‘Implement Act 917 on Hazardous and Electronic Waste’

By Damian Avevor

Participants at an advocacy workshop on E-Waste have called on Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation and the Environmental Protection Agency to fully implement Act 917 and Legislative Instrument (LI2250) on Hazardous and Electronic Waste Control and Management.

They also called for the use of the Electrical and Electronic Waste levy and Fund which offers incentives for the collection, processing, transportation and disposal of E-Waste as well as for the promotion of public education on negative effects of E-waste.

The appeals came at a two-day training workshop on Public Policy Advocacy in Accra to enhance Faith Actors and citizens’ engagement for the effective implementation of public policies and laws (Act
The participants noted that having a sound environmental E-Waste management system would protect the environment from pollution, prevent potential health hazards to persons and also bring economic benefits to the state and the citizens, especially the youth.

Electronic Waste refers to any appliance or gadget powered by electricity that has reached its end point of life and has thus been discarded because it is too old, spoilt or damaged. They include a wide-range of domestic and IT appliances such as air-conditioners, refrigerators, television sets, washing machines, computers, vacuum cleaners, mobile phones, bulbs.

While these discarded wastes contain some inherent valuables which are much sought after for income, they also have a high potential to harm individuals and communities or pollute the environment if managed inappropriately.

Caritas Ghana, the development agency of the Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference organised the Workshop with support from the Embassy of France as part of the Care for Our Common Home Project inspired by Pope Francis’ Encyclical Letter, *Laudato Si*.

The Advocacy Workshop was attended by about 30 participants representing the National Catholic Secretariat, the Christian Council of Ghana, Federation of Muslim Women Associations in Ghana (FOMWAG), Office of the National Chief Imam, Ghana Pentecostal and Charismatic Council, Marshallan Relief and Development Services (MAREDES), Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission in Ghana, City of God at Agbobloshie, the Accra and Tamale Archdioceses, Ghana National Catholic Youth Council and *The Catholic Standard* Newspaper.

**Speaking at the Advocacy Workshop, Samuel Zan Akologo, the Executive Secretary of Caritas Ghana** said the Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference (GCBC) issued a directive to Caritas Ghana to develop and operate local structures for sustainable E-Waste management in Ghana in 2017. He said the Church’s primary purpose and interest was to address wastes of electrical and electronic equipment
He added that there is a huge potential of safely harnessing valuables of Electronic and Electrical Equipment Waste and expressed gratitude to the GIZ, the Embassy of France, City Waste Recycling Ltd and the Environmental Protection Agency for their co-operation and collaboration in the Caritas Ghana’s E-Waste Project.

Mr. Akologo noted that advocacy was not only in criticising Government policies but understanding public policies and regulations and facilitating citizens to make demands on decision makers. Policy advocacy, he said is also about demonstrating to Government what works best in the resolution public problems.

**Mr. Oliver Boachie, a Technical Advisor to the Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation**, commended Caritas Ghana for ensuring sustainable E-waste management system in the country through advocacy and public sensitization.

According to him, the Act provides for the designation of an external service provider, to verify, assess and collect Advance Recycle Eco Fee on imported-electrical and electronic equipment, under the Fifth Schedule of Act 917.

He said the Act also mandates a state-of-the-art recycling facility to be constructed at Agbogbloshie, in fulfilment of Act 917 which will create over 22,000 self-sustaining jobs for the Ghanaian youth.

He said the Act 917-mandated Fund is to provide support for the construction and maintenance of electrical and electronic waste recycling or treatment plants and to support research in academic and research institutions.

**Mr. Alexandre Foulon, Head of Co-operation and Cultural Affairs who represented the Embassy of France in Ghana**, bemoaned the disposing of E-waste and called for protection of the environment.

Mr. Francis Samuel Koku, the Coordinator of the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office; Madam Eunice Agbenyadzi and Safia Musah of STAR Ghana Foundation and Madam Vivian Ahiayibor, the Chief Executive Officer of City Waste facilitated the workshop.