

Decision support for the drinking water sector

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The political discourse around drinking water in Ghana is shaped by a neo-liberal agenda and three major targets: poverty alleviation, cost-recovery and equal access. But the way to reach this within the country differ, Ghana's household water supply displays more than one policy approach and more than one water management system. Instead, various water right regimes co-exist (see figure 1), which define ownership of the facilities, access to water and power of the actors involved. GLOWA Volta studied all these water management systems to support decisions in the water sub-sector.

The power of actors is constituted by their legal and informal decision-making rights, as well as their individual characteristics, such as political influence or economic property. Interest and strategies vary according to the context, as well as the subject of negotiation and scope of decision-making.

Policy category	(1) Unimproved	(2) Rural Improved	(3) Peri-urban Improved	(4) Urban/ metropolitan Ghana Water Company Limited	(5) Alternative supply
Water policy	None	NCWSP	NCWSP/ PPP	PPP	None
Water sources (Physical access)	Natural water bodies, simple hand-dug wells	Hand pumps	Piped water systems	Piped water systems	Water vendors, water tankers
Regulation of use right (Institutional access)	Customary law	Customary law Project law	Project law	PURC	Market
	Basic right to water	Basic right to water Ownership of facility	Water tariffs Tolerated access	Water tariffs	Water prices

Figure 1: Regulation of access in different water management systems

Rural household water

- The National Water and Sanitation Program (NCWSP) is a donor-defined and donor-dependent policy
- Policy: Community-based management with 5% capital contribution of the future water users
 - Successful local self-regulation by water users
 - Unnecessary delays in pump delivery due to poverty/ 5% rule
 - Institutional access is more limited than before due to registered water users
 - Water allocation practice is rather independent of institutions
- Knowledge gaps and low sanction ability of district water administration
- Often, smaller donors/ NGOs don't act according to policy
- Reluctance of non-potable water supply in water policy (non integrated water resource management)
- Local water users have no bargaining power/ political representation at higher levels (regional/ national)



DECISION MAKERS	DECISIONS	POTENTIAL FOR DECISION SUPPORT
Water users + pump committees	• Day to day management • Local rules for access	Little bargaining power
District administration	• Allocation of facilities	Importance of local politics • Stakeholder dialogue
Government agencies CWSA, Ministry for Water Resources, Works and Housing	• Sector policies • Technical standards • Rules for allocation and management of facilities	• Policy briefs and recommendations • Stakeholder dialogues • Case studies on policy impact • Information and decision-making tools
Government of Ghana	• Political priorities, funding • Legal framework	• Indicating needs for legal revision • Identification of areas of future action
Donors	• Political priorities • Conditions for funding	• Impact studies • Identification of areas of future action

Figure 2: GVP decision support for rural supply
No decision support possible (red) Decision support possible (green)

Household water for small towns

- Policy: NCWSP/ Public Private Partnerships (PPP)/ Ghana Water Company Limited
 - none of the management options surely prevents water system failure
 - all three management options can be functional and participatory if water users receive more bargaining power
- Unclear role of district water administration, partly acting where no WSDB is working
- Problems under NCWSP/ PPP: elite capture, lack of knowledge, low sanction ability of Water Boards (WSDBs), bureaucratization of community management, backfiring of crafted institutions, regional/ national representatives of WSDBs only exist in a few regions (such as the AWSDB in the Northern Regions)



DECISION MAKERS	DECISIONS	POTENTIAL FOR DECISION SUPPORT
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Water users/ customers	• Election of representatives	(Unlinked to policy)
Representatives of water users WSDB/ AWSDB	• water system planning • Local rules for access (water tariffs, by-laws)	Little bargaining power • Recommendations for water system management, by-laws
District administration DA, DWST	• Allocation of funds • Inauguration of by-laws	• Recommendations for water system management, by-laws
Government agencies CWSA, PURC, WRC, Ministry for Water Resources, Works and Housing	• Sector policies • Technical standards • Rules for allocation of facilities • Water permits	• Policy briefs and recommendations • Stakeholder dialogues • Case studies on policy impact • Information and decision-making tools
Government of Ghana	• Political priorities • Legal framework • Funding • Involvement of foreign actors	• Indicating needs for legal revision • Identification of areas of future action
Donors	• Political priorities • Conditions for funding	• Case studies on policy impact • Identification of areas of future action

Figure 3: GVP decision support for small town supply

GVP decision support

- provision of information and data to policy makers (local regulations, local ways of organization, prices for water, water users interest)
- providing policy recommendations, as well as supporting civil society argumentation towards decision-makers
- enhancing dialogue among the various stakeholders