



Progress Towards Environmental Sustainability

Poor enforcement of regulations on natural resource utilization, inefficient management of forest reserves and dependence on wood-fuel by the poor have contributed immensely to forest degradation in Ghana. Lax enforcement of forestry regulations has left unchecked degradation related to crop and livestock production activities. Moreover, as a result of inefficient management of forest reserves and weak enforcement mechanisms, the loss of forests through fire, unsustainable logging practices, indiscriminate wood-fuel extraction and forest encroachment has accelerated.

A major challenge to formulating sustainable environmental programmes in Ghana is the ability to balance genuine environmental concerns with stakeholders. Such tensions underline the operational difficulties in achieving effective enforcement. Ultimately however, the overriding difficulty in formulating effective environmental policies is to obtain buy-in from stakeholders by involving them in the management of their natural resources.

Access to safe water rose from 49% in 1990 to 74% in 1998. However, there are wide disparities among regions and between urban and rural areas. Water shortages are frequent in many urban areas while rural areas experience seasonality of supply. In general, a greater proportion of rural dwellers lack access to adequate supply, as their communities lack ability to contribute to capital costs. Other constraints include the low borehole yield, poor quality of ground water, low levels of training of local maintenance staff with the result that boreholes remain out of service for longer than necessary. Obtaining spare parts is another challenge, as there is difficulty in establishing spare part outlets in remote rural areas.

QUICK FACTS

CURRENT PORTFOLIO BUDGET

Total UNDP-GEF and Co-Finance:	\$5,781,046
Total UNDP and Co-Finance:	\$1,025,000
Total MPU and Bilateral:	\$918,382
Total:	\$7,724,428

Cumulative Total ODS Phased-Out: 388.0 ODP tonnes

The Government's on-going strategy to address environmental sustainability challenges is largely embodied in the National Environmental Action Plan (1990-2000), the Forestry and Wildlife Policy, the Forestry Development Master Plan (1996-2000), the National Land Policy, the Science and Technology Policy (2000), and the Action Plan for Science and Technology Management.¹

SPOTLIGHT

LP Gas Bridges Gap to Socio-Economic Development²

Over 90% of all households in Ghana rely on traditional biomass – fuelwood and charcoal – as the primary fuel for domestic cooking and other productive activities. Heavy dependence on wood has resulted in increased local pollution, tremendous deforestation, and increased use of already scarce water supplies for cleaning cooking pots. Hajia Adamu, a commercial food vendor in the Savelugu district of northern Ghana, used 300-400 kg of firewood every day for her business until NewEnergy came to town.

Supported by the UNDP/Government of Ghana Liquefied Petroleum (LP) Gas Substitution Project and a financing grant of US\$ 300,000, NewEnergy visited Savelugu District in 2004 to promote new cooking stoves and LP Gas; Hajia Adamu embraced the initiative. The project's main strategy was to identify and support local champions from within the community who would replace 80-90% of their use of fuelwood with LP Gas. Hajia was selected because of the high visibility of her enterprise in the community and her personal interest in trying new technologies. As well as the necessary investment in LP Gas cylinders, ensuring safe operation of the equipment, and improving hygiene conditions, the project also provided various kinds of locally-produced cookers, technical training, and maintenance support. After two weeks of training, Hajia was able to successfully convert from use of 100% fuelwood to 95% LP Gas.

Thanks to LP Gas substitution, cooking time decreased considerably from 3.5 hours – 1.5 hours a day, leaving women more time to rest and prepare their children for school. Less water is used, reducing cooking times, and local pollution and indoor air quality have improved dramatically. Hajia is now an executive member of the Savelugu LP Gas Users Association, and serves as guide and mentor to local women on the use and potential of LP Gas substitution.

Ghana's principal development challenge of accelerating economic growth for poverty reduction, job creation, and accumulation of wealth implies high dependence on natural resource base. UNDP is working to support the formulation and implementation of national strategies, including legal frameworks, for environment protection and energy conservation. Public-private sector partnerships are being enhanced for effective management of natural resources. At the district level, the Government's capacity is being improved for environmental assessment, management, and monitoring.³ The UN will contribute to the coordination of community level training on the most appropriate technologies such as renewable energy as one way of increasing access to rural energy services in order to support growth, equity and gender equality.⁴

Daouda Toure, Resident Representative

PORTFOLIO

FSSD*

UNDP is supporting Ghana's efforts to achieve its development objectives through improved management of its wealth of natural resources. Projects such as the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) process, and the National Strategies for Environmental Resource Management enable Ghana to both ensure coherence in national environmental planning, and identify capacity requirements to fulfil the country's international environmental obligations. Linking economic and social concerns to the environment is central to both of these GEF and UNDP-supported initiatives.

ENERGY

UNDP is supporting access to sustainable energy services to reduce poverty in Ghana. The country has embraced the use of the Multifunctional Platform, which provides rural communities with modern energy access. Similarly, UNDP's LP Gas Substitution for Wood Fuel project represents a significant contribution to energy efficiency and poverty reduction (see Spotlight), incorporating many aspects of the numerous energy initiatives currently underway in Ghana. In terms of Climate Change, under Ghana's strategy to combat climate change and reduce poverty, UNDP has supported several GEF-funded projects to introduce environmentally sound technologies, or develop strategies to enhance local and national capacities for energy conservation and efficiency.

LAND

To support Ghana's efforts towards sustainable land management (SLM), UNDP is implementing a GEF-funded SLM project to mitigate land degradation and reduce poverty, proposed by a University of Ghana-led group of scientists and research institutes. The overarching goal of the project is to contribute to sustainable ecosystem-based integrated land management in globally, nationally and locally significant land resources in agricultural areas under threat of land degradation. This undertaking is expected to last until 2009 and result in greater ecosystem stability, enhanced food security, and improved rural livelihoods.

BIODIVERSITY

UNDP is supporting Ghana to conserve and use its biodiversity in a sustainable manner. For example, Ghana's Lake Bosomtwe Basin is endowed with flora and fauna of national and global significance. UNDP is implementing a GEF-Funded Biodiversity Conservation Project to help conserve aquatic and terrestrial biodiversity in the basin, by supporting positive traditional conservation practices, and a community-based conservation programme.

CHEMICALS

UNDP has been providing continuous support to Ghana's efforts to establish sustainable national institutions and effective strategies that enable the country to phase out ODS since 1991. Supported by funding from the Multilateral Fund of the Montreal Protocol, UNDP has worked with Ghana to implement 16 projects. In addition to institutional strengthening projects, UNDP is providing significant assistance in the refrigeration, solvents and methyl bromide sectors. Under the Stockholm Convention on POPs, UNDP is implementing a GEF-funded project that aims to build national capacity for elimination of Polychlorinated Bi-Phenyls (PCBs).

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www.undpgha.org/Programme_Activities/Environment.htm

¹Ghana MDGR 2003 http://www.undg.org/documents/3345-Ghana_MDG_Report_-_Report.doc; ²UNDP INFOlink, 'LP Gas Substitution for Wood Fuel in Ghana – Opportunities and Challenges', Nov. 2004; UNDP Ghana Document: Project LPG Substitution for wood fuel.; ³http://www.undp-gha.org/Programme_Activities/Environment.htm; ⁴<http://www.undg.org/content.cfm?id=327>;

*Frameworks and Strategies for Sustainable Development