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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Launch of the District WASH Full Coverage Start-up Initiative in Asutifi North**

Accra | Ghana, 16 March, 2017 – IRC, Safe Water Network and partners with the support of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation will launch the District Based Full WASH Coverage start-up initiative today in Kenyasi in the Asutifi North District of the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. The District Based Full WASH Coverage start-up initiative will present and leverage resources and expertise from stakeholders to support the design of a Master Plan and cost for achieving universal coverage to provide the blueprint for the district to reach full coverage.

The WASH sector in Ghana aspires to reach full coverage for water and sanitation by 2025 (MWRWH, 2014). Within the rural and small town sub-sector in Ghana, progress has been made in extending rural and small town coverage from 29% in the 1990s to 65% in 2015 with very slow growth in the last five years. In 2012, Community Water and Sanitation Agency (CWSA) adopted the service delivery approach and revised its operational guidelines to include tools and elements to support this process.

The monitoring system for rural and small town water service has been upgraded to include indicators for measuring water services and performance of service providers. The system has also been supported through the development of tools and web-based systems for collecting data on functionality and service levels, tracking of break downs and repair services. These tools have been applied to establish a national data-base on water services and the performance of service providers in 131 out of the 216 districts in Ghana. SMS systems for repair services have been established in about 200 communities in 6 regions in Ghana.

However, challenges remain in sustaining water and sanitation services and in achieving set targets by 2025 including: Non-functionality of water and sanitation facilities, lack of financing from Government and from Development partners; Poor sector coordination; weak service authorities; few sustainable service delivery models; weak enabling environment for scaling-up achievement of SDG 6; and weak sector performance tracking and reporting. IRC, Safe Water Network and partners aim to tackle the above problems and contribute to Ghana's 2025 vision by demonstrating that it is possible to achieve full coverage with a district in sustainable rural water and sanitation services.

**Speaking about the start-up initiative, Vida Duti, Country Director of IRC Ghana said:**

"The launch of the District Based Full WASH Coverage start-up initiative marks the inauguration of an inception period for a long term district based and water services governance and systems programme with the Hilton Foundation. In this regard, a rigorous and diligent process was followed to select Asutifi North District in the Brong-Ahafo Region of Ghana which will be used as a pilot for developing a long-term plan to respond to the challenges of the WASH sector with the target of providing full coverage by 2030 in the district. At IRC we are pleased to be part of this initiative and will together with SWN and Partners set the groundwork for a strong collective solution, drawing on SWN's expertise in providing commercial water services, and IRC's in strengthening local government and supporting collective impact coalitions to facilitate the development of long term strategy for achieving universal coverage in Asutifi North."



Organized by IRC, SWN and Partners with the support of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the start-up launch will bring together stakeholders from government, private sector, service providers, private operators, development partners, service users, traditional authorities among others from the WASH sector in and outside the district.

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## Editor's notes

### About IRC

IRC is an international think-and-do tank that works with governments, NGOs, entrepreneurs and people around the world to find long-term solutions to the global crisis in water, sanitation and hygiene services. At the heart of its mission is the aim to move from short-term interventions to sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services.

With over 45 years of experience, IRC runs projects in more than 25 countries and large-scale programmes in seven focus countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is supported by a team of over 80 staff across the world.

### About IRC Ghana

IRC Ghana, based in Accra, is led by its Country Director, Vida Duti. Registered in Ghana in 2011, IRC Ghana consists of a multi-disciplinary team of some fifteen professional staff, supported by technical specialists from IRC in The Netherlands.

### Safe Water Network

Safe Water Network (SWN) was co-founded in 2006 by the late actor and philanthropist Paul Newman, along with prominent civic and business leaders. An esteemed international board comprising leading water authorities and business leaders contributes to an increasingly influential organization, focused on empowering communities around the world to overcome the challenges to local sustainability. In 2008, Safe Water Network established field offices in Accra, Ghana and New Delhi in India. SWN works with Ghana government at all levels and collaborate with both the public and private sectors to overcome the country's water problems. SWN is presently testing a model for a market based approach to WASH service delivery in selected communities in 4 regions in Ghana.

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