

GHANA WATER COMPANY AND VEI END 2ND EXPOSURE VISIT ON STRENGTHENING WATER SUPPLY DELIVERY CAPACITY TO LOW-INCOME URBAN COMMUNITIES

A team of six members from the Low-Income Customer Support Department of the Ghana Water Company Limited and VEI (Netherlands) has ended a 5-day working visit to the Guma Valley Water Company under the European Union Water Operators Partnership Program (EU-WOP). The partnerships are solidarity-based, not-for-profit, and peer-to-peer exchanges between water and sanitation operators, that aim at strengthening the capacity and performance of utilities, with the ultimate goal of contributing to achieving UN Sustainable Development Goal 6, clean water and sanitation for all. The Chief Manager of Ghana Water Low-Income Customer Support Department,

Faustina Boachie said a key objective of the visit is to facilitate the transformation of the Community Services Unit of the Guma Valley Water Company into a Department; “Our drive is to facilitate the preparation of an establishment plan and a strategic plan and see how Guma can adapt it. The more visible low-income customers are within a utility, the better the quality of the service they will receive”.

Madam Boachie said a lot has been achieved under the EU-WOP and the visit is also to ensure that deliverables are on track and objectives are achieved.

She added that the staff of both Ghana Water and Guma Valley has been given a lot of trainings over the last 12 months; “We hope to see these trainings impacting positively the work of the Community Services Unit”.

Krijn Driessen, Project Manager of the EU-WOP reiterated that setting up a department is crucial to attracting funding; “A testament to that is that my Regional Manager has been approached by UNICEF to see how the Ghana model can be replicated in Sierra Leone, and a condition precedent is to have a department as is the case with Ghana Water”.

In his response, the Managing Director of Guma Valley Water Company, Ing. Maada S. Kpenge said improving water supply services to the urban poor is at the core of Guma’s operation; “The reason why low-income communities are not served is that we think they lack the capacity to pay for the service, we must therefore find innovative means to cater for their water need”.

The Guma MD said the company has done a lot to transform the Community Service Unit by linking its functions with the Peri-Urban services, and that it will gradually be upgraded into a department with the potential to attract external funding.

During the course of the 5-day visit, the team was able to finalize the Financial Plans for Years 1 and 2 of the partnership, agreed on a model for recording financial transactions, review documents and the existing corporate structure of Guma, and share best practices on the establishment of a Community Services Department. The team had engagements with representatives of the European Delegation in Sierra Leone and UNICEF during which discussions were held on further strengthening the capacity of the Guma Community Services Unit.

The team also visited Kroo Bay and Collier Compound (Juba) communities to assess which community service delivery models would best serve them.

GUMA COMMUNICATION UNIT_28/8/23