

IN BRIEF
NATIONAL RURAL WATER SANITATION & HYGIENE PROGRAMME
(NRWASHP) DEVELOPMENT STUDY: INCEPTION REPORT (IR)

INTRODUCTION

- IR serves as a conceptual framework and broad implementation plan to monitor the progress of key activities and constantly evaluate actual and potential achievements

METHODOLOGY

- Detailed review of sector documents
- Consultative meetings with sector stakeholders
- Coordination with Programme Development Team (PDT)

KEY FINDINGS

- Though institutional framework is strong, sector remains fragmented and weak
- Ministry of Public Works (MPW), lead WASH line ministry, remains challenged by insufficient technical and support staff, inadequate logistics and funding, and bureaucratic bottlenecks
- Rural population struggles with inadequate and unreliable access to potable water supply due to low investments in rural water supply, high incidence of non-functioning pumps, and poor groundwater
- Access to water and sanitation services remains non-equitable between counties, districts and communities
- Sustainability is cross-cutting in rural WASH, incorporating functionality of water points, Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS), hygiene promotion in schools, etc.
- Hand pump standardization is needed, as recommended in the Sector Investment Plan (SIP), and should be adequately reflected in the Operations & Maintenance (O&M) Framework and Manual (to be developed during this Study)
- The responsibilities of the Rural Water Division of MPW and Liberia Water & Sewer Corporation (LWSC) may need to be redefined through population thresholds
- Limited water supply technologies should be expanded to include piped water supply based on groundwater, and gravity-fed piped schemes based on spring catchments or streams
- A promising link between rural WASH and the Rural Renewable Energy Agency could overcome potential limitations of power for piped schemes
- Cost Recovery has been a major pillar of the Community Management Model of the rural water sector but assessment of effectiveness needed
- Scientific testing of physical-chemical and biological parameters of water points in a systematic way has been a challenge



- O&M is critical for sustainability and decentralization, and requires a blend of technical and software (socio-economic) expertise
- Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a dynamic but a challenging process especially when donor-funded projects have ended and the Government of Liberia (GOL) is expected to continue the process
- NGOs have played a significant role in the development of the rural WASH sector through policy research, advocacy and direct implementation of water, sanitation and hygiene projects with funding from Development Partners

MAJOR FOCUS AREAS GOING FORWARD

- Capacity gap in human resources, logistics and financial resources
- Major policy issues including the population threshold for rural water supply; capital cost contribution; and water supply technology limitations.
- Gender and equity
- Sustainability, especially around O&M including different cost recovery mechanisms (audits, water tariff setting, revenue collection, financial records keeping, funds management and utilisation as well as accountability systems)
- Performance of the Capital Cost Contribution (CCC) policy
- Standardization of hand pumps and viable hand pump spare parts supply chain
- Improved technologies
- Private sector participation
- Sector financing focusing on Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and proposed Pool Fund
- Sector governance in line with national strategies, such as the Agenda for Transformation, and plans, including the forthcoming National M&E Plan
- Progress of the SIP and Capacity Development Plan
- Water quality coordination and monitoring
- Sector coordination of various stakeholders

NEXT STEPS

- Situational Analysis Workshop & Report (May)
- Review of new information, including output of WASH Joint Sector Review and UNICEF Bottleneck Analysis
- PDT working groups to support work on specific themes like institutional/policy issues, M&E framework, and O&M



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