Ghana Coalition of NGOs in the Water and Sanitation Sector

The Voice for WASH

MOLE XXXV WASH CONFERENCE

COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE END OF THE ANNUAL MOLE XXXV WASH CONFERENCE ORGANIZED BY THE COALITION OF NGOs IN WATER AND SANITATION (CONIWAS)AND PARTNERS FROM 6th October TO 11th October 2024 at Volta Serene Hotel, HO, Volta Region.

THEME:

Looking Back on the Implementation of SDG 6 in Ghana: Progress, Challenges, and the Way Forward.

PREAMBLE

The annual Mole WASH Conference is a CSO-led multi-stakeholder platform aimed at reviewing sector performance, influencing policies, removing barriers, and promoting access to sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene services.

The 5-day conference was opened by Hon. Lydia Seyram Alhassan, Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR) with solidarity messages from the Development Partners, Executive Secretary of the Environmental Service Providers Association (ESPA), and the 2024/25 Child Sanitation Diplomat, Abdul Yazid Faraj.

The opening session of the conference was chaired by Togbe Tepre Hodo IV Paramount Chief of Anfoega traditional area and President of the Volta Region House of Chiefs. The theme address was delivered by the Senior Water and Sanitation Specialist at the World Bank, Ing. Harold Esseku.

The conference discussed four sub-themes –Institutional Alignment for improved WASH Service Delivery; Approaches, strategies, and methods for safe WASH Services; Innovative Financing for WASH Services Delivery; and Innovative technologies for WASH Service Delivery. The conference was attended by two hundred and twenty-one (221) participants drawn from Ministries, Departments and Agencies, Development Partners, CSOs, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, Academic and Research Institutions, the Private Sector and the Media attended the conference.

THE CALLS

At the close of deliberations, the Conference resolves as follows:

Funding and Financing Mechanisms

1. The conference commends the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR) on the strides made in developing and rolling out different WASH policies over the past year, including the Presidential WASH Compact, signed by the President of Ghana in August 2024. Conference calls on sector stakeholders to increase their funding

allocations by the next 2026/2027 fiscal year. Government should maintain 0.5% of GDP commitment whilst Development Partners (DPs) are urged to increase their contributions to 50%, while CSOs and NGOs should increase theirs by 100%.

CONIWAS will provide support for policy implementation, monitoring, and evaluation at all levels between November 2024 and October 2025.

2. The conference urges the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR) to expedite the establishment of the National Sanitation Authority (NSA), and National Sanitation Fund (NSF). In addition, the Conference urges the MSWR to effectively coordinate WASH-related Funds and various financial mechanisms, such as public-private partnerships, donor funding, and innovative financing models, to ensure sustainable and adequate funding for the WASH sector. This will be monitored between November 2024 and October 2025

Climate Change and WASH

3. CONIWAS will advocate for climate-resilient WASH infrastructure and collaborate with MSWR to ensure WASH issues are integrated into the National Determined Contribution (NDC) and National Adaptation Plan (NAP) on climate change. CONIWAS will also partner with INGOs, MSWR, and MESTI to build capacity for WASH-Climate Change linkages from March to October 2025. In addition, Conference calls on MSWR to work closely with MESTI to promote circular economy in the WASH sector, focusing on turning waste into value and creating jobs for youth, with relevant training provided between January and November 2025.

Regulation

4. The conference recognizes the urgent need to strengthen the regulatory environment for WASH service delivery at all levels, particularly in the rural water and sanitation sub-sector. The MSWR, in collaboration with relevant ministries such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation, and Rural Development, Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology, and Innovation, should work closely with its, MDAs, and MMDAs to enforce WASH regulations along the value chain. This should be done by November 2025.

Illegal Mining

5. Conference calls on the President of Ghana to immediately halt all illegal mining (Galamsey) activities, especially those affecting water bodies and forest reserves. A unified action plan should be initiated involving all relevant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation, and the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, to restore and protect these critical ecosystems. CONIWAS will support these efforts by coordinating advocacy and community engagement initiatives between November,2024 and October 2025.

Institutional Alignment

6. Conference calls on the MSWR to work with the Office of Head of Local Government Service (OHLGS)/Local Government Service (LGS) for the establishment of Environmental Health and Sanitation Department at the MMDAs to be headed by a Director.

Issued this Thursday, 10th October 2024 at Volta Serene Hotel, Ho, Volta Region.