

## **HATOF Foundation, Lancaster University hold community durbar on waste management**



**Accra, Oct 14, CitiNews - The HATOF Foundation, an environmental non-governmental organization, in partnership with Lancaster University in the United Kingdom, has organized a day's Community Durbar in the La-Nkwantanang Madina Municipality in Accra to sensitize the community to the problem of waste generation and to inform them about the ACTUATE Project designed to turn waste into valuable resources.**

The durbar also sought to solicit community buy-in and to seek their support to accelerate the uptake of a safe circular water economy connecting waste, human health and energy, food, and soil security in the community.

The ACTUATE project, an abbreviation for "Accelerating the Adoption of Circular Sanitation Demonstration System for Improved Health Outcomes," is a community-based pilot demonstration of bioenergy systems funded by the Global Challenges Research Fund through UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

In his virtual presentation at the durbar, the Director of RECIRCULATE and ACTUATE Projects, Professor Kirk T. Simple, from the Lancaster University, UK, informed that the project looks to see how to manage all waste -from human liquid and solid waste, agricultural, food and green waste, to alleviate its impact on human and environmental health.

Thus, the project aims to examine the virtuous circular economy of waste, sanitation, health, sustainable energy production from waste, and food security in Sub-Saharan Africa.

According to Professor Kirk, "the project will establish two demonstration pilots, including SHOW labs, to offer educational and capacity building tools to support understanding and acceptance."

The demonstrators are set up at the Umar Bun Hatab Islamic school in Ghana and on the University of Benin campus in Nigeria.



***Biodigester installation***

Also speaking at the durbar, Mr. Samuel Dotse, Chief Executive Officer, HATOF Foundation, explained that most people are used to acknowledging the health dangers of waste, but undervalue, energy, food production, and soil enrichment potential of waste.

Therefore, the ACTUATE project led by Lancaster University is building the biodigester system that will use organic waste to produce biogas to generate electricity and liquefied fertilizer for crops.

Mr. Dotse mentioned that neighboring schools and communities would be educated on a circular economy's health and environmental benefits and hinted that a national dialogue to solicit national support for the project.

“a national dialogue is also planned to ensure that we work with government, local businesses, investors, and entrepreneurs to support the commercialization and expansion of the technology,” he said.

Mr. Boniface Abu-bakar Sadique, the Member of Parliament for Madina, expressed his appreciation of the ACTUATE project in the Municipality.

He said the ACTUATE project would help the students and the community appreciate the nexus between waste and energy and inculcate the application of science among school children.

The headmaster of Umar Bun Hatab Islamic Basic School, Mr. Imoro Suleiman, equally expressed satisfaction and delight over his school's selection for the second time for such a pilot project.

He said the school, which had already benefit from a similar project - establishing a weather station on the campus under the RECIRCULATE project, from Lancaster University, is very much ready for the ACTUATE project.

He added that class six and form one student would participate in the pilot project, and they would be trained on how to segregate waste to feed the digester.

The three-year project would be collaboratively implemented by the HATOF Foundation, Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Green Advocacy and Umar Bun Hatab Islamic Basic School, and Sewerage Systems Ghana Ltd here in Ghana.

Dr. Richard Bayitse, a Senior Research Scientist at the CSIR, explained that HATOF and Green Advocacy would be educating the community on the sanitation and waste aspect of the project. At the same time, the CSIR-IIR would work on the research aspect.

"The project is a demonstrator, so the success of this project will give us the opportunity to upscale or implement it in other communities. So that it would benefit everybody," Dr. Bayitse said.



Also present at the durbar were Paramount Chief of Madina, Ali Dada Abdulai Dagadu; Chief Imam of Madina Zongo, Sheikh Salman Mohammed Alhassan; Imam of Ibn Taymiyya Mosque, Malam Abu; and Proprietor of Umar bun Hatab Islamic School, Sheik Tahir. The participants also included community Chiefs, Imams, youth and women groups, community associations, Assemblyman, and representatives from the Municipal Assembly, the Education Directorate, and the Islamic Education Unit.



***Across session of Chiefs in Madina Zongo***

The community leaders expressed their delight over the project and the school's selection and pledged to offer leadership and support to ensure the sustainability of the project.



### ***Participants at the durbar***