AKVO Refresher Training Report

I.   Background

The WASH Sector Strategic Plan (SSP) prioritizes the establishment of information management systems under Strategic Objective 3, which includes Priority Activity 3.1.2: *Develop one set of agreed indicators and guidance for use in national surveys (LHDS, Census, other) in alignment with WASH sector definition/ JMP as appropriate.* The Government of Liberia (GOL) and UNICEF engaged AKVO, a Dutch-based NGO specializing in building open source internet and mobile software, to develop technical capacity around monitoring. AKVO previously delivered similar services to GOL during the 2011 water point (WP) mapping exercise. In February 2013, GOL hosted AKVO for a weeklong training workshop in Monrovia; AKVO introduced its signature products Really Simple Reporting (RSR) and Field-Level Operations Watch (FLOW) which offers survey development and data collection services. The objective of the Refresher Training was to enable partners to use FLOW to report on key WASH activities so the sector can monitor and report on progress.

II.   Details

The workshop was held Wednesday, 9 October – Friday, 11 October, 2013 at the Ministry of Public Works (MPW), Infrastructure Implementation Unit Conference Room. There were 25 participants from various government ministries and agencies and partner organizations.

III.   Proceedings

Honorable George K. Yarngo, Assistant Minister for Community Services at MPW, officially opened the training and Abdul Koroma, Coordinator for the National WASH Promotion Committee (NWSHPC), facilitated throughout the three days. The agenda was split between two days of in-classroom training and one day of field practice; the in-classroom training included presentations, practice setting up phones with the AKVO FLOW app and group discussion while field practice entailed testing national reporting forms in the Pipeline area of Greater Monrovia. Content from the three days is available on the WASH Liberia website – www.wash-liberia.org, under "AKVO Refresher Training" on the Documents page. Notable points from the field practice de-briefing and other sessions can be found below.

IV.   Next Steps

AKVO will continue with in-country training for government representatives for two days, specifically around dashboard management with the objective of enabling GOL at national level to undertake higher level FLOW functions and organization effective FLOW trainings. The NWSHPC will develop a guidance note on expectations in partner reporting in regards to incorporating FLOW and has agreed to share all raw data on a quarterly basis with partners, and also by request. Partners should begin to use FLOW to collect data on new points and, once the continuous monitoring function is available, begin using FLOW for updating existing points. Partners should also continue to update RSR profiles, add projects and explore additional information on the AKVO website.

Notable Points from Field Practice De-Briefing and Other Sessions

Reporting Forms

- 6.2 on both forms: Why is there not "other" for title of verifier? Because the WASH technical guidelines specify that verifier must be one of the following: School Principal/ Vice Principal, Clinic OIC, Camp Manager/ Leader, Community Leader/ Chairman
- 3.8-10 on Latrine Form: Animator and WASH Committee questions do not apply to schools, so perhaps make dependent on type of facility
- Throughout: Expand fields for measurements by adding space for inches (i.e. fields for feet and inches; make total number in inches; or allow decimal)
- 4.3-5 on Latrine Form: Specify "without shower" for number of cubicles
- 4.1.1. on Latrine Form: Remove "mud brick" as slab option as never used

Points from Discussion

- Respondents should be technical as many questions require technical knowledge
- Assessment reporting form will be added; it will be a shorter form allowing partners to document functionality of point and offer notes on work needed
- Place codes (P-codes) are unique numbers assigned to each community in Liberia by LISGIS; it is not feasible to expect enumerators to carry a list of P-codes to the field and new communities do not have an assigned code, so it is a non-mandatory question and should be input manually on dashboard by NWSHPC for now
- Population will probably be overestimated by community, but like P-code challenge, cannot be addressed in field; census data also wouldn't have population by "zone"
- When answers missing in reporting form, FLOW only shows questions but not tab to find it under; AKVO emphasized that enumerators will be so familiar with forms after filling them out repeatedly that it should not be an issue
- When scrolling through forms, such as when to find questions that were missed on first round, always scroll on the right side to avoid changing multiple choice answers
- GPS is not exact anywhere in the world; new satellites will be launched in 2014 but for now enumerators should be satisfied with measurements within 20m
- For FLOW appspot, AKVO could look into color-coding map to show functional vs. nonfunctional points
- For dashboard, AKVO noted that being able to filter in different ways is high on roadmap
- During field practice, data collection took an estimated 17-32 minutes per form, but that was partly due to needing to find people for answers; users can save forms and return later if necessary
- It is possible that partners could create additional relevant forms to be uploaded in collaboration with NWSHPC
- Group agreed that if an error is spotted, procedure will remain informal - call NWSHPC for fixing