

Liberia WASH Sector Civil Society Partners Response to Joint Sector Performance 2013 Report

Progress from the 2013 Joint Sector Review

Following the circulation of the Joint Sector Performance Report, one day working session was held at the offices of the Citizens United to Promote Peace & Democracy in Liberia host of the Liberia CSOs WASH network. Participating organizations included Liberia WASH Consortium, WaterAid-Liberia, Liberia NGOs Network, Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia, Youth and Disable Network and Citizens United to Promote Peace & Democracy in Liberia. The participants agreed on the following counts as outlined under each theme:

Executive Summary (P9) Advocacy and Public Awareness

- ✓ Civil society agreed that the recommended actions as outlined under the advocacy and public awareness section on page 9 are legitimate, however, civil society believe it is key for the report to in addition recommend increase regulation, need for efforts to improve standards and guidelines implementation through the establishment of the WASH Commission and operationalization of the Board
- ✓ No evidence of national level coordination meetings information reaching county level as well county level reaching national level coordination mechanism as such civil society partners believe this needs to be clearly articulated in the report

Acknowledgement

- ✓ Civil society appreciate, applaud and welcome the acknowledgement of the efforts of the authors of the report, however, civil society believe the acknowledgement must go beyond the authors and consider institutions that contributed some ways or the other to the gathering of the data that form the text of the report

Progress on SSP

- ✓ Civil society agreed and can confirm that President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has appointed NWRSB members, however, civil society wants the report to clearly articulate that NWRSB is not inclusive of civil society as agreed between civil society and the president

on September 6, 2013 and in the WASH sector finalization of Executive Order meeting at Ministry of Public Works.

- ✓ Civil society note the key role played by eight ministries and agencies in the preparation of the Sector Performance Report 2014, however, civil society believe the preparation of the report was and can never be collaboration between only the eight (8) government ministries and agencies rather the collaboration encompasses international and local organizations and the media
- ✓ Civil society wishes to acknowledge the availability of WASH Capacity Development Plan and that despite its availability, very little has been undertaken in the regard of capacity development, however, civil society believe the column of the report this mention is made is dedicated to progress as such there is need for progress on Capacity Development must be noted before gap.
- ✓ Civil society sees bulk of water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion implementation in rural Liberia been funded by donors as serious gap which is a risk to sustainability and amount to proven lack of political will from government to live up to her commitment to prioritize WASH Financing as such this should not be recorded as progress rather a gap/challenge
- ✓ Civil society agreed with the Sector Performance Report 2013 that monitoring of WASH activities and outputs are taking off, however, civil society observed monitoring to be focused on numbers and actions and not other key monitoring component such as qualities, accessibility and adherence to standards. Civil society believe inadequacy of monitoring can be attributed to the absence of responsible public body with the require capacity to regulate and ensure adherence to standard protocols. Civil society strongly believe the continue delay in the establishment of the National Water Supply and Sanitation Commission is largely responsible for the inadequacy as such the way forward is the full establishment of the commission and making it operational. Considering the discovery of new WASH data for the LISGIS and the data collection capacity gap at the NWSHPC, civil society believes it is key for the LISGIS to form a part of the NWSHPC secretariat
- ✓ Civil society review of the Sector Performance Report observed that some of the provisions/counts of the report recorded gaps as progress ex Progress on SSP counts 3,

6, etc. civil society therefore recommend that all gaps recorded under progress be relocated to challenges and gap aspect of the report

Rural Water in SSP-Financing

- ✓ Civil society observed that the financing issue under this section failed to mention the 1.5m that was allotted to the Ministry of Public Works in FY 2012/2013 intended for Rural Water Supply. Civil society believe this allocation should be recorded as progress and record failure of the disbursement of the funds to the Ministry as some of the many financing challenges the sector is face with

Advocacy and Public Awareness

- ✓ Civil society fully agreed that advocacy and public awareness has improved and is been sustained. Civil society however, want adjustment in the second paragraph on page 98 especially that emphasized under National Overview and Trend that “Advocacy and public awareness has been undertaken by the CSO WASH Network, Youth and Disability Network, Reporters and Editors Network as well as Government partners with support through WaterAid, the Liberia WASH Consortium and other development partners”. Civil society propose adjustment is that the membership of the civil society network be clearly name for individual membership visibility and that the names of other donors be clearly made in the document as is the case with the Liberia WASH Consortium and WaterAid. It is civil society believe singling-out WaterAid and the Liberia WASH Consortium and making no direct mention of some of civil society other key supporting partners such as National Democratic Institute, the Swedish Embassy in Monrovia and Plan International will amount to disincentive for sustainability of partnership.

Annex

- ✓ Civil society observes inconsistency in the location mapping of partners, donors and civil society organizations. In some cases, partners counties of work were clearly shown while in other cases some partners location of work is unknown for example, WatrAid who is widely known to be working in Maryland, Grand Kru and River Gee and civil society organization (CSOs WASH Net and Disable Youth) working nationally, locations of work are not indicated nor any mention made of means for reader of the report to gather such important information as was done in the case of the Liberia WASH

Consortium and others. Civil society therefore recommend that various partners should be contacted to gather location of work from all partners

Annex 3:

- ✓ Civil society noticed that annex 3 design suggest that partners funding sources request and capture in the report is only more concern about hardware service delivery and has less concern about advocacy, in an effort to capture funding sources of WASH civil society advocacy there is need for the revive of annex 3 design to reflect advocacy founding sources

Other General Observations

Structure of the report: civil society is not clear as to the intent of the SP report, civil society believe if this report is intended to review progress set against the 2012 sector review, then sections of this report should have been set against objectives or specific targets set up in the 2012 report. This could have enabled clear presentation of progress against benchmarks set in the 2012 report. Civil society is not very clear of what this report is covering and the report is also not structured to cover the priority areas/ objective set in WASH sector strategy as well as the 2012 sector review report.

Participation of CSOs and the JSR process: lingering in the minds of civil society now are several questions on receiving the report, some of such questions being “who is evaluating whose performance? Is it government reviewing its own performance? If so, how much can civil society agree or disagree with the evaluation? In our minds if the review process considers seriously civil society views, previews review done by CSO some part of 2013 and 2012 should be taken into consideration in the review to strengthen the role and legitimacy of CSO in the process. Civil society stand ready to provide copies of her sector performance review findings to inform the report from civil society viewpoint.

Budgetary allocation: The report mentioned government contribution in terms of national budget allocations but fall short of mentioning the utilization of funds for WASH services delivery and or disbursement of the allocated funds. Civil society believes budget utilization is as equally important as allocation as such there is need for disbursement and utilization of

funds to be covered in the report on grounds that allocation of funds and such funds not been utilized is the same as unavailability of funds.

Scope and coverage: the report was limited in scope and coverage relative to the role of civil society. There was only little mentioned of the extent to which civil society had intervened in the areas of advocacy. The report should have indicated that advocacy has progress beyond Monrovia to national level including engaging with local government, national legislators and citizens groups. Also, compared to the review report of 2012 which talked about equitable services, this report is limited on issues around equity and pro –poor targeting. The focus is limited to Gender and WASH. In terms of progress with access to services, the increase in services such as LWSC pipe network systems or construction of water sources – who are being targeted? How much is it benefiting the poor and underprivileged? Is the government improving targeting of pro-poor? Reports are that LWSC had threatened to stop supply to some slum communities in Monrovia due to payment of bills. Residents claim overbilling by LWSC, the report needs to consider these issues.