do not know why” the chairman of the Someh WATSAN committee mentioned. The chairman of the Volivo WATSAN committee on the other hand, mentioned that before the sensitisation and education, the women in the community always sat at the back at community meetings, and never spoke. He however stated that, in recent times, women’s participation in discussions at community meetings in Volivo has improved due to the sensitisation programme done by the DWST. He was however quick to add that continuous sensitisation, education and training of the women on the need for them to participate in the management of the services, still needs to be done.

The key informants at the Dangme West District Assembly also attributed the improvement of women’s participation at WATSAN committee meetings, to the current seating arrangements during committee meetings. They mentioned that currently, seats are arranged in a semi-circle, giving no opportunity for the women to hide at the back, instead of the usual normal way where the seats were arranged in classroom style settings. Nonetheless, the district community development officer mentioned that in the Someh community which is predominately a Moslem community, the women until recently, were not using the seats arranged. According to her, whenever there was a meeting, despite the arrangement of the



seats, the women still brought their kitchen stools and sat on them behind the seats arranged.

*My sister, it has not been easy getting these women to even sit with their men, but now there is an improvement, at least they sit with the men but will still not talk (Community Development Officer)*

Furthermore, two of the key informants at the Greater Accra regional CWSA and the District Assembly, mentioned that though some of the women are not active members of the committees with regards to their effective participation, a few are assertive and those are older women between the ages of 45 and 50 years. These key informants could not explain the reasons why this was the case.

*Madam, we do not know why older women are more assertive than younger ones. You know women and their issues (District Desk Officer for water and sanitation)*

The key informants at the District Assembly nonetheless mentioned that the reason could be the lack of financial incentives for members of the WATSAN committee. They further mentioned that, the contributions of these older women to the operations and maintenance of the services are mostly accepted by all the members. Apart from the assertiveness of these older women, they are also respected in the communities and therefore are regarded as natural leaders, championing the cause of water, sanitation and hygiene issues.

Out of the five committee meetings observed, two had older women who were more than 40 years old as members of the committees. At Dawa, it was observed that two out of the three women who occupy the treasurer and hygiene educator positions are both more than 40 years old and very active at committee

meetings. They made key contributions that were accepted by all the members. However, the relatively younger one aged about 35 years old, who occupies the organiser position sat throughout the meeting and never spoke. This observation was also made in Volivo community, where though the women were about 40 to 50 years old, they did not contribute to discussions during one of their committee meetings which were under observation. However, they participated in the focus group discussions.

In Kewum and Atrobinya, all the women were younger (between the ages of 30 and 40 years) but were very active in discussions. This was the case especially when it came to discussions concerning the need to increase the number of boreholes in their communities. However, observations made at the Someh community confirmed the assertion that younger women were not active on the committees. During the FGD session held for only the female members of the Someh WATSAN committee, they mentioned that the village is a male-dominated one which does not encourage women to express their opinions in public. From observations made and FGDs held with these five WATSAN committees, it was difficult to conclude that the age of the women had anything to do with their effective participation on the committees. On some of the committees visited, the older women were more assertive and on other committees, the younger women were assertive.

#### Women's involvement in the project cycle

Interviews with the key informants at the Dangme West District Assembly and the Greater Accra Regional Office of CWSA revealed that their respective

institutions acknowledge the important role of women in rural water and sanitation services delivery. These institutions therefore make conscious efforts to involve them in all the stages of the project cycle. This was confirmed by the discussants from Dawa, Volivo, Atrobinya and Kewum with the exception of the Someh female members of the WATSAN committee. In Someh, the women mentioned that, apart from the planning stage where they contributed to the choice of the site of the facility, they were not consulted to take part in any decision at any stage of the project cycle. This, they said was due to religious reasons where in most cases, women are left out of some consultative meetings between members of their community and the DWST about the project.

The discussants on the four other committees and key informants at the Greater Accra regional CWSA office and the District Assembly mentioned ways by which the women were involved in the project cycle. The cycle, as stated in the Sector Guidelines-General (CWSA, 2010) involves the following:

- community mobilisation and sensitisation,
- promotion of hygiene and health,
- planning, designing and construction,
- operations and maintenance,
- monitoring and evaluation,

In Dawa, discussants mentioned that during the community mobilisation and sensitisation stage, the community was educated through meetings with the DWST and the Regional Water and Sanitation Team (RWST) on the need to have potable water within or closer to the community. The facilitators also made the communities aware of the benefits that will accrue to the women and community

as a whole and the importance of having women participate effectively in the management of the water and sanitation services in the community. According to the treasurer on the Dawa WATSAN committee who is a woman, some women's groups were targeted and sensitised to offer themselves for positions on the WATSAN committee when it was being formed. The women's groups she could remember were those in some of the churches and the Market Women's Association. Discussants on the Volivo, Atrobinya, Kewum and Someh WATSAN committees mentioned that the community sensitisation and mobilisation was also done in the same way as was done in Dawa. According to the chairman of the Volivo WATSAN committee, a consultant was engaged by the Dangme West District Assembly to lead this process in his community. The Assembly man in Volivo confirmed that women in the community were consulted extensively during the sensitisation stage.

The key informant at the District Assembly mentioned that the DWST had had experiences with the Someh community where the women in the community did not participate in discussions during the DWST's initial interactions with the community. Consequently, separate meetings were held for the women and men and facilitated by a woman and a man respectively. Issues raised at both meetings were then brought together in a larger forum.

With regards to the promotion of hygiene and health, key informants at the District Assembly and Greater Accra regional office of CWSA, mentioned that all the five communities were educated on good hygiene practices which according to them are an integral part of the rural water and sanitation services delivery. All

the discussants in the five communities under the study stated that their respective communities were educated on good hygiene having a direct link to good health.

*I now understand that the provision of only potable water does not guarantee good health, unless you practice cleanliness (Hygiene Educator in Dawa).*

With regards to the planning, designing and construction of the facilities, key informants at the District Assembly and the Greater Accra Regional office of CWSA mentioned that women in all the five communities were involved at this stage of the project cycle especially in the siting of the facilities. During the FGDs held with the Dawa, Volivo, Someh, Atrobinya and Kewum WATSAN committee members, it was revealed that the women in their various communities assisted in determining location for various components of the water and sanitation facilities. The female members on the Someh WATSAN committee also mentioned that they were involved in determining the location of the stand pipe.

A face- to- face interview held with a 70- year old retired female traditional birth attendant in Atrobinya, revealed that since private contractors were brought in to do the drilling, community members did not join in the siting of the borehole or its construction. This was confirmed by the Assemblyman in Atrobinya and Kewum. According to him, the construction of the boreholes is normally done by contractors engaged by the District Assembly. He also added that Hydro-geologist determine the site of the borehole since that depends on the availability of ground water and its quality. Community members were therefore not involved directly with the drilling nor were they involved in the siting of the

boreholes. Discussants in Volivo also confirmed that community members were not directly involved in the siting and construction of the borehole in their community.

The community development officer, a key informant at the Dangme District Assembly, mentioned that community members are not involved directly with the construction of the facilities. Thus women in the five communities under study were not directly involved in the construction of the facilities. They were however involved in the choice of their design. According to her, they did not participate in drawing the designs of the water and sanitation facilities, but were shown pictures of designs and helped to make a choice. This was confirmed by the desk officer for water and sanitation in the District Assembly and the extension services coordinator of the Greater Accra regional office of CWSA. The Assemblyman and opinion leader for Volivo mentioned during a face-to-face interview that community members were shown the designs and helped to make a choice of the type of facility. The discussants in Kewum, Atrobinya and Dawa confirmed this during their FGDs.

On the other hand, the women on the Someh WATSAN committee mentioned that they were not involved in the choice of the design. According to them, the men did. The chairman of the Someh WATSAN committee mentioned that the women were at the meeting when they were being helped to make the choice and did not object to the choice that was made. An opinion leader in Someh, a cattle farmer, in a face-to-face interview said that some of the women were at the meeting, but never objected to the choice of the design, though they were given the opportunity to make an input.

*The women agreed with everything that was said and they still do that.  
Madam, ask them why, if you talk to them (An Opinion Leader in Someh).*

Key informants at the Dangme West District Assembly and regional office of CWSA shared the same views concerning women's involvement in the operations and maintenance stage in the project cycle. According to them, both men and women are trained on the basic activities associated with operations and maintenance of the services. This training relates to basic book-keeping, simple repairs of facilities, hygiene and minutes writing. With regards to minutes writing, apart from the general overview that all the WATSAN committee members are trained on, an educated member is given intensive training on minutes-writing. This gives the beneficiary of that kind of training, the opportunity to become the secretary of the committee.

Discussants in Dawa, Volivo, Atrobinya and Kewum confirmed that both women and men were given basic training on operations and maintenance of their water and sanitation services. According to the chairman of the Dawa WATSAN committee, since women and children suffer whenever the facilities breakdown, the women are very active in operations and maintenance. An example is the treasurer on the Dawa WATSAN committee who is a woman and very active in the operations and maintenance of the services. She ensures that the water and electricity bills are paid on time to avoid a disconnection of their pipes. The hygiene educator, who is also a woman, does her bit in educating other women in the community, on the need to keep their environment clean, practice good hygiene and the need to own household latrines.

In Atrobinya and Kewum, the discussants revealed that though they have been given basic operations and maintenance training, area mechanics are engaged to do major repairs. They mentioned that normally, the cleaning of the water points and regular greasing of the pumps is done by the water vendor. In Someh, however though the women and men have been trained to be responsible for operations and maintenance, apart from the simple repairs that the water vendor does, area mechanics are relied upon for the major repairs, whereas the men on the committee perform the operations aspect of the service. The Assemblymen in Volivo, Dawa, Atrobinya and Kewum and the Opinion leaders in Volivo and Someh confirmed what the discussants in the various committees said about the operations and maintenance aspect of the services. The community member interviewed in Someh confirmed that minor maintenance is done by the water vendor in the Someh community.

With regards to the monitoring of rural water and sanitation in the communities visited, the key informants at the District Assembly mentioned that all the members of the WATSAN committee have been given some basic training on monitoring activities relating to the services. These activities relate to the periodic greasing of the pumps, cleaning of the water points and the general activities relating to the operations and maintenance of the services. Women on the WATSAN committees are involved in the monitoring of such activities to ensure that these activities are done. The key informants in Volivo, Atrobinya and Dawa, Assemblymen for these communities, mentioned that women members of the WATSAN committees in the communities supervise the activities that need to be done to ensure that the services are sustainable. They added that when it was



time to weed the surroundings of the boreholes or stand pipes the hygiene educators ensure that these are done either by the water vendor or someone else. The opinion leader in Volivo confirmed what the Assemblyman for his community said. He added that the water vendor monitored the cleaning of the water point and also made sure that the iron-removal plant, which has been installed to remove excess iron in the water from the borehole, is cleaned periodically. In Someh, the opinion leader mentioned that the WATSAN members ensure that whatever needs to be done with regards to operations and maintenance of the services are done.

Focus group discussions held with four out of the five WATSAN committees in the communities under study and interviews held with key informants confirmed that women have been involved in the management of the services. However, in Someh, the women members of the committee mentioned during their FGD session that though they have not being involved in monitoring, the community has had no problems with the functionality of the water facility.

Although, women in Someh were not consulted in the stages of the project cycle except in the location of the stand pipe in the community, the water facilities were still functioning. According to the key informant in the District Assembly, the opinion leaders including the chief of the community ensure that the facilities function. Even though research done by the World Bank (Narayan, 1995) and USAID (Baden, 1999) points to the fact that rural water and sanitation services succeed more where women are involved in its management than when it is done by men only, there could be a few cases where these services could succeed even without the active participation of women. This is possible where

the men accept the importance of having potable water in the community due to the prestige attached to having these services. One of the reasons for the men's willingness and ability to keep the facilities from breaking down in Someh could be due to the importance of water for their religious ceremonies (ablution).

### **Challenges in implementing gender mainstreaming in rural and sanitation delivery**

This section discusses results for the third research question based on responses received under the following sub-headings: illiteracy, cultural norms, lack of motivation for members of the WATSAN committees and lack of cooperation by men.

#### **Illiteracy**

One of the challenges mentioned by the key informants at the Dangme West District Assembly and the Greater Accra regional office of CWSA was the rate of illiteracy in the district. According to Dangme West district desk officer for water and sanitation, Dangme West district is one of the districts in Ghana with a high level of illiteracy. The community development officer in the district, another key informant, said that in the last five years, the Dangme West district has consecutively ranked last in the Greater Accra Region, in the Basic Education Certification Examination (BECE).

The Assembly men in Volivo, Dawa, Kewum and Atrobinya and opinion leaders in Someh and Volivo could not confirm what the key informants at the District Assembly said about the high rate of illiteracy in the district. According to

them, they do not have enough information on lack of formal education being the reason women in the communities did not contribute to discussions at community meetings. They were of the view that since discussions are normally done in the local language, and since women especially those on the WATSAN committee are given some level of training on leadership and on water and sanitation, they should be able to participate effectively. Manuh (1998) asserted that illiteracy is one of the key barriers to women's participation in decision-making, some of the key informants thought otherwise.

They concluded that the challenges to women's effective participation go beyond the lack of formal education. They were of the view that the lack of refresher courses in leadership in water and sanitation was rather the challenge. In Atrobinya, the retired female traditional birth attendant mentioned in an interview that she has not had any formal education but speaks her mind at community meetings. Her confidence despite the lack of formal education was evidenced when she was asked her age. Her response was: "How am I supposed to know my age?"

None of the focus group discussants in all the five communities mentioned the lack of formal education among women in the communities, as a hindrance to the participation of women at the community and committee meetings. In Dawa, two out of the three women hold the General Certificate of Examination (GCE) Ordinary Level. These are the treasurer and the hygiene educator. The third woman, who is the organiser, has not had any formal education. Also, in Someh, out of the four women on the committee, only one has had formal education up to the Junior High School and she is the hygiene educator. The three other women

have no formal education. In Volivo, all the three women on the committee including the treasurer have not had any formal education. In Atrobinya, one of the three women on the committee is a teacher having completed a Teacher Training School. The other two have had formal education to the Junior High School level. On the Kewum WATSAN committee, the treasurer is the only woman among the three women members who has completed the Junior High School. The two others have no formal education. The perception from all the discussants was that though some of the women had not gone through any form of education, if they are periodically educated on current issues on water and sanitation situation, they could contribute to decision making or discussions. The women on the Dawa and Volivo WATSAN committees however stated that, they had better knowledge on water and sanitation than the men did, since water and sanitation is their business.

From observations made at all the five meetings, it was difficult to conclude that formal education influenced the level of participation of women in the management of water and sanitation services in the five communities. This is due to the fact that on some of the committees, the women who have not had any formal education participated effectively during the committee meeting under observation and also during the focus group discussions. The FGD in Kewum is an example of this situation where the two female members of the committee who participated in the discussions, contributed effectively to discussions though they have had no formal education.

On the other hand, FGD held in Dawa saw two of the female members of the committee who have had formal education, participating effectively in the

discussions and at their committee meeting. The third woman who has no formal education did not speak during the FGD or at the committee meeting. Also in Someh, though one of the female members has had formal education to the Junior High Level, she did not talk during the committee meeting and the FGD held for both the male and female members of the committee, as did the other three members who have no formal education. Nevertheless, a separate FGD held for only the female members of the committee saw them contributing effectively to discussions.

#### Cultural norms

Young (1993) and Ogbodo (2003) identified cultural norms and traditions as a key challenge to mainstreaming gender in rural water and sanitation delivery. They both mentioned that these traditions and norms made it difficult for women to speak in public and therefore participate effectively in decision-making. This was confirmed during focus group discussions in the five communities. The discussants admitted that their cultural norms were a key hindrance to the effective participation of women in the management of rural water and sanitation services delivery. During the focus group discussion at Someh, which is a predominantly moslem community, the issue of cultural norms came up strongly. The men mentioned that the women were not willing to contribute to discussions at committee meetings even when they were encouraged to do so. The general observation made during one of the regular meetings of the committee confirmed this fact. The women sat throughout the meeting without contributing to the discussions but agreeing to every decision taken by the men. When asked reasons

why they were not taking part in the discussions, the women stated that they agreed to what the men said.

The community member from Someh in an interview mentioned that men take the decisions in the community and the women would have to accept those decisions. She further stated that she felt comfortable taking instructions from men than from women in the community.

The opinion leader in Someh, though admitted that their culture is a hindrance to women's effective participation, he also believed that the women were not doing enough to help themselves. He was of the view that the women should be able to contribute to discussions at community meetings when they are given the opportunity to do so. He added that the women would be helping themselves if they did that.

However, a separate FGD organised for only female members of the Someh WATSAN committee brought out the issue of cultural norms where in some communities women do not talk in mixed group meetings. The women mentioned that even though the men claim to be encouraging them to contribute to discussions, their opinions are not taken seriously and are disregarded. "These are women's opinion and should not be taken seriously" was an example of comments the men make. The hygiene educator lamented. The men are the decision makers in the community and on the committee. The hygiene educator did not even remember her position on the committee since she did not see herself as an active member and did not seem to be bothered about what happened at committee meetings. The women also mentioned that women do not attend

community meetings frequently, and the few that attended sat at the back or outside.

These cultural norms made it difficult for other women in the community to take suggestions from the women members of the committee towards effective management of the facilities. An example cited by one of the women, was when the hygiene educator advised the water vendor, who is a woman, to turn on the pipes early enough to enable their children to fetch water early in order to avoid reporting to school late. This was ignored by the vendor. The hygiene educator was of the opinion that the water vendor would not take this from her because she is a woman. She had complained a number of times to the chairman but he had not taken steps to address that. The hygiene educator was sure that the vendor would have heeded to this same suggestion if it was coming from a male member of the committee. It was therefore not surprising that the environmental sanitation situation in the community was not good enough. Asked whether all the houses had latrines, the hygiene educator responded that just a few houses had household latrines, though she was unable to give the number of household latrines in the community. She also mentioned that there was no public latrine.

In Volivo, the men on the committee admitted that due to traditions and cultural norms women had been restricted from talking in public for a long time. This has therefore affected their willingness and ability to contribute to discussions at meetings, even in recent times when they are being encouraged to do so. The chairman mentioned that even though women on the committee participate in discussions during committee meetings, more education and

sensitisation needs to be done to encourage women to participate in community meetings.

Face-to-face interviews with the Assembly men for Volivo, Dawa, Atrobinya and Kewum confirmed the issue of culture being a barrier to women's effective participation in the community. They mentioned that, though effective participation of women has improved, they think the District Assembly could do more by continuous sensitisation of both men and women in the communities on the need to support women to participate effectively, not only in issues concerning water and sanitation but on all development issues in the community.

The women on the Volivo WATSAN committee did not participate in discussions during one of their committee meetings under observation. They however participated in discussions during the focus group discussions session. When asked why they did not contribute to the discussions, they responded that they did not have anything to say about what was being discussed.

In Dawa, Atrobinya and Kewum, focus group discussants shared similar views about cultural norms being a key hindrance to the effective participation of women. They admitted that, this is the result of cultural beliefs that view women as recipients of welfare and men as decision-makers. Key informants at the District Assembly and CWSA also mentioned cultural norms as one of their biggest challenge to their efforts in getting women in the district to participate effectively in the management of water and sanitation services. According to them, they believe that since these cultural norms are deep-rooted, it will take some time before the full impact of the strategies being adopted to get both women and men to equally participate in management of rural water and



sanitation services is seen. The key informants also admitted that despite the cultural norms or barriers, some women in the communities and on the committees are active participants in the management of the services.

This was confirmed by observing the Dawa WATSAN committee meeting. Out of the three women on the committee, two were very active. These were the Treasurer and the Hygiene Educator. They made very relevant contributions during the meeting and these were agreed upon by the men. According to the men on the committee, the views of these women are highly respected by the other members of the committee. They also gave some examples of key contributions made by women on the committee, which has contributed to the effective management of the services. The opinion leader in Volivo shares the same opinion with the discussants on the WATSAN committees in the five communities visited. The community member in Atrobinya interviewed mentioned that cultural issues were a hindrance. She however did not think that culture should stop women from contributing to discussions towards effective management of their water and sanitation services.

#### Lack of financial motivation

In Dawa, the discussants complained about the lack of financial motivation for their efforts. According to them, they are not asking to be paid salaries but allowances for participating in committee meetings, since sometimes depending on the issues being discussed, the meetings drag into the late afternoon. This view was shared by all the discussants from Someh, Volivo, Atrobinya and Kewum. They mentioned that neither water nor snacks are served at meetings

even when discussions drag into the late afternoons. This was confirmed when the meeting was under observation. The members had to buy their own water to drink. They wondered how long they could hold on to providing their services without any financial benefits.

The key informants at the district stated that, although one of the principles guiding the provision of rural water and sanitation requires the work of the WATSAN committees and WSDBs to be voluntary, they were of the view that members are gradually getting discouraged due to the lack of financial motivation. The key informant at the CWSA Greater Accra region on the other hand, did not mention the lack of financial motivation as a challenge to the effective participation by WATSAN committee members.

In addition, the key informants in Kewum, Atrobinya, Dawa and Volivo, Assembly men for these communities, mentioned during interviews with them, that it will be fair if the members on the WATSAN committees are given some allowances for their efforts. The key informant in Kewum and Atrobinya added that members of the WATSAN committees in Kewum and Atrobinya were doing well and deserved to be motivated financially. He cautioned that the lack of financial motivation will soon cause them to be disinterested in the management of the services and could cause the facilities to break down. He mentioned that if that happened, his work as an Assemblyman will be difficult.

The retired traditional birth attendant in Atrobinya mentioned that, women in the community and on the committee were doing very well in terms of their participation in water and sanitation activities. She added that if women find time, aside the time they spend doing their household chores and caring for their

children, to attend committee meetings, then it is just fair that they are given a token for their time and efforts. The opinion leaders in Someh and Volivo and the community member in Someh shared similar views about the need for financial motivation for members of the WATSAN committees.

Even though key informants at the District Assembly mentioned that the work of the WATSANs and WSDBs is to be voluntary, CWSA has recognised this issue as a challenge to the management of rural water and sanitation services. Consequently, the Sector Guidelines-General (CWSA, 2010) allows for allowances for members of the committees to be included in the tariffs for water. This is to ensure that members of the WATSANs are paid some allowances when they attend committee meetings

The request by discussants and key informants for WATSAN/WSDB committee members to be given some financial benefits for the efforts and time they put into the management of the services is not out of place. It confirms the argument made by IRC (1992), on the need for clear benefits for those women who are involved in the management of water and sanitation, if their involvement increases their workload.

#### Lack of cooperation by men

Key informants at the District Assembly and CWSA interviewed, did not mention the lack of cooperation by men as a challenge to the effective participation of women, since according to them, men are educated on the important role of women in water and sanitation and are encouraged to support them. This is done during the community mobilisation and sensitisation stage

during project implementation. The key informants in Kewum, Atrobinya and Volivo also did not think that women lacked the support of men. According to them, they thought the issue was to do more with the culture, where women have accepted men to be the ones to take decisions, rather than to the lack of support by men.

On the other hand, the key informant in Dawa and the community member from Atrobinya did not mention the lack of support by men as a hindrance. Asked whether they saw the lack of cooperation of men as a challenge in their communities? They mentioned that they did not. The community member from Atrobinya added that she has never had problems with men during community meetings. She also said she has not had any opposition from a husband when she shares her opinions in public since she is a widow. The community member from Someh however mentioned the lack of cooperation from men was a challenge to effective women's participation, but explained that this had more to do with their religion.

In addition, the opinion leader in Someh, in an interview, also mentioned that the issue was more to do with the culture than the intentional lack of cooperation by men. He further gave the example where the women during community meetings are being given the opportunity to participate in the decisions that are being made, but fail to do so. According to him, the women have to be assisted to be able to have the confidence to participate effectively in decision-making.

Though focus group discussants in Someh, did not mention the lack of cooperation by men as a hindrance, the female discussants, during a separate

session held with them mentioned that they lacked the cooperation of men. They explained that this was seen by the rejection of their opinions at committee meetings. According to the women, they assumed their religious and cultural norms could be contributory factors.

Discussants in Volivo and Dawa mentioned the lack of cooperation by men as a hindrance. In Dawa for example, the discussants mentioned that some of the women have stopped contributing to discussions at community meetings due to the attitudes of their husbands. According to them, any attempt to share their opinions at community meetings is strongly opposed by their husbands when they returned home. They have therefore decided not to attend community meetings or talk even when they attend such meetings. Though the female members on the committee could not substantiate with enough evidence, in their views, the men are threatened by the empowerment of women or the men still believed in the fact that women should not share their opinions directly in mixed group meetings. This confirms the literature on gender mainstreaming efforts in Mabule (Sanitation Project) in South Africa and Manzvire village in Zimbabwe (United Nations, 2006), where the main obstacle to the gender mainstreaming efforts in all the above mentioned communities was the initial lack of support and cooperation by the men and husbands.

Discussants in Volivo, Atrobinya and Kewum, did not mention the lack of cooperation of men as a challenge to their effective participation. The women mentioned that they have the support of their husbands and men on the committees. However, they did not know about the attitudes of men towards the participation of women at community meetings. The support of the women by

men on the committees in these communities was confirmed during observations of one of their meetings. The men sometimes asked the women to confirm submissions made with facts. An example was a comment like “women, you have to talk since you will be affected the most if the boreholes breakdown”. Tables 4 and 5 give summaries of the views of focus group discussants and key informants on the challenges to the participation of women in decision-making concerning rural water and sanitation services delivery. These tables are found in Appendix D.

It was clear during the interactions with the key informants and discussants that, the key challenge to gender mainstreaming in the communities under study was the lack of financial motivation for members of the WATSAN committees. Though CWSA has addressed this issue in its sector guidelines (CWSA, 2010), where members of the WSDB are to be paid some allowances from tariffs received. The allowance are supposed to be factored into the water tariffs when they were being set, it was obvious that apart from the key informant at the Greater Accra regional office of CWSA, all the other key informants and focus group discussants were not aware.

In addition, whereas some of the focus group discussants saw the lack of cooperation of men as a challenge to the effective participation of women in the management of the services in their various communities, the key informants from the communities had a different view. They viewed this assertion by the discussants as an issue to do more with the culture of their communities than the intentional lack of cooperation by men. It was also obvious that with most of these key informants from the communities under study being men, it is naturally

going to be challenging for them to agree with the discussants who held the view that the lack of cooperation by men was a hindrance.

### **Willingness of women to participate in decision-making**

This section discusses results for the fourth research question, based on responses received with regards to the number of female members and their positions on the management committees, attendance of the women to committee meetings and some key contributions made at meetings and to decision-making.

#### Number of females and their positions on WATSAN Committees

The key informants at the District Assembly and CWSA mentioned that since efforts are being made to involve women in the management of the services, the community is required, as a pre-requisite for demanding water and sanitation services, to ensure that at least three out of the seven members of the management committees are women. The key informants mentioned that in compliance with this requirement, all the WATSAN committees in the five communities sampled for the study have at least three women members. Volivo, Dawa, Kewum and Atrobinya have three women members on the WATSAN committees, while Someh has four women. The key informants however admitted that not all the women were elected based on their ability to contribute to decision-making, but to satisfy the requirement that at least 40 percent of the members of the committee must be women. The community development officer, a key informant at the District Assembly, gave the example of the Someh WATSAN committee which has four women members with none of them contribute to decision-making concerning the management of their water and sanitation services.

The key informants from the communities and the discussants in the five communities also mentioned that their various committees have at least three women members. This confirmed what the key informants at the District Assembly and CWSA said about the number of women on the committees. Regardless of what the key informants and discussants said about ensuring that there are at least three female members on the committees, apart from the Dawa and Someh WATSAN committees meeting observed which had three and four of the female members respectively in attendance, the others had only two female members each in attendance. According to the other members present at the meeting in Kewum, Atrobinya and Volivo, the other women could not make it to the meeting. This was also the case during the focus group discussions with the committees.

With regards to the positions occupied by the women on these committees, the desk officer for water and sanitation, also a key informant at the Dangme District Assembly cited the positions reserved for female members of the WATSAN committees as the treasurer, hygiene educator and organiser. Despite the reserved positions for women, most of the women on the WATSAN committees visited were hygiene educators, organisers and members. Apart from Dawa and Volivo WATSAN committees which have women occupying the treasurer positions, the other did not have. This was confirmed by the discussants of the five WATSAN committees during the focus group discussions and key informants in the five communities. The opinion leader in Someh admitted that he was aware of women being members of the WATSAN committee but did not remember their respective positions on the committee.



There were no women as Chairpersons or Secretaries in all the WATSAN committees visited. The reason as mentioned by the key informants from the District Assembly was that, the women did not offer themselves for the Chairperson or Secretary positions.

#### Women's attendance to meetings

Focus group discussants in all the five communities especially the men mentioned that women attended meetings regularly and that the only times women did not attend meetings was when the scheduled time or day coincided with market days. They admitted that the meeting days are normally agreed upon by all the members including the women. Therefore, the women having agreed on a day and time make it a point to attend. This was confirmed by the key informants at the District Assembly and the communities.

A look at the attendance register of the Dawa WATSAN committee from September 2010 to January 2011 confirmed that women generally attended meetings regularly. Though the Kewum, Atrobinya and Someh and Volivo WATSAN committees did not have their attendance books or registers at the time of the committee meetings, the members mentioned that committee meetings are attended by women if the time and place is convenient for them.

With regard to community meetings, discussants in Dawa said that women in the Dawa community do not attend meetings regularly whether or not the time scheduled for the meeting is supposedly convenient for them. The hygiene educator stated that she sometimes went from one household to the other, educating the women on critical issues concerning hygiene behavior and the need

to attend community meetings regularly. According to her, it was during one of such visits that she was made aware by the women in the households that termites were destroying the household latrines they had built due to the materials they used, and asked her to recommend alternatives. This issue of women not attending community meetings regularly was also raised during the FGD in Volivo, Kewum, Someh and Atrobinya. The Assembly men in Kewum, Atrobinya, Dawa and Volivo confirmed this fact. In Someh, the opinion leader mentioned that the women in the community do not even talk at the meetings and always sit at the back even when they attended community meetings. Therefore according to him, it is always as if the women were absent.

The key informant at the Greater Regional office of CWSA could not confirm the regular attendance of women to committee meetings but stated that he was sure they did attend meetings regularly since there had not been any report to the contrary. He mentioned that from his experience with community work, the women attend WATSAN committee meetings if the meetings are not scheduled in the mornings or evenings when they are getting household chores done or on market days. In relation to community meetings, he stated that he could not confirm that.

Interviews with the key informants at the District Assembly also confirmed the assertion by the Discussants and the key informant from CWSA. They stated that the women on the WATSAN committees from communities studied attend meetings regularly, but they also mentioned that the challenge has always been to get the women in the community to attend community meetings

regularly even though these meetings are scheduled at times that women are usually not busy.

#### Contributions by women members of WATSAN committees

With regard to some contributions that women have made to the management of the services and to decision-making, the key informants at the District Assembly and CWSA, mentioned that a few of the women on the management committees have made contributions that have had positive outcomes on the management of the services. They could not however give specific examples of such contributions made by women.

However, a non-participant observation made during one of the meetings of the Dawa WATSAN committee, showed an example of a key contribution made by the female treasurer that was agreed upon by the other members including the men. This contribution related to finding the reasons for the non-payment of water bills by the vendor, which had resulted in the closure of the stand pipe by the private operator and thus causing community members to return to the unsafe source of water. The treasurer suggested to one of the other members to go to the community to read the Metre as it is, and return to the community the following morning to check if the numbers on the Metre has changed upwardly. If the numbers have, then it meant that people stole the water at night. However, if the numbers were the same as was read the previous night, then it meant the vendor had misappropriated the proceeds from the sale of the water. The appropriate sanctions will then be taken against him. This was agreed by all the members and one of them volunteered to take up that responsibility.

Also, at the focus group discussions at Volivo, the male members of the committee mentioned that the women on the committee make relevant contributions to decision-making concerning the service. A specific example cited was when the water vendor, though not a member of the committee, suggested that tariffs for the water be increased from five pesewas to ten pesewas. This was to enable the committee pay for electricity utilised for the operations of the mechanised borehole.

In Dawa, the hygiene educator suggested solutions to the complaints by some community members about the destruction of their household latrines by termites during one of their meetings. She mentioned that owners of such latrines could be encouraged to choose another type of latrine from the Sanitation Market (a place where different types of latrines including their estimated cost and technical information for their construction are displayed). She also suggested that the issue of identifying alternatives and more durable materials for the building of the latrines be taken up with the DWST. This was agreed on by the other members of the committee.

Another example of a key contribution cited in Atrobinyia during the focus group discussions in was the need to request for another borehole since the population had increased to about 700. This was confirmed by the key informant in Atrobinyia. Discussants in Someh mentioned that the women on the committee have not made any contribution to decision-making concerning the management of water and sanitation services. According to them, the men on the committee make the decisions and the women agree with those decisions. This was confirmed by the women during a separate FGD held with them and the key

informants at Someh. In Kewum the discussants stated that women on the committee make contributions but could not give specific examples.

### **Outcomes of gender mainstreaming**

This section discusses results for the fifth research question, based on responses received with regards to some of the outcomes of involving women as well as men in decision-making concerning the management of the services

All the focus group discussants in the five communities generally admitted that since the provision of the water and sanitation services between 1997 and 2008 in the various communities, a number of benefits have accrued to the community members especially the women. According to them, these include reduction in diarrhea and skin rashes, availability of water for small scale businesses like production of sachet water and improvement in hygiene practices like hand washing with soap especially among children. Others were increases in school attendance and a generally cleaner environment. A female member on the Volivo WATSAN committee said that with the borehole closer to the community, she did not have to go over hilly and dangerous terrain in search of water. She said: “I don’t have to climb those hills and be falling down just to fetch water from the river down that hill”. These positive outcomes were confirmed by key informants in the communities visited who admitted that one of the reasons for these outcomes has been the result of the participation of both women and men in the management of the services.

Key informants from the Dangme West District Assembly confirmed the decrease in diarrheal and bilharzia cases. According to them, at a meeting with

Dawa and Someh, some of the women mentioned that they had taken advantage of the availability of safe water to engage in the production of kenkey, wakyé and sachet water for sale. They further mentioned that those who owned pharmacy shops said sales of medicine for diarrhoea and skin rashes had reduced. This was confirmed by the Assembly man in Dawa and the opinion leader and a community member in Someh who were present at that meeting. Key informants at the District Assembly also said that the water facilities in the communities visited hardly break down for a long time. They mentioned one of the contributory factors to this trend as the involvement of both men and women in the management of the water and sanitation services. This was confirmed by all the discussants except for discussants at Someh who admitted that only the men have been involved in the management of the services.

Although, focus group discussants and key informants mentioned environmental cleanliness and sustainability of water facilities respectively as outcomes of mainstreaming gender into water and sanitation services in the communities, observations made in Dawa and Someh did not confirm this. Although the water facilities were functioning, environmental cleanliness in Dawa and Someh needed much to be desired. In Someh, the hygiene educator could not explain the reason. However in Dawa, the hygiene educator said it was a recent phenomenon and that efforts were being made to rectify the situation. Tables 6 and 7 summarise the views of the focus group discussants and key informants on the outcomes of gender mainstreaming. These tables are found in Appendix E.

The community member interviewed in Atrobonya community mentioned that the encouragement of women to be assertive in the community and on the

WATSAN committee has enabled women's groups to take up the responsibility of educating girls in the community on social virtues like dressing decently. This confirms the literature on the fact that the water and sanitation sector can contribute to redressing the inequality and can impact positively on the social, political and economic positions of women (WSP, 2010).

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter provides a summary of the study, highlighting the main findings and conclusions. It further makes some recommendations for enhancing the effective involvement of women as well as men in the delivery of water and sanitation services in the Dangme West district of the Greater Accra Region.

#### **Summary**

The study examined gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation services delivery in Dangme West district of the Greater Accra Region. It set out to achieve six key objectives namely; to find out the gender roles in terms of rural water and sanitation services delivery in the Dangme West district and to ascertain gender mainstreaming approaches in rural water and sanitation services delivery in Ghana and the district under study. It also looked at the factors that hinder gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation delivery in the Dangme West district, ascertain the level of willingness of women in the Dangme West district to participate in decision-making at the various stages of the water and sanitation project cycle, to find out some of the outcomes of involving women as well as men in decision-making concerning the management of rural water and



sanitation services delivery in the district and recommend ways of improving gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation in the district.

To achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the study combined different methods which included a review of relevant literature, focus group discussions, key informant interviews and observations. In total, six separate focus group discussions were held. One each with the Dawa, Volivo, Atrobinya and Kewum WATSAN committees, and two FGDs with the Someh WATSAN committee members. The total number of participants for the FGDs were 26. Face-to face interviews were also held with eight key informants. These were a member of the Regional Water and Sanitation Team, Desk Officer for water and sanitation, Community Development Officer at the Dangme West District three Assembly men for Volivo, Dawa and Atronbinya and Kewum and two opinion leaders one each from Someh and Volivo. Two community members were also interviewed, one each from Someh and Atrobinya. Data collected during this study were electronically and manually recorded. Data collected electronically, was later transcribed, and thoroughly analysed.

### **Key findings**

The key findings of the study are:

- With regard to gender roles, women in the Dangme West district are most often the primary users, providers and managers of water in their households and are the guardians of household hygiene. They are the ones who go in search of water for cooking, cleaning, watering of backyard gardens, washing and bathing among others. The women also teach the children about good

hygiene practices, like hand washing with soap after the use of the toilets and before handling food. These are regarded as gender roles for women.

- Some of the factors hindering the effective gender mainstreaming into rural water and sanitation service delivery in the district are the lack of financial motivation, cultural and religious norms and inadequate support from men.
- While the key informants at the District Assembly and the Greater Accra regional office of the CWSA mentioned illiteracy as a challenge to effective mainstreaming of gender into rural water and sanitation services delivery in the district, WATSAN committee members in the communities visited did not see that as a challenge in women's participation at the community level. Key informants in the communities visited also could not confirm the issue of illiteracy being a hindrance to the effective participation of women in their communities.
- Generally, women in the Dangme West district participate in decision-making throughout the project cycle, with the exception of Someh which is a pre-dominantly Moslem community. Women are therefore involved from the community mobilisation and sensitisation stage through health and hygiene promotion, planning, designing and construction, operations and maintenance to monitoring and evaluation. Though they are not directly involved in the technical aspects of the maintenance of the facilities.
- Women on the WATSAN committees in the communities visited generally attend meetings regularly and are represented well on the committees. However their positions are limited to organisers and hygiene educators. Only

two committees out of the five committees visited had women treasurers. None of the committees visited had a woman chairperson or secretary.

- Though some of the women on the committees visited have contributed to key decisions that have improved the management of the services, most of the women in the communities visited, do not contribute to discussions at community meetings.
- Some of the outcomes of the participation of women as well as men in decision-making concerning the management of the rural water and sanitation services in the Dangme West district include the following:
  - Reduction in diarrhoea, skin rashes and bilharzia cases
  - Sustainability of the services
  - Girls now go to school early and attend school regularly
  - Improvement in economic activities like sachet water production, kenkey making and “wakye”.
  - Improvement in hand washing with soap behaviour
  - Women are gradually becoming involved in decision-making in other development issues in one of the communities visited.
- There were no distinct differences between the management of rural water and sanitation services under a Piped Water Scheme and a Borehole Water Scheme. Issues with regards to the effective participation of women in decision-making concerning the management of the services were the same for the management of both types of systems.
- Ghana has adopted a number of approaches to mainstream gender into rural water and sanitation delivery, under which standards and guidelines for water

and sanitation service delivery have been developed as well as a Project Implementation Manual. These include strategies like:

- General community education on gender during the community mobilisation phase.
- Special training for female WATSAN/WSDB members.
- Adopting gender-sensitive methods in decision-making throughout the project stages such as:
  - taking into account the possible differences between men and women in planning and designing training programmes.
  - Making special efforts to inform and encourage women to attend and participate in community meetings.
  - Organising separate meetings for men and women to address their special needs and concerns and incorporating their separate views in the final decisions.

## **Conclusions**

From the findings presented, it can be concluded that apart from the national strategies or interventions to ensure the effective participation of women in the decision-making concerning rural water and sanitation service delivery, there are also district specific interventions like the role-model concept adopted by the Dangme West district. Although the water and sanitation sector in Ghana has made great strides in ensuring the effective participation of women at committee meetings, more efforts should be put in to extend this to community meetings since the study found that as a challenge. In view of the fact that

community participation does not guarantee women's participation in most developing countries like Ghana and also especially in rural settings, specific strategies are needed to ensure that women participate effectively at community meetings. This in a way goes beyond the water and sanitation sector, but should involve other national and district authorities. A lot more sensitisation and education on this issue is therefore needed.

Finally, lessons demonstrate that incorporating women's as well as men's experiences and concerns into sector activities can enhance equality, more skills can be made available for development and the sector can increase its importance and impact on society as a whole.

### **Recommendations**

From the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed for the consideration by the Dangme West District Assembly and the Regional Water and Sanitation Team, Greater Accra Region and other sector stakeholders, towards the effective mainstreaming of gender into rural water and sanitation services delivery.

- Early consultations with men by the DWST, especially community leaders and opinions leaders should be done in order to promote positive attitudes towards women's participation. The Dangme West District Assembly through the DWST and with technical and financial support from the RWST and other sector stakeholders in the district, should follow this up with continuous and consistent sensitisation and education of both men and women of the need for women also to be part of the decision-making concerning water and sanitation

services delivery in the district. The community sensitisation process which is embarked upon at the onset of the provision of water and sanitation services in the communities should therefore not be a one-off activity.

- The female leadership training given to the female members of the WATSAN committees should not be a one-time activity. Refresher courses should be given periodically to the women. This would keep them abreast with current issues in water and sanitation. In addition, the training should not be targeted to selected women on the committee, but all the women on the committee for effective performance of roles by all of them and not just the trained ones. This is to avoid gaps in the absence of the trained women, who though are supposed to be trainers of trainees do not often perform such roles. The DWST should explain potential advantages of organising the female leadership training for women or organise complimentary or parallel activities for men on the committees. This will also encourage the full cooperation of men and to ease their stance against women's participation.
- The Dangme West District Assembly should be made aware of the provision made in the Sector Guidelines-General (CWSA, 2010) which allows for the payment of allowances to members of WATSAN committees and WSDBs. This should be done by the Greater Accra Regional Water and Sanitation Team. Also, since according to CWSA (2010), allowances should be factored into the water tariffs, it is recommended that the issue of affordability of water be taken into consideration while incorporating allowances into the tariffs.
- Health and hygiene programmes in the district should be more gender-sensitive. It needs to also target men and boys through culturally appropriate

channels to make it work effectively. All family members need to be aware of hygiene issues to make it work. Therefore men on the WATSAN committees in the district could also be encouraged to offer themselves for the hygiene educator position.

- The Dangme West District Assembly should structure training programmes for Area Mechanics in pump maintenance and management to involve women since, as it was revealed during the discussion that women are not involved directly with the maintenance of the pumps. Thus in training area mechanics to repair pumps, women should be given the opportunity or be encouraged to offer themselves for such training.

### **Suggestions for further study**

This study was limited to the Dawa, Someh, Volivo, Atrobinya and Kewum communities and for that matter the Dangme West district, with the aim of enhancing the participation of women in decision-making concerning the management rural water and sanitation services delivery, which contributes to the sustainability of the services in the district among other benefits. Further studies are suggested in other Metropolitan Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana to find out if there are other good strategies used by the MMDAs which are not outlined in the standards and guidelines for rural communities and small towns, but can be adopted to improve upon gender mainstreaming.

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## APPENDIX A

### GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

#### **Part One**

1. Date: .....
2. Location: .....
3. Focus Group: .....
4. Number of participants:.....

#### **Part Two**

##### **Objective Two (To find out the gender roles in terms of rural water and sanitation in services delivery in the Dangme West district)**

1. What are the gender roles in terms of rural water supply and sanitation delivery in your community?
2. In your view, should women also be given the opportunity to contribute to decision-making concerning rural water and sanitation services? If yes why?  
If no why?
3. Do women contribute to decisions concerning the delivery of water and sanitation in your community?
4. At what stage during the project do women contribute to decisions concerning the delivery of water and sanitation?
  - Community mobilisation and sensitisation
  - Promotion of hygiene and health
  - Planning, designing and construction
  - Operations and Maintenance

- Monitoring and evaluation
5. What has been the outcome and impact of women contribution to water and sanitation delivery in your community?

**Objective Three (Explore the factors that hinder gender mainstreaming in the rural water and sanitation delivery in your community)**

- What in your opinion are the challenges that prevent women from participating effectively in your community in the provision of the above-mentioned services?

**Objective four (Explore the willingness of women to participate in decision making of the water and sanitation projects in your community or town)**

- How many women serve on the WATSAN Committees or Water Board?
- What are their age group?
- What roles do these women play?
- Do the women on the management committees attend meetings regularly? Yes or No and why?
- What are some of the key contributions that women on management committees have made that has had a positive impact on rural water and sanitation service delivery in your community or district?

**Objective five (To find out the outcomes of involving women as well as men in decision-making concerning the management of rural water and sanitation services in the district under study)**

- What are the outcomes of involving women as well as men in the management of rural water and sanitation in your community

**Objective Five (Recommend practical ways of improving gender mainstreaming in water and sanitation delivery in Dangme West district)**

- What are some of the practical ways to ensure that women contribute to decision-making in respect to water supply and sanitation in your community?



## APPENDIX B

### GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW

#### **Part One**

1. Date: .....
2. Location: .....
3. Organisation: .....
4. Position: .....

#### **Part Two**

5. **Objective one (To find out gender mainstreaming approaches in rural water and sanitation delivery in Ghana and the Dangme West district)**
  - What are the efforts being made by your institution to mainstream gender into the provision of rural water and sanitation services?
  
6. **Objective two (To find out the gender roles with regards to rural water and sanitation services delivery in the Dangme West district)**
  - What are the specific roles played by women and men with regards to rural water and sanitation services in your community/Dangme West district
  - Do you involve women in decision-making throughout the water and sanitation project cycle? If so, how is that done? If not, why?

Project Cycle	Yes/No	How
Community mobilisation/ sensitisation		
Promotion of hygiene and health education		
Planning/design/ construction		
Operations /maintenance		
Follow-up /Monitoring & Evaluation		

**7. Objective three (To find out the factors that hinder gender mainstreaming in rural water and sanitation delivery in the Dangme West district )**

- Are there challenges in mainstreaming gender in rural water and sanitation activities? What are these challenges?

**8. Objective four (To find out the willingness of women to participate in decision making at the various stages of the water and sanitation project cycle in the Dangme West district.)**

- How many women serve on the WATSAN Committees or Water Board?
- What is the educational background of these women?
- What are their age group?
- What roles do these women play on such committees?
- Do the women on the management committees attend meetings regularly?  
Yes or No and why?

- What are some of the contributions that women on management committees have made that has had a positive impact on rural water and sanitation service delivery in your community or district?

**9. Objective five ( To find out the outcomes of involving women as well as men in decision-making concerning the management of rural water and sanitation services delivery in the Dangme West district)**

- What have so far been the outcomes of women's and men's involvement in the implementation of Water and sanitation projects in the District or community

**10. Objective five: Recommend practical ways of improving gender mainstreaming in water and sanitation delivery in the Dangme West District.**

- Why is it important for women to be encouraged to participate in the management of the water and sanitation services in the district or community
- What in your opinion are some of the strategies to enhance the participation of both women and men in the management of rural water and sanitation services in the Dangme West district?

## APPENDIX C

**Table 2: Approaches to mainstreaming gender by key informants**

<b>Key informants</b>	<b>Approaches</b>
<b>Extension services coordinator</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Female leadership training</li> <li>2. At least three WATSAN committee members are women</li> <li>3. Women water vendors</li> <li>4. Targeting women groups during community mobilisation stage in project implementation</li> <li>5. Educating women to be involved in the management of water and sanitation services</li> </ol>
<b>Desk Officer &amp; Community Development Officer</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Female leadership training</li> <li>2. At least 40% of WATSAN committee members are women</li> <li>3. Women water vendors</li> <li>4. Targeting women groups during community mobilisation stage in project implementation</li> <li>5. Educating women to be involved in the management of water and sanitation services</li> <li>6. Role model concept</li> </ol>

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**Assemblymen-Volivo, Atrobinya,  
Kewum and Dawa**

1. Three members of the WATSAN committee are women, representing 40% of members
2. Provision of training for women on leadership
3. Community education and sensitisation targeting women's groups during initial stage of project implementation
4. Sensitisation for the need for women to attend community meetings regularly
5. Women water vendors

**Opinion leaders –Someh and Volivo**

1. Three members of the WATSAN committee are women,
  2. Provision of training for women on leadership
  3. Community education and sensitisation targeting women's groups during initial stage of project implementation groups
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	4. Women water vendors
	5. Sensitisation on the need for women to attend community meetings regularly
<b>Community members- Someh and Atrobinya (female trader and retired traditional birth attendant)</b>	1. Three members of the WATSAN committee are women
	2. Provision of training for women on leadership
	3. Community education and sensitisation targeting women's groups during initial stage of project implementation
	4. Women water vendors
	5. Sensitisation for the need for women to attend community meetings regularly

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Source: Field data

**Table 3: Approaches to mainstreaming gender from focus group discussants**

<b>Discussants</b>	<b>Approaches</b>
<b>Group 1:</b> <b>Dawa WATSAN committee members</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Women are encouraged to offer themselves for WATSAN committee positions</li> <li>2 Women’s groups are target for education and sensitisation on their roles in water and sanitation</li> <li>3 Encourage women to be water vendors</li> <li>4 Three members of committee are women</li> <li>5 Women are encouraged to attend and contribute to discussions regularly at community meetings</li> </ol>
<b>Group 2:</b> <b>Volivo WATSAN committee members</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage women to be water vendors</li> <li>2. Women are encouraged to offer themselves for WATSAN committee positions</li> <li>3. Three members of committee are women.</li> </ol>

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4. Women's groups are targeted for education and sensitisation on their roles in water and sanitation
  5. Women are encouraged to attend and contribute to discussions regularly at community meetings

**Group 3:**

**Atrobinya WATSAN committee members**

1. Women are encouraged to offer themselves for WATSAN committee positions
2. Three members of committee are women.
3. Women's groups are targeted for education and sensitisation on their roles in water and sanitation

**Group 4:**

**Somey WATSAN committee members**

1. Women are encouraged to offer themselves for WATSAN committee positions
  2. Three members of committee are women.
  3. Women's groups are target for education and sensitisation on their roles in water and sanitation.
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**Group 5:**

**Kewum WATSAN committee members**

1. Women are encouraged to offer themselves for WATSAN committee positions.
2. Three members of committee are women
3. Women's groups are target for education and sensitisation on their roles in water and sanitation.
4. Women are encouraged to attend and contribute to discussions regularly at community meetings.

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Source: Field Data

## APPENDIX D

**Table 4: Focus group discussants views on challenges to women’s participation**

<b>Discussants</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Group 1:</b>	1. Lack of refresher courses
<b>Dawa WATSAN committee members</b>	2. Lack of financial motivation 3. Lack of cooperation by husbands 4. Cultural norms
<b>Group 2:</b>	1. Lack of financial motivation
<b>Volivo WATSAN Committee members</b>	2. Cultural norms 3. Lack of cooperation by men
<b>Group 3:</b>	1. Cultural norms
<b>Atrobinya WATSAN Committee members</b>	2. Lack of financial motivation
<b>Group 4:</b>	1. Lack of financial motivation
<b>Someh WATSAN Committee members</b>	2. Lack or inadequate refresher courses 3. Lack of cooperation by men 4. Cultural/religious norms
<b>Group 5:</b>	1. Lack of financial motivation
<b>Kewum WATSAN Committee Members</b>	2. Lack of refresher courses 3. Cultural norms

Source: Field Data

**Table 5: Key informants' views on challenges to women's participation**

<b>Discussants</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Extension services coordinator</b>	1. Cultural norms 2. Illiteracy
<b>Desk Officer</b>	1. Lack of financial motivation 2. Illiteracy 3. Cultural norms
<b>Community Development Officer</b>	1. Illiteracy 2. Lack of financial motivation 3. Cultural norms
<b>Assemblymen- Volivo and Dawa</b>	1. cultural norms 2. Lack of financial motivation 3. Lack of refresher courses for female members
<b>Assemblyman- Atronbinya and Kewum</b>	1. Lack of financial motivation 2. Cultural norms 3. Lack of refresher courses for female members
<b>Opinion leader –Someh</b>	1. Lack of financial motivation 2. Lack of refresher courses
<b>Community member- Someh (female trader)</b>	1. Cultural norms 2. Lack of cooperation by men
<b>Community member- Atrobinya (Retired traditional birth attendant)</b>	1. Lack of financial motivation

Source: Field data

## APPENDIX E

**Table 6: Views on outcomes of participation of both men and women by discussants**

<b>Discussants</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<b>Group 1:</b>	1. Decrease in diarrhoeal cases
<b>Dawa WATSAN committee members</b>	2. Availability of water for economic ventures
	3. Sustainability of facilities
	4. Cleaner environment
<b>Group 2:</b>	1. Decrease in diarrhoeal and Bilharzia cases
<b>Volivo WATSAN Committee members</b>	2. Availability of water for small business
	3. Sustainability of facilities
	4. Reduction in time taken to the Point Source
	5. Increase in school attendance by girls
<b>Group 3:</b>	1. Girls report to school on time
<b>Atrobonya WATSAN Committee members</b>	2. Women are beginning to participate in other development activities in the community
	3. Decrease in diarrhoeal cases

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	4. Children practice hand washing with soap
<b>Group 4:</b>	1. Availability of water for their cattle
<b>Someh WATSAN Committee members</b>	2. Decrease in diarrhoeal and bilharzia cases
	3. Availability of water for other small scale businesses
<b>Group 5:</b>	1. Decrease in diarrhoeal cases
<b>Kewum WATSAN Committee members</b>	2. Schools in the community now have hand- washing facilities
	3. Children practice hand washing with soap
	4. Cleaner community

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Source: Field Data

**Table 7: Views on outcomes of participation of both men and women by key informants**

<b>Discussants</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
<b>Extension services coordinator</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sustainability of facilities</li> <li>2. Decrease in diarrhoeal cases</li> <li>3. Availability of water for economic ventures</li> </ol>
<b>Desk Officer</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sustainability of facilities</li> <li>2. Reduction in time taken to the Point Source</li> </ol>
<b>Community Development Officer</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase in school attendance by girls</li> <li>2. Decrease in diarrhoeal and Bilharzia cases</li> <li>3. Availability of water for economic ventures</li> </ol>
<b>Assemblymen- Volivo and Dawa</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decrease in diarrhoeal and Bilharzia cases</li> <li>2. Availability of water for economic ventures</li> <li>3. Sustainability of facilities</li> <li>4. Reduction in time taken to the Point Source</li> </ol>

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	5. Increase in school attendance by girls
<b>Assemblyman- Atronbinya and Kewum</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Girls report to school on time</li> <li>2. Decrease in diarrhoeal cases</li> <li>3. Children practice hand washing with soap</li> </ol>
<b>Opinion leader –Someh</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Girls report to school on time</li> <li>2. Women are beginning to participate in other development activities in the community</li> <li>3. Decrease in diarrhoeal cases</li> <li>4. Children practice hand washing with soap</li> </ol>
<b>Community member- Someh</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decrease in diarrhoeal and bilharzia cases</li> <li>2. Availability of water for other small scale businesses</li> <li>3. Availability of water for their cattle</li> </ol>
<b>Community member- Atrobinya</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Decrease in diarrhoeal and bilharzia cases</li> <li>2. Availability of water for other small scale businesses</li> </ol>

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1. Sustainability of facilities
  2. Increase in school attendance by girls
  3. Decrease in diarrhoeal and Bilharzia cases
  4. Women are beginning to participate in other development activities in the community

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Source: Field data