

# Ghana's National Sanitation Authority: recommended role and responsibilities

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## Quick read...

- These recommendations are based on research conducted to feed into the development of the Government of Ghana's (GoG) proposed National Sanitation Authority (NSA).
- The Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources (MSWR), in collaboration with sector stakeholders, has proposed that the NSA take on numerous roles, including: institutional development and sector coordination; research and development; regulations and standards setting; infrastructure development; building the capacity of local government; and sector monitoring and evaluation.
- While the exact shape of the NSA is still being debated by the Cabinet of the GoG, this is an opportunity to better align and streamline the sanitation activities currently performed by several governmental and non-governmental bodies.
- We recommend that the GoG move forward in establishing the NSA, resourced appropriately at national, regional and district levels so that it can achieve pro-poor sanitation across the country.

## Rationale

In 2017, the GoG announced its intention to establish an NSA as part of its aim to “ensure provision of sustainable pro-poor sanitation services” across the country. This is being driven by the new MSWR, who requested that the Urban Sanitation Research Initiative Ghana provide them with advisory input as they decide the institutional and organisational structure of the NSA.

Given the level of fragmentation within Ghana's sanitation sector, a new agency will need to coordinate with those already delivering sanitation services, such as Municipal, Metropolitan and District Assemblies (MMDAs), the Ministries of Health and Education, and the as-yet-unestablished National Sanitation Fund (NSF). The NSF is envisioned to be an independently managed fund administered by the Ministry of Finance (or the Presidential Office), which would fund infrastructure development projects implemented by the NSA's Regional Development Facilities and local projects undertaken by MMDAs.

If the NSA is structured carefully and fully aligned with other sanitation actors in Ghana, it will add real value. This is an opportunity to streamline and strengthen the sector at the national, regional and local levels, and for a public body to take ownership of promoting pro-poor and equitable access to sanitation in Ghana.

## Urban Sanitation Research Initiative Ghana

This report is produced under the Urban Sanitation Research Initiative Ghana, a 2017-2020 programme of rigorous research designed to drive pro-poor sector change in urban sanitation in Ghana. [www.wsup.com/research](http://www.wsup.com/research)



## Potential role of the NSA

Initial recommendations from a multi-country review of institutional sanitation sector frameworks<sup>1</sup> fed into two stakeholder workshops, at which the proposed roles and responsibilities of the NSA were further defined:<sup>2</sup>

### Institutional development and sector co-ordination

- Advocate for the prioritisation of sanitation with GoG and advise MSWR on sanitation policy and issues
- Establish administrative and institutional structures at national and regional level
- Support governance at the MMDA level and guide MMDAs in data collection and reporting
- Co-ordinate the work of national and international agencies, institutions and organisations
- Publish information and national statistics on sanitation service delivery

### Research and development, standard setting

- Commission operational and applied research in the sector
- Encourage studies to promote innovation, appropriate technologies and public financing approaches to improve access to sustainable and affordable services
- Establish standards, guidelines and codes of practice for sanitation services

### Infrastructure development

- Develop public infrastructure projects before assets are transferred to MMDA for management and service delivery, with funding from the NSF channelled through Regional Development Facilities
- Regional branches would ensure that the design and construction of sanitation infrastructure increases delivery effectiveness and efficiency

### Capacity building of MMDAs

- Define roles and responsibilities of actors throughout the service chain and provide a framework for private sector service delivery
- NSF would provide technical support to MMDAs through the NSA's regional branches
- Prepare sanitation plans that identify short-, mid- and long-term target areas and local priorities, and design appropriate solutions

### Monitoring and regulation

- Support MMDAs to comply with sanitation laws and regulations i.e. eliminate illegal practices, create indicators and metrics to track coverage and quality of sanitation in low-income areas and for marginalised groups, grant licenses to sanitation enterprises and monitor their activities, and ensure the health and safety of sanitation service providers themselves.

## Next steps

The MSWR presented its own recommendations for the NSA to the Cabinet in a draft Bill, proposing that the NSA hold a number of roles. However, the international review undertaken as part of this research demonstrated that no other country's equivalent sanitation body holds as many roles as suggested for the NSA, and the draft Bill is subsequently undergoing further review. Sector stakeholders, including WSUP, will assist the MSWR as it works with Cabinet and Parliament to finalise the legal instruments that will make the NSA functional. WSUP strongly recommends that, whatever the final structure and role of the NSA, it prioritises mainstreaming *pro-poor* sanitation provision in Ghana.

1. IMC Worldwide (March 2018) International study of institutional models to support the development of Ghana's proposed National Sanitation Authority. <https://www.wsup.com/insights/international-study-of-institutional-models-to-support-the-development-of-ghanas-proposed-national-sanitation-authority/>
2. Urban Sanitation Research Initiative Ghana, IMC Worldwide & Maple Consult (September 2018) Recommended Institutional Responsibilities for the Proposed National Sanitation Authority, Ghana

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