

District Capacity Building Project (DISCAP)

DISCAP-DWST Management and Administration Training

Training Report

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Introduction/Overview of Report

The District Capacity Building Project (DISCAP) developed a Management and Administration manual for District Water and Sanitation Team members in the three northern regions of Ghana. This was delivered at three different training workshops in the respective regional capitals of Bolgatanga, Tamale and Wa between February and March 2005. The training was to deepen their understanding of administrative concepts and equip them with management tools and skills in the context of water and sanitation activities in Ghana.

This report is the result of that endeavor. The report discusses the purpose, which was meant to broaden the outlook of DWST members in management and administrative issues thereby improving their operational effectiveness. The objectives are summarized in bullet form in the report.

Adult learning principles were used as such the methodology was quite participatory. The various approaches are also discussed including the organization of the training. In all 5 modules were covered with 23 topics presented in 23 sessions. The modules, their objectives and topics and sub-topics are briefly discussed. Details of the modules and handouts used can be found in the training manual.

The training targeted 72 participants but 60 attended with 48 men and 12 women. All the 24 districts DISCAP operates in were represented at the training. Participants during the training were given the opportunity to discuss issues of concern to them. These are discussed under highlights and issues of consideration. The evaluation of the training is briefly discussed and concluded with recommendations. One recommendation that came up strongly was for DISCAP to facilitate the formation of a network of DWSTs.

Purpose

The purpose of the training programme was to broaden the outlook of District Water and Sanitation Team (DWST) members in management and administrative issues thereby improving their operational effectiveness. The training was to deepen their understanding of administrative concepts and equip them with management tools and skills in the context of water and sanitation activities in Ghana.

DWSTs have a broad mandate to plan, implement, coordinate, manage and monitor water and sanitation services at the District level. This responsibility calls for a wide variety of expertise given the social structure and the complex environment vis-à-vis the importance of water and sanitation in our daily lives. It was therefore been deemed necessary to design a DWST team level training that focuses on management and administration of DWSTs. This training was a refresher course for some and for others it was a new material needed for peak performance. This effort was been supported by DISCAP¹ to enable DWST members improve their effectiveness in the management and administration of water and sanitation activities at the District level.

Training Objectives

Since the early 1990s, District Water and Sanitation Teams (DWSTs) have been the focal point for water and sanitation services in the District Assembly system (DA). They are responsible for a variety of tasks including community mobilization, hygiene promotion, vetting applications for point sources and oversight of contracts. The DWSTs are the main link between the Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) and communities.

The goal of DISCAP is to improve government programming in the 3 northern regions with focus on water and sanitation, so that most water and sanitation systems are being operated and maintained using local resources, of which the DWSTs are a part of the puzzle. Although DWSTs have received some training there is no limit to investing in the human resources of organizations and nations and the fact that membership of DWSTs has changed and many of them need basic training hence this tailor made training package.

The goal of the training was to enhance the capacity of DWST members to be efficient and effective in the sustainable management of water and sanitation services.

¹ DISCAP is the District Capacity Building Project, a 5 year 7 million CDN joint initiative of CIDA and MLGRD. The mandate of DISCAP is improved government programming and that most water and sanitation systems are operated and maintained using local & national resources. DISCAP operates in the 3 Northern Regions and is being implemented by E.T.Jackson & Associates.

Objectives;

The objectives of the training were to enable DWST members to:

- Prepare realistic plans and budgets that are incorporated into the District MTDP;
- Communicate in a clear and concise manner, both verbally and in writing;
- Establish partnership and linkages with other stakeholders in the water sector;
- Identify their role in different projects and programmes and carry out tasks necessary to achieve objectives; and
- Incorporate gender issues into water and sanitation plans and activities.
- Collect and analyze data on water and sanitation
- Monitor and supervise water and sanitation activities effectively

Training Approach and Methodology

The training was highly participatory. This means that participants were not assumed to be entirely ignorant of management and administrative issues and so their views and experiences were shared. Adult learning principles were used. The training was structured in a way that participants were first introduced to the entire training programme and content of topics followed by discussions and presentations. In all fifteen (15) facilitators were involved in the training in the three regions. The three northern regions were zoned into 3 (see below) with a training each in the regions.

Zone 1. Upper East Region: The Districts under this zone were; Bolgatanga Municipality ;Bongo; Bawku West; Bawku; Tamale Metropolis; Talon-Kumbungu; Savelugu-Nanton and West Mamprusi.

Zone 2. Northern Region; East Gonja; Yendi; Gusheigu; East Mamprusi; Nanumba; Zabzugu-Tatale and Saboba-Cheriponi.

Zone 3. Upper West: Sissala East; Wa Municipality; Lawra-Nandom; Jirapa-Lambushie; Nadowli; West Gonja and Bole.

The training workshops were organized along the following teaching and learning methods:

Presentations: to provide the information and explanations needed by participants to understand the concepts. Facilitators spent time to explain topics and concepts as a starter to each session. This proved useful as participants had a better understanding of every topic and its relationship to their area of operation.

Guided Discussions and Brainstorming: This was meant to encourage the participants to think about, relate to and interprets concepts of management and administration in the context of water and sanitation services. This method allowed participants to freely share ideas, generate spin-off ideas, refined them and confirmed existing ideas in the field of management and administration. Within the context of water and sanitation..

Structured Group Work: This took the form of discussions, exercises and group presentations to provide a learning experience and practice for the participants.

Day one of all the trainings started with introduction of participants and discussion of expectations and ground rules as follows:

Expectations:

- Learn new management skills and administrative skills
- Knowledge sharing and full participants of all participants
- Gain more understanding of DWST role/responsibilities.
- gain requisite skills for office management
- Be able to resolve conflicts
- Make new friends (Networking)

Ground rules:

- Punctuality
- Respect each others views
- Time must be respected
- Put mobile phones off/on vibration
- Limit movements, and
- No side talks among others

An exercise named “Forced Choices” was used in all 3 trainings to solicit experiences and expertise that participants would bring to bear both on the training and on DWST. Participants put themselves into their various fields of specializations as Community Mobilization, Technical staff, and Hygiene educators and discussed their expertise in each case. The insight drawn from this exercise was that, participants recognized the unique

contribution each member of the team makes and the need for them to complement each other to achieve their objectives.

Training Coverage

The entire training covered five (5) modules with 23 topics and presented in 23 sessions for five days. Each module with its objectives and various handouts used in the delivery to achieve the objectives. Below are the modules and topics covered during the trainings:

Module 1: The Decentralized Process and the DWSTs

Objectives:

- Outline the roles and responsibilities of the DWST.
- Discuss the decentralization process and how it affects the DA and the DWST.
- Describe the institutional arrangements for water and sanitation.
- Locate the DWSTs in the global context.

Topics treated under this module included:

The Decentralized Process

Institutional Arrangements in the Water Sector

Roles and Responsibilities of DWSTs

This module lasted for 5 hours and was very useful to participants. Participants appreciated the important role they play within the water world as they saw it the global context. Insights and issues for consideration drawn from this session is discussed in the proceeding pages.

Module 2: Management

Objectives:

- Effectively manage water and sanitation interventions.
- Apply office management concepts such as filing, data collection and management, planning and facilitating meetings, to improve office operations.
- Work together with other team members to achieve stated objectives.

The module lasted for 7 hours and covered six (6) topics as follows:

Management Defined: This topic discussed the definitions of management and leadership drawing on their differences and qualities in each case. The topic also dealt with functions of management including: planning, coordination, organising and controlling and also the distribution of managerial skills required of all three levels of management.

Effective Supervision: Staff motivation with all theories on motivation was discussed as well as exploring supervisory skills and expectations of supervisors.

Effective Meetings: The most important aspects of this session were sub-topics such as basic guides to effective meetings and meeting facilitation skills.

Team Building: Some teambuilding exercises were used for participants to appreciate what it takes to build teams. They were also taken through team formation stages and the importance of building effective teams.

Data Collection and Management; This was meant to help participants to identify relevant data to be collected and stored in a useful manner whereby it is easily retrievable.

Office Management: Participants brainstormed and appreciated the characteristics of a well run office. Included in this was time management as a sub-topic.

Module 3: Communication

Objectives:

- Communicate clearly, effectively and concisely, in both written and verbal forms.
- Collaborate effectively with stakeholders and partners

This module lasted for 6 hours and covered 7 topics as follows:

Basics of Communication: Participants were taken through elements of communication and how to ensure effective communication at the DWST and barriers to effective communication.

Report Writing

Proposal Writing

Presentation Skills

Networking

Advocacy/Lobbying

Conflict Resolution and Negotiation Skills: Land has always been an issue in many conflict situations as is water. This was therefore a critical topic to help participants facilitate positive

solutions for conflicts both at work and at community level. Sub-topics included definitions and structure of conflicts, dimensions of conflicts and resolving work place conflicts and negotiation skills.

Module 4: Gender Mainstreaming in Water and Sanitation

Objectives:

- Apply basic gender concepts in water and water and sanitation
- Implement gender sensitive mobilization programmes in communities.

This was a six and half hour module covering 4 topics as follows:

Basic Gender Concepts

Gender Issues in Water and Sanitation

Gender Analysis of Water and Sanitation Plans

Gender Sensitive Community Mobilization

Module 5: Planning and Budgeting

Objectives:

- Develop DWSPs that can be incorporated into the MTDP.
- Develop Programme and Project Budget.
- Report on Expenditures incurred.

This module proved very useful to participants as they were made to appreciate the key components of the District Assembly planning cycle and the critical role of the DWST in the planning cycle, especially in the preparation of the MTDPs. The preparation of District Water and Sanitation Plans (DWSPs) in the context of the logical framework was also discussed under this module. This module covered 3 main topics and lasted for six and half hours. The topics covered are as follows:

DA Planning and Budgeting Cycle

District Water and Sanitation Plans

Budgeting and financial Management

Note that details of the training modules and handouts are found in the training manual.

Targeted Participants

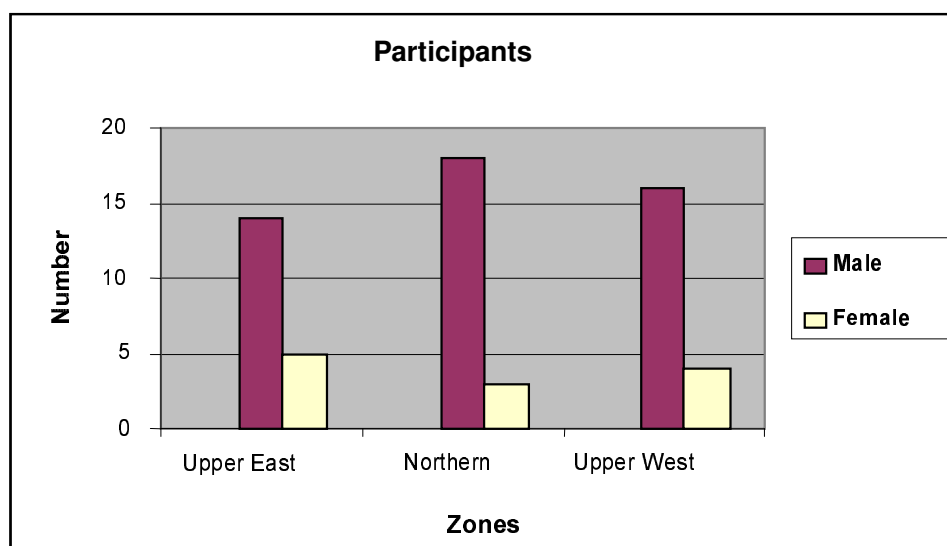
The training targeted members of District Water and Sanitation Teams (DWSTs) in all 24 DISCAP districts in the northern regions of Ghana. In all 60 participants in the three regions participated. 12 of them were women and 48 men.

Table showing number of participants.

Zone	Number of Participants		Total
	Male	Female	
1. Upper East	14	5	19
2. Northern	18	3	21
3. Upper West	16	4	20
Total	48	12	60

There was an imbalance in terms of gender representation in numerical terms. However, the few women represented in all 3 zones were quite vocal and contributed extensively to discussions. They made a greater impact during discussions, which even helped their male counterparts to appreciate gender dimensions and its importance within the water world and can make a difference in terms of management and administrative issues at the DWST.

Graph of sex disaggregated presentation of participants



Highlights and Issues for Consideration

This section captures issues that came up from participants during session presentations since presentations were more participatory. Participants made contributions, which are worth noting.

Motivation

Participants discussed what they think is their motivation at the DWST and what should be done to motivate them. The following were considered as factors that keep them on the DWST job:

- Job challenges
- Verbal praise from the DA
- Respect from communities and community based popularity, and
- Personal development

According to participants these are not enough motivation and suggested that more be done as follows:

- Sustainable means of transport; as the DAs highjack motorbikes given to them
- Financial support
- Recognition at the DA and absorption by DAs into mainstream Assembly system.
- Staff development training/Refresher courses
- Monthly allowance
- Protective clothing
- Provision of office logistics and equipments, and
- Annual awards and end of year get-togethers among others.

This discussion came both before and after a presentation was made on theories of motivation, which helped participants to appreciate whether they were being properly motivated.

Challenges of DWSTs

These are challenges DWSTs face in the context of their everyday operations and those posed by the decentralization system.

- Lack of motivation for DWST members

- Inadequate financial support by DAs
- Non permanence of DSWT members
- Too many schedules for some DWST members (inadequate staffing at DA)
- No acceptable defined location of DWST in the DA structure
- Release of Donor funding not regularly/timely
- Lack of adequate fuel to carry out water and sanitation activities
- DWST Co-ordinators are too Busy and are not committed to the job (planning Officers, Directors)
- No involvement of DWST in contract awards of Water and Sanitation.
- Inability of communities to pay 5% contribution to Watsan service delivery.
- Most of the watsan committee members are illiterate and inactive
- Cost of pumps/spare parts are too costly and not available
- DWSTs are not included in contracting and contract management.

Challenges of Decentralization

- DWSTs roles/responsibilities are not understood by other Assembly staff
- Political influence
- Logistics of DWSTs are being hijacked by DA e.g. (motorbikes, allowances, computer etc)
- Funds to water and sanitation are handled by DAs and are not timely released
- Award of some contracts are done in the national level e.g. HIPC boreholes institutional toilets, EU
- Donor influence
- Poor stakeholder networking
- No collaboration among NGOs
- Lack of commitment of DA to water and sanitation activities
- Different policies from various Donors in the water and sanitation sector

Participants also had the opportunity to discuss challenges of water and sanitation at Area councils (ACs) level. They felt the area councils were not functioning well as they should due to the following:

- Unit Committees are not considered in decision making in some respects.

- Area Councils lack requisite staff
- DAs overshadow ACs simply because decentralization has not taken root
- Inadequate logistics
- Delays in transmission of information to ACs.

Participants however suggested ways ACs can be made functional as follows:

- DAs should create budget lines to employ qualified staff and cater for their salaries and motivation for ACs.
- Provision of resources and logistics
- Sensitization of ACs to appreciate their roles in water and sanitation.
- Ensuring effective communication down to ACs level.

Other issues strongly advocated for by DWSTs

- Training for DWSTs: Monitoring & Evaluation and Water Management among others
- Information sharing/Best practices and Networking among DWSTs
- Conference of DWSTs and Schedule Officers to address issues that concerns both parties
- Selection of DWST members not properly done
- Microsoft PowerPoint installation on DWSTs computers.
- Certification of DWST participants in trainings of this nature.

Discussion of Evaluation

This section presents a summary of participants' responses on the evaluation that was given to them. The questions on the evaluation form were as follows:

1. What were the positive aspects of the training workshop?
2. What were the negative aspects of the training workshop?
3. What are the areas of this training workshop that needs improvement?
4. Did the workshop meet your expectation?
5. What are some of the ways this training will enhance your work?

Participants felt the workshop was well organized and highlighted almost all issues the every DWST will need to perform effectively and the fact that topics were all related to their

situations. Both the facilitation and the participatory nature of the training and almost all topics were positive.

Participants were of the view that the time and duration was short and did not allow all modules to be treated to satisfaction. Some facilitators to them were too slow and repetitive. This was in response to the second question above.

Some areas, according participants, need improvements. That facilitators should be selected base on experience and not book knowledge. One particular topic that came up strongly as an area for improvement was Budgeting and Financial Management.

Participants appreciated the usefulness of the training and promised to incorporate all the skills and knowledge acquired to improve their daily duties. That they can now build effective teams and see women as partners in water and sanitation management. They hoped their approach to management and administration will be changed for the better.

Generally, participants felt their expectations were being met.

Recommendations/Conclusions

The recommendations that follow are based on observations made by facilitators, other people associated with the training and on the analysis of the evaluation.

1. It was highly felt during the training on the need for DWSTs to strengthen their network to have a strong front to enable them press home their demands. All DWSTs in the three northern regions of Ghana can form a “Network of Northern Ghana DWSTs”. The expectation was for DISCAP to facilitate this. **The DISCAP office could first organize a days meeting with DWST leaders in each region to discuss modalities concerning the network and then organize a first ever conference of DWSTs where executives for the network will be elected and other issues confronting the membership discussed.** This network is critical to a sustainable problem-solving to DWSTs since DISCAP will no be there forever. This will help them to meet and devise various strategies to solve most of the problems and

challenges facing DWSTs as discussed in the previous pages. The facilitation of the meeting and formation of network should be done as soon as possible.

2. It will be useful to organize a meeting involving DWST schedule officers and team members for them to understand properly their roles as schedule officers and appreciate the need to support the team.
3. DWSTs complained not having PowerPoint installed on their computers and trained to use it. If this is true, the installation should be done and officers trained if they have not been already.
4. A request was made to prepare certificates for them and sent to them by post.

The conception of the idea, preparation and delivery of the training was both timely and appropriate. Participant's expectations were already high for a training of this nature. The training which covered 5 modules and 23 adopted the participatory adult learning approaches. This worked well to achieve training objectives and purpose. Participants had the opportunity to discuss issues of interest to and identified motivational issues, challenges at the DA level and those posed by the decentralized system as per water and sanitation. Generally, the programme was successful and met the expectations of participants.