
Review of the implementation of the Liberia WASH Compact commitments

September 2011

A study commissioned and carried out by WaterAid on Behalf of the National Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion Committee (NWSHPC).

WaterAid in Liberia
Ministry of Public Works, Lynch Street,
Monrovia, Liberia
+231880685378
apollosnwafor@wateraid.org

Table of Contents

List of Acronyms.....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Background	5
Objectives of the review	5
Methodology.....	5
Findings of the Review	6
Progress by commitment area.....	6
1. Institutional capacity.....	6
2. Service provision priorities and equity	11
3. Data and monitoring and evaluation gaps.....	11
4. Financing mechanisms	13
Further impact of the Compact	13
General points of learning	14
Recommendations	15
Appendix 1: Contributors to the review	16
Addendum to the Compact.....	17

Report written by Karyn Beattie and commissioned by WaterAid

List of Acronyms

CSOs	–	Civil Society Organizations
CSWG	–	Civil Society Working Group
DCMHyP	–	Directorate of Community Mobilization and Hygiene Promotion
EPA	–	Environment Protection Agency
GoL	–	Government of Liberia
LISGIS	–	Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services
LWSC	–	Liberia Water and Sewerage Corporation
MDGs	–	Millennium Development Goals
MoG&D	–	Ministry of Gender and Development
MoLME	–	Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy
MoE	–	Ministry of Education
MoF	–	Ministry of Finance
MoHSW	–	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
MoPW	–	Ministry of Public Works
MoPEA	–	Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs
NCD	–	National Capacity Development
NGO	–	Non-Governmental Organization
NWSHPC	–	National Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion Committee
NWRSB	–	National Water Resources and Sanitation Board
SSP	–	Sector Strategic Plan
SWA	–	Sanitation and Water for All
UNDP	–	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	–	United Nations Children Fund
USAID	–	United States Agency for International Development
WASH	–	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	–	WASH Focal Point
WSP	–	World Bank Water and Sanitation Program
WSSC	–	Water Supply and Sanitation Commission
WWG	–	WASH Working Group

Executive Summary

The successful development of the Liberia WASH Compact was the result of a Joint Mission undertaken with the support of the Government of Liberia and the Sanitation and Water for All initiative. This is the first review of the progress made towards achieving the Compact commitments.

The most significant result of the Compact, a point made by most of the contributors to this review, is the improved coordination and networking across the WASH sector in Liberia. Regular meetings of the National Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion Committee have provided a forum for information sharing and the framework of the Compact has provided a focus for the discussions. Similarly, the four commitments of the Compact have formed the structure of the WASH section of the second Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS II).

Progress has been made against the indicators set out in the roadmap of actions contained in the Compact. Out of the nine deadlines due within this review period, five had been completely achieved and progress made towards the remaining four. In addition, progress had also been made towards some which were not yet due.

The development of the website has improved access to WASH-related information in Liberia but also allowed the Liberian delegates to the AfricaSan conference in Rwanda in July 2011 to share the Compact with delegates from other countries.

Another success has been the development of a comprehensive Terms of Reference and workplan for the capacity building assessment and plan which will be undertaken by a consultant in January 2012.

Perhaps the most significant challenge has been the inability to secure the President's approval for the Compact. This has had consequences for the achievement of some commitments as well as for development partners' perception of the government's support of the document. But in spite of this, it did not deter stakeholders from working towards the Compact commitments. Nevertheless, increased lobbying will be required to secure the approval as soon as possible.

The purpose of the Joint Mission was to produce a Compact which would lead to the achievement of the sector goals. To date, the Compact has increased coordination and provided a focus for the work of both government and development partners. If progress continues it is fair to assume that the sector goals stated within the Compact will be achieved.

Background

The Liberia WASH Compact was a result of a Joint Mission; a meeting in which the Government of Liberia and their development partners, including civil society and the private sector, came together under the banner of the Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) initiative. The Compact included a “roadmap of actions” for implementation with deadlines for the different activities.

During the Joint Mission, the attendees felt it was important that the progress of the Compact implementation be reviewed periodically in order to capture learning and to ensure the progress remained on track. This review is the first and covers the six month period beginning just prior to the Joint Mission.

More information on the Joint Mission and the process by which the Compact was developed can be found in the report entitled ‘The development of the Liberia WASH Compact’¹.

Objectives of the review

The Terms of Reference for the review included the following 4 objectives:

1. Determine the extent to which the work plan for the first 6 months has been implemented
2. Highlight any challenges that have arisen in implementation of the work and provide clear recommendations to improve the process. Likely areas to assess are issues pertaining to the signing of the compact and executive orders, and the development partners’ engagement in the process.
3. Provide an overview on significant changes that have occurred as compared to before the SWA process started
4. Report on any identifiable impact the SWA process has had on various stakeholders (e.g. partner views on Liberia WASH investments, government WASH budget etc, NGO coordination etc)

Methodology

The review was conducted over a two week period beginning with a plenary session with the National Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion Committee (NWSHPC) in which certain individuals were identified for further follow up (see Appendix 1 for a list of the contributors²). The discussions focused on the indicators which were due during the period and on recommendations for the next six months.

¹ See www.wash-liberia.org for a copy of the report and the Compact.

² Although the list of names is given in the Appendix, no statements are attributed in the report.

Findings of the Review

The Compact roadmap had a number of activities under each commitment. The performance on these commitments was to be assessed against indicators with specific deadlines. Out of 26 indicators, 3 were ongoing throughout the Compact period and 9³ were due within the period under review. There were a further 4 indicators which did not have deadlines but these were set during this review by the NWSHPC. The remaining indicators were not due within the review period.

In addition to the activities in the roadmap, the Foreword in the Compact was to be signed by the President. However at the time of this review, the Compact was still unsigned which means that it is a draft document until there is sign off. This was one of the most important lessons to have come out of the review: More lobbying was required to secure the approval for the Compact as soon as possible. However, the even as a draft document, the Compact commitments have formed the basis of the planning and activities within the WASH sector since May 2011.

Progress by commitment area

1. Institutional capacity

1. Appoint National Water Resources and Sanitation Board (NWRSB)		
1.a. Executive order for NWRSB issued	1.a. End Jul 2011	●
2. Operationalize required institutions		
2.a. Executive orders issued; NWSHPC established	2.a. 15 May 2011	● ✓
2.b. Functions of various structures clarified	2.b. Mid Jun 2011	✓
2.c. WSSC created	2.c. Jun 2012	
2.d. RWSS bureau established	2.d. May 2011	●
2.e. DCMHyP established	2.e. 2 years	●
3. Mandate assessment and strengthening of county-level structures within existing policies		
3. a. Capacity building taskforce for WASH established	3.a. Immediately	✓
3.b. Assessment carried out	3.b. Immediately	●
3.c. Capacity building plan developed and implemented	3.c. Ongoing	

Key to table

Indicators which were not due in this review period are shaded in grey.

The last column contains a symbol to show progress:

- A tick (✓) = completed
- A dot (●) = in progress
- Left blank = no progress to report as yet

Progress and learning

Indicators 1.a., 2.a. (first part), 2.d. and 2.e. were all linked to the Compact being signed off before they could progress. According to the Compact roadmap, all these indicators were reliant on an Executive Order being issued which was being delayed until the Compact was signed. However, according to one informant, the NWRSB could be formed on instruction of the President without the

³ Indicator 2.a. originally had one deadline but since it has two parts to it, I have counted it as two indicators.

formality of an Executive Order. The other three, the WSSC, the RWSS bureau and the DCMHyP require an Executive Order to be issued.

An Executive Order is a detailed legal document which the President can issue in one of two ways. Either it is presented as a request from the President to National Legislature to create a legal entity: This is a lengthy process but once approved, it is signed into law as a permanent agency. The alternate option is for the President to issue the Executive Order directly. This allows for the creation of an entity on a temporary basis only – a period of 1 to 2 years. This second option is much quicker and was the option being pursued to form the required institutions under the Compact.

Following the Joint Mission, a small committee was put together to draft the Executive Order using an example from another department. Once complete, it was circulated to the NWSHPC for comments and then sent, together with the Compact, for approval. These two documents were submitted to the MoPEA since it was this ministry which had been responsible for the coordination of the Joint Mission.

According to those interviewed, it would have been better not to send the Executive Order for sign off at the same time as the Compact. Essentially, the Compact document must be signed off before anything else because the President's approval of the commitments contained in the Compact paves the way for any subsequent approval such as the Executive Order.

Secondly, responsibility for submitting the different documents fell to different ministries but this was not clear to the committee initially. The Compact was the responsibility of the MoPEA but the Executive Order fell under the MoLME for submission. One respondent felt that it would have saved time if this had been made clear sooner.

Thirdly, the committee felt that they had further delayed the process by presenting the sector investment costing for the next 5 years to the ministers at a meeting called by the MoPEA. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and agree on the Compact and the Executive Order. But when the costing was presented, the ministers were concerned by the scale of the funding required and as a result, were unwilling to back the signing of the Compact or the Executive Order. A number of contributors felt that it was not necessary to present the sector investment costing at all but rather to only present the costing for the institutions included in the Executive Order.

A crucial learning point was that the amount of lobbying required was under-estimated. Since most of the ministers did not attend all the sessions of the Joint Mission, there was a lack of clarity on the proposed institutional structure. The ministers needed more information in the following specific areas:

- The importance of the Compact
- An explanation of the role and nature of the NWRSB and the WSSC
- Information on the benefits versus the cost implications of the new structure
- Information to enable the ministers to generate national support/ effort for the Compact commitments

By way of illustration, one contributor felt that the committee had still not convinced the ministers that the WSSC was required. This was a concern which the President had raised when she attended the final day of the Joint Mission and so in order to back the Compact and, specifically the Executive Order, the ministers needed to be able to justify the WSSC to the President. It was suggested that the committee should have kept the ministers updated in the months following the writing of the Compact so that they would have a better understanding of the discussions and decisions which

were made by the committee. As it was, the length of time between the presentation of the Compact at the Joint Mission and the engagement with the ministers was too long.

Similarly, suggestions were made to increase awareness of the Compact to the public through the media. In the lead up to the elections, WaterAid and the WASH consortium worked with the WWG to engage political candidates in debates relating to the Compact. These highlighted the lack of understanding of what the Compact is; who was involved in making the commitments; and what it means for ordinary Liberians.

As a result of the discussions held for this review, a taskforce was put together to plan a specific strategy to raise awareness through the media and to target the relevant government ministries prior to the inauguration in January. This is important because a policy statement will be made at the inauguration so it is an opportunity to influence the degree to which WASH is included in that policy.

As a result of the delays, amendments were suggested to the deadlines for indicators 1.a., 2.a and 2.d. These are shown in the amendments section on page 17.

Second part of indicator 2.a.: The committee (NWSHPC) was successfully established and fully functional by the 19th May 2011. Meeting twice a month, the roadmap of the Compact forms the basis for the agenda of those meetings. The secretariat is headed by the Civil Society WASH Working Group and the MoPW chairs the meetings. At present, UNDP GoAL WASH provides support to the MoPW but it is recommended that this support be institutionalised as soon as possible.

Indicator 2.b. was also achieved by the deadline. This structure is shown in Figure 1. However, what is still to be done is to work out how to make the transition from the current fragmentation to the new structure. Another factor to consider in future is that the commission will need to come under the committee rather than the Board since the members of the Board will be ministers who will not have the time to provide the oversight for the commission. This also has financial implications.

Learning points:

- The Compact must be signed off before any subsequent documents are submitted to government for approval.
- Lobbying different line ministries for support is essential prior to submitting documents for approval. Ministers have to understand and be convinced about what it is they are asked to approve.
- When presenting a Compact for support, the corresponding budget should be broken down into phases of investment and if possible, show any commitments made by development partners.
- The use of the roadmap to develop the agenda for the committee (NWSHPC) meetings ensures that the focus remains on the Compact commitments.

The capacity building taskforce was set up early in May so indicator 3.a. met the deadline in the roadmap. The taskforce was appointed by the committee with representatives from the MoPEA, UNDP GoAL WASH, USAID, civil society, the private sector, LWSC and MoE. MoPEA chaired the taskforce since it is this ministry which houses the National Capacity Development (NCD) Unit. In

addition, the GoL had been working with the World Bank Institute who had provided training on capacity development. The material from that training proved very useful and saved time.

The taskforce developed a Terms Of Reference and a workplan for a consultant to carry out an assessment of the sector capacity needs and develop a capacity building plan. These documents were complete by the 8th August and the funding for the consultancy was secured in the last week of September. In addition, some preliminary research was undertaken in the private sector to identify the current areas where there are gaps. The most common need cited was for trade schools to increase the number of people with practical skills.

One challenge which was highlighted was the low level of engagement of most members. Consistently, only three members attended meetings and very few responded to requests for feedback on documents which were circulated. In particular, there was a concern at the lack of attendance by the representative from the MoE – this was despite repeated invitations from various members of the NWSHPC. The opinion of one of the taskforce members was that the low attendance showed that there is not enough commitment to capacity building in the WASH sector. Similarly, another felt that it is important to ensure buy in for capacity building.

Indicator 3.b., the assessment, is to take place beginning in January 2012 and is likely to take 3 months. Only once this is complete can indicator 3.c., the implementation of the capacity development plan, begin. However, this will also be dependent on the Compact having been signed.

Learning points:

- Using the training from the World Bank Institute saved time. Wherever possible, use tools which have already been developed.
 - The choice of taskforce members is very important to ensure good representation and responsiveness.
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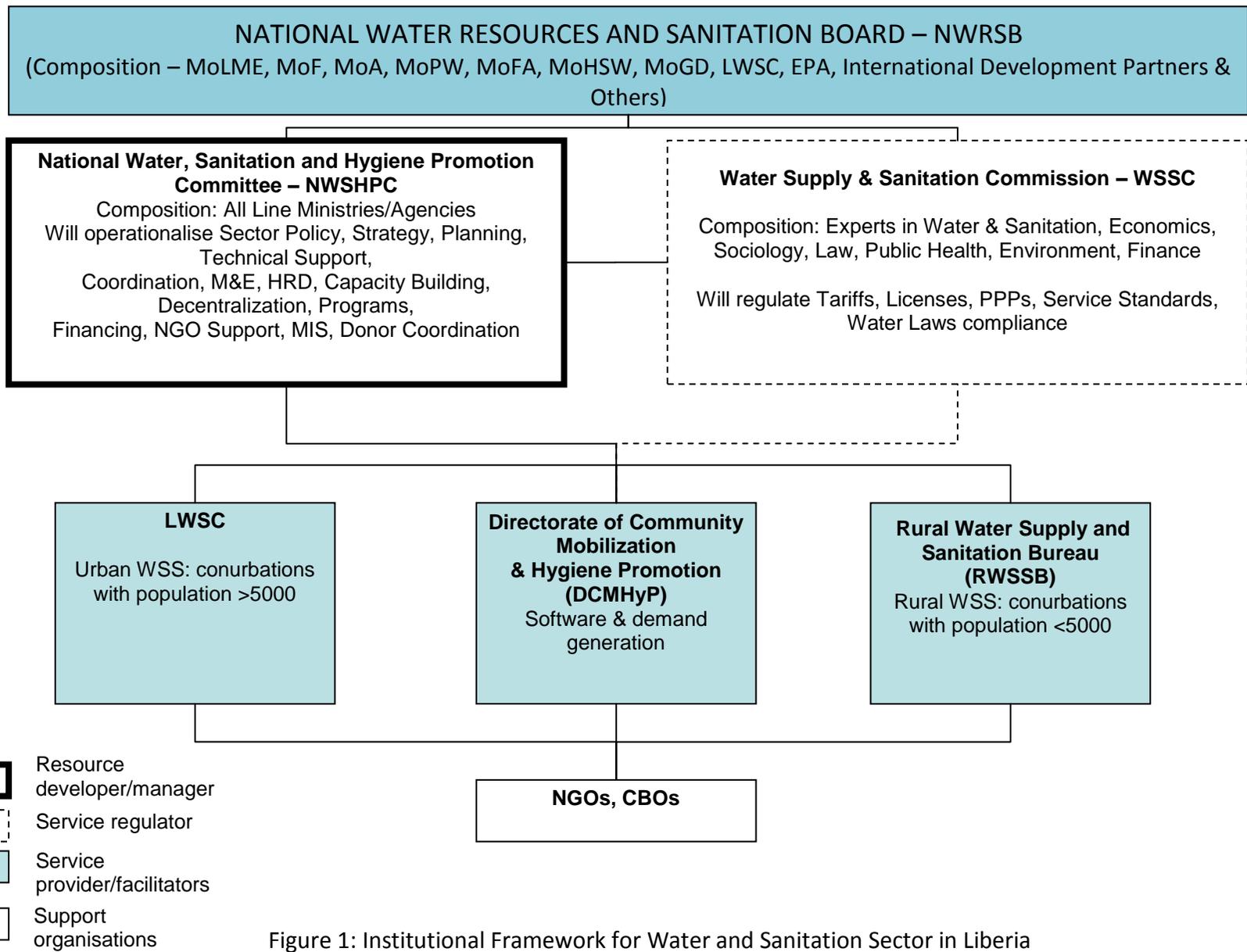


Figure 1: Institutional Framework for Water and Sanitation Sector in Liberia

2. Service provision priorities and equity

1. Mandate implementation of WASH standards and regulation protocols		
1.a. Technical guidelines disseminated	1.a. Jan 2012	
2. Mainstream WASH in the educational system		
2.a. School curriculum updated to include WASH	2.a. Jan 2013	
3. Ensure policies have a strong emphasis on government supported community-led approaches to sanitation and hygiene promotion		
3.a. Policies include community-led approaches	3.a. Dec 2011	✓
3.b. Directorate formed	3.b. 2 years	
4. Ensure equitable access		
4.a. Sector Investment Plan includes priority areas	4.a. Mar 2012	
4.b. Gender mainstreamed	4.b. Ongoing	●

Key to table

Indicators which were not due in this review period are shaded in grey.

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Progress and learning

As shown in the table, none of the indicators were due for completion during this review period but the inclusion of community-led approaches into the sanitation policies has already been achieved. In addition, both the Sector Strategic Plan (SSP) and the Terms of Reference for the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) programme have been developed which, although not indicators, enable the delivery of this commitment.

Gender mainstreaming, [indicator 4.b.](#), is an ongoing activity but so far the policies and plans developed all give consideration to gender. The committee felt that this will be seen more clearly at a programmatic level and that meaningful assessment of this indicator will need to be undertaken in subsequent reviews.

3. Data and monitoring and evaluation gaps

*See Key to Table above.

1. Establish monitoring mechanisms		
1.a. M&E framework developed	1.a. March 2012	
1.b. Centralized and decentralized database operational	1.b. March 2012	●
1.c. Minutes of county coordination meetings shared	1.c. Jan 2012; ongoing	
2. Refine and disaggregate the structure of budgets (MoF)		
2.a. National budget has clearly defined budget lines	2.a. March 2012	
3. Commit to GoL sharing of WASH data / information (LISGIS) internally and externally		
3.a. Freely accessible Liberia WASH Website established with relevant WASH data/information posted and updated on a regular basis.	3.a. May 2011	✓
3.b. System developed to disseminate and update data	3.b. Dec 2011	●
4. Institute reviews of commitments in the Compact		
4.a. Reviews carried out and reports presented	4.a. Sept 2011	✓

Progress and learning

Under the fourth commitment, there were three indicators that did not have deadlines. These have now been set by the committee and are shown in the table in italics as well as in the Amendments section on page 17. These newly set deadlines do not fall within the review period but progress has already been made towards their achievement.

Indicator 1.b. refers to the database holding the water point mapping information. At present the centralized database is being developed and as funding becomes available, this will be decentralized. The data will be held at three levels: District, county and national. This work has been carried out by the World Bank's WSP.

The water point data is reliant on WASH Focal Points (WFPs), individuals who work at both district and county level. At present, there are thirty WFPs identified to work at county level, two per county. Until district WFPs are appointed, responsibility for gathering information will be at county level. County level WFPs will submit data via smartphones to the central database and updates should occur monthly.

Similarly, the development of the website (indicator 3.a.) was also carried out by WSP. Originally, the responsibility was given to MoPW but ahead of the AfricaSan conference in Rwanda in July 2011, the committee made an urgent request for support to set up the website. This was so that the Compact, among other things, could be made available via the website (www.wash-liberia.org) at AfricaSan. Since then, it has been constantly updated and also includes the Water Point Mapping (WPM) data which will eventually be updated from the decentralized and centralized databases. It is proving to be a useful resource within the sector and as a result, at least one other WASH website in Liberia was considering closing down and submitting their information to the wash-liberia site.

At present, indicator 3.b. is being achieved via the website but the intention is that other methods of dissemination be implemented once the development work on the databases is complete.

The ongoing maintenance of the databases and the website will eventually be handed over to the committee. For this reason, it is essential that funding for the committee is secured since a team of three or four skilled people will be required.

Indicator 4.a. is fulfilled by this report – the review was carried out in the last week of September according to the original deadline.

Learning points:

- The development of the website was achieved quickly because support was given by WSP.
 - It is difficult to maintain county and national level data without the district WASH Focal Points in place but to put them in place, funding is required.
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4. Financing mechanisms

1. Establish detailed, prioritized Sector Investment Plan		
1.a. Sector Investment Plan developed	1.a. March 2012	
2. Deliver on GoL's previous financial commitments		
2.a. Commitment to 0.5% of GDP for sanitation and 7.3% of PRS budget for WASH delivered.	2.a. March 2012	
2.b. Further commitments identified and delivered.	<i>2.b. July 2012</i>	
3. Establish a WASH pooled fund mechanism		
3.a. Pooled fund established (details to be included post July '11)	3.a. March 2013	

Key to table

Indicators which were not due in this review period are shaded in grey.

The last column contains a symbol to show progress:

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Progress and learning

As shown, there were no indicators which were due during the review stage but there was further detail regarding the WASH pooled fund which was supposed to have been included in the roadmap after July 2011. This had not yet been completed.

Indicator 2.a. has been revised because the 7.3% was a commitment made in one particular year and therefore should not have been included as a recurring commitment. This is shown on page 17.

Indicator 2.b. was one that previously did not have a deadline; this is now shown in italics and is included in the Addendum to the Compact on page 17.

Further impact of the Compact

Apart from the progress against the roadmap indicators, there were other deliverables which were not captured by but were a result of the Compact:

1. Finalisation of the Sector Strategic Plan
2. The Sector Operating Matrix
3. The Sector Investment Costing
4. Design of the building which will house the WSSC and eventually, the WASH ministry

In addition, the Compact has had an impact on the WASH component of the second Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS II) which has used the same four priority areas as the Compact commitments.

There were a number of comments made regarding the impact of the committee, another direct result of the Compact. The most notable was that the coordination and networking within the sector has improved as a result of the regular committee meetings.

Also noted was that the Compact has provided a framework which resulted in a more coordinated approach and better accountability within the sector.

General points of learning

- Throughout the process, starting before the Joint Mission, the various groups set up to achieve different tasks worked well together with only one exception.
- Because no financial commitments from the development partners were captured in the Compact development process, there is currently no way to track these and furthermore, it has made it more difficult to lobby government without this information.
- International partners played an important role in helping to lobby government. This was true from the initial engagement with SWA right through to the present lobbying for the Compact to be signed.
- Contrary to what might have been expected, there has been no improvement in the GoL's budgetary support to the WASH sector since the development of the Compact.

Recommendations

1. Within the next few months, lobbying for the Compact to be signed should be increased.
2. Since there is still a lack of clarity among ministers regarding the new institutional structure, it will be important for the committee to ensure that the justification and the role of each entity is explained to the ministers, particularly those who will be members of the Board (NWRSB). This should be done concurrently with the lobbying for the signing of the Compact since it will equip the ministers with the information to allay the concerns raised by the President during the Joint Mission.
3. It is recommended that the committee develop plans to maintain the momentum of the Compact immediately after the election results are announced and ministerial appointments have been made.
4. The support being provided by UNDP to the MoPW in relation to the NWSHPC has contributed to the success of the committee and this function should be institutionalised to enable the committee to continue to run smoothly. Funding will be required for this but given the success of this committee so far, this should be prioritised.
5. The committee should continue to request better commitment from the MoE. Development partners who are engaged with support to education could assist in lobbying for this via their existing channels/ relationships.
6. If individual members of a taskforce are not engaging with their group, the committee should consider replacing or reassigning members to ensure better representation, engagement and support to the chair of the group.
7. At regular intervals, perhaps quarterly, the financial commitments of development partners should be captured. This could be done against the Sector Investment Plan once it has been developed but should start immediately. This will increase accountability as well as clearly showing GoL the commitments of their development partners⁴.
8. The ongoing maintenance of the website and the databases is essential if it is to remain a useful resource. It will be crucial to find sufficient funding for the regular data capture and the updating and maintenance of the databases.
9. The outcomes of the Capacity Development Plan will need to be incorporated into the Sector Investment Plan.

⁴ As a result of the review discussions, a taskforce headed by the AfDB will meet to identify possible options for achieving this. This should be followed up in the next review.

Appendix 1: Contributors to the review

Date	Affiliation/ representation	Name
22 Sept	NWSHPC meeting	See minutes for attendees
26 Sept	Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy	Jeff Wylie
26 Sept	Foundation for Women	Joelle Gordon
27 Sept	Ministry of Public Works	George Yarngo
27 Sept	Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs	Lilian Best
27 Sept	UNDP GoAL WASH	Chantal Richey
28 Sept	Water and Sanitation Program of The World Bank	Abdul Koroma
29 Sept	Liberia WASH Consortium	Samuel Pieh
5 Oct	USAID	Augustine Mulbah
20 Oct	NWSHPC meeting	See minutes for attendees

Addendum to the Compact

As a result of the first review, the following amendments were made to the roadmap of the Compact.

Institutional capacity:

1. The new target date for Executive Order to be signed is March 2012. This affects indicators 1.a., 2.a.
2. The new target date for the establishment of the RWSS Bureau (indicator 2.d.) is May 2012.

Service provision priorities and equity

1. The responsibility for indicator 1.a. has changed from WSSC to the NWSHPC.

Data and monitoring and evaluation gaps:

Target dates were included for those indicators which did not have a date set in the Compact. These are as follows:

1. Indicator 1.b. – March 2012.
2. Indicator 1.c. – January 2012; ongoing
3. Indicator 3.b. – December 2011.

Financing mechanisms:

1. Indicator 2.a. should not include the 7.3% of PRS budget because this is an annual %.
2. The target date for indicator 2.b. is July 2012.