



USAID | **LIBERIA**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

IMPROVED ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER IN LIBERIA ACTIVITY YEAR 1 ANNUAL WORK PLAN

December 30, 2022

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Winrock International under contract 72066923C00001.

IMPROVED ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER IN
LIBERIA ACTIVITY
YEAR 1 ANNUAL WORK PLAN
NOVEMBER 1, 2022 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

Approved Date: March 10, 2023

Version: 4

Contract/Agreement Number: 72066923C00001

Activity Start and End Dates: November 1, 2022 to October 31, 2027

Submitted To:

Zulfikar Gorar, Contract Office Representative (COR)

Rukmal S. Perera, Contract Officer (CO)

USAID Liberia

Submitted By:

Doris Kaberia, Chief of Party

Winrock International

DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Table of Contents 3
- Acronyms 5
- 1. Introduction 8
 - A. Authorization 8
 - B. Activity Goal and Objectives..... 8
 - C. Activity Theory of Change 9
 - D. Geographic Scope 9
 - E. Overview of Year 1 Annual Work Plan..... 9
- 2. Country Context 11
- 3. Technical approach..... 12
 - Overall Technical Approach for Year 1 12
- 4. Detailed Activities 16
 - A. Foundational Activities..... 16
 - Stakeholder Engagement and Inception Meetings 16
 - Foundational Activity 1: Conduct Baseline Assessments 16
 - Foundational Activity 2: Selection of Intervention Sites 18
 - Foundational Activity 3: Design a Funded Incentive Strategy..... 19
 - B. Technical Support to Robertsport, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama Water Services (Task 2.2.3)..... 20
 - C. Objective 1: Local Government Institutions Effectively Plan, Budget, and Oversee Water Service Delivery 22
 - Sub-Objective 1.1: Local Leadership Structures and Institutional Arrangements for Water Service Delivery are Established and/or Improved 22
 - Task 1.1.1: Build the case for LGI-managed PPPs for water services 23
 - Task 1.1.2: Develop a sub-national framework for water service delivery 24
 - Task 1.1.3 Define framework for PPPs for water services at the local level..... 25
 - Sub-Objective 1.2: Policies and Regulations for Water Service Delivery are Improved, Implemented, and Enforced..... 25
 - Task 1.2.1: Support the application of policy frameworks 26
 - Task 1.2.2: Strengthen County level monitoring and enforcement 27
 - Task 1.2.3: Train CWCs in policies and regulations 27

Sub-Objective 1.3: Improved Institutional Capacity and Coordination Around Planning, Budgeting, and Monitoring Water Services	28
Task 1.3.1: Build the capacity of national ministries to support LGIs	28
Task 1.3.2: Build county capacity.....	30
Task 1.3.3: Develop and strengthen the capacity of CWCs to monitor and regulate the water services.....	31
D. Objective 2: Equitable and Inclusive Water Service Delivery Improved and Expanded ..	32
Sub-Objective 2.1: Professional and Financially Resilient Water Service Delivery Models Adopted	32
Task 2.1.1: Design pay-for-use water services in target communities and towns.....	32
Task 2.1.2: Implement service provision improvements and management models	35
Task 2.1.3: Recognize and celebrate successes	37
Sub-Objective 2.2: Water Service Providers have the Capacity to Manage Water Services	37
Task 2.2.1: Build county capacity to monitor and backstop CWCs and WSPs.	37
Task 2.2.2: Build private sector service provision capacity	38
Task 2.2.3: Provide capacity-building services to LWSC and WSPs in RobertSPORT, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama.....	38
Sub-Objective 2.3: Water Service Providers Incentivized to Extend Inclusive Services to Poor and Marginalized Households.....	38
Task 2.3.1: Engage at national level to establish policies responsive to barriers to water access for poor households.	38
E. Objective 3: Uptake and Maintenance of Key Water Use Behaviors Among Households Increased.....	39
Sub-Objective 3.1: Social Norms Around Use of Basic Water Services Created and Uptake of Clean Drinking Water Increased.....	39
Task 3.1.1: Conduct formative research on water use behaviors	40
Task 3.1.2: Implement SBC and marketing activities with partners through an adaptive, learning-by-doing approach.....	41
Task 3.1.3: Increase water quality awareness.....	42
Sub-Objective 3.2: Financial, Social, and Physical Barriers to the Use of Basic Water Services are Removed	42
Task 3.2.1: Develop approaches for inclusive local investment decisions.....	42

Task 3.2.2: Assist CWCs and WSPs to monitor and address barriers	43
Task 3.2.3: Implement advocacy campaigns	43
Sub-Objective 3.3: Participation of Women and Other Marginalized Groups in Decision Making Related to Water Access and Management Strengthened.....	44
Task 3.3.1: Understand decision-making systems and address barriers to women and marginalized groups’ participation	44
Task 3.3.2: Form partnerships with pro-women organizations to identify pathways to improve participation of women and marginalized groups	44
Task 3.3.3: Amplify women’s voices on issues related to water services, women, and vulnerable populations	45
5. Cross-Cutting Activities	45
A. Monitoring and Evaluation	45
B. Learning and Adaptation.....	46
C. Collaboration.....	48
Collaboration with Other USAID-Funded Programs and Other WASH Partners in Liberia	48
Collaboration with GOL.....	48
D. Sustainability.....	49
6. Management and Administration	50
Annex 1. Year 1 Schedule of Deliverables.....	51
Annex II. Summary Gantt Chart.....	51
Annex III. Illustrative Annual Budget	51
Annex IV. Organizational Chart.....	51
Annex V. Institutional Structure.....	52
Annex VI. Stakeholders consulted during Preparation of the Workplan.....	52

ACRONYMS

AGILE	Analytics, Gender, Inclusion, Learning, and Evaluation
AMELP	Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan
APS	Annual Program Statement
BCD	Behavior-Centered Design
BoQ	Bill of Quantities
CHW	Community Health Worker
CLA	Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting
CO	Contracting Officer
COP	Chief of Party

COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CWC	Community WASH Committee
CWT	County WASH Team
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
EHT	Environmental Health Technician
EMMP	Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
GESI	Gender, Equity, and Social Inclusion
GOL	Government of Liberia
GUC	Grants Under Contract Manual
HH	Households
HO	Winrock Home Office
LGIs	Local Government Institutions
LWSC	Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation
LTTA	Long-Term Technical Assistance
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and learning
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MIS	Management Information System
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOPW	Ministry of Public Works
MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NWRSB	National Water Resources and Sanitation Board
NWASHC	National WASH Commission
NPHIL	National Public Health Institute of Liberia
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheets
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
Q	Quarter
QASP	Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan
QC	Quality Control
RFP	Request for Proposal
SA	Situational Analysis
SBC	Social Behavior Change Communication
TBD	To be determined
TOR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Thematic Working Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Association
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WPdx	Water Point Data Exchange
WQAP	Water Quality Assurance Plan
WSP	Water Service Provider

1. INTRODUCTION

The Government of Liberia (GOL) committed to increasing access to water and sanitation services in the country’s [2018-2023 pro-poor Agenda for prosperity and development](#), which states that “by 2023, the Government aims to have equitable, safe, affordable and sustainable water supply and sanitation for all Liberians.” The water sector governance in Liberia is still centralized and needs to be strengthened. Although the [local Government Act of 2018](#) attempts to support the decentralization of power and resources by assigning the responsibility of the provision of public goods and services to counties, city councils, and townships, the planning, budgeting, and management of water services is still centralized at the national level. The GOL has various laws that support centralized water service delivery, including [Water and Sewer Cooperation \(LWSC\) Act \(1973\)](#), the [Public Health Law Act \(1976\)](#), the [Integrated Water Resource Management Policy \(2007\)](#), and the [Water and Sanitation Policy \(2009\)](#). The GOL constitution assigns LWSC the responsibility to provide safe drinking water to urban centers, while the rural water service provision is under the authority of the Ministry of Public Works.

Liberia is one of the [22 United States Government \(USG\) Global Water Strategy](#) priority countries. USAID has made significant investments in the water sector in Liberia, such as developing solar-powered water treatment plants in Robertsport, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama. A key lesson learned from these past USAID investments calls for the need to consult the end users and co-create solutions with the local government institutions (LGIs) for ownership and sustainability that will ultimately lead to transformative impact. The second key lesson is the need to support the governance frameworks and institutional arrangements to manage and sustain the infrastructure while supporting financial sustainability is critical. The third key lesson learned is the need for a strong, focused, and transparent private sector engagement process. The process for tendering and selection criteria of private firms should be agreed upon by all stakeholders. Based on this experience, USAID is implementing a sustainable approach by prioritizing the improvement of local governance capacity, improved water service delivery, and improved behaviors around water use.

A. AUTHORIZATION

To support the GOL in improving the delivery of good quality, reliable, and safe water services to urban, peri-urban, and rural populations in alignment with the established GOL frameworks, USAID/Liberia awarded the five-year (November 2022 – October 2027) \$17.9 million cost-plus-fixed-fee contract #72066923C00001 Improved Access to Safe Drinking Water in Liberia Activity to **Winrock International**, in partnership with **WaterAid** and **FEI Consulting**.

B. ACTIVITY GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The project aims to move Liberians in rural Montserrado and Margibi Counties to at least a basic level of water services by strengthening water sector governance, creating scalable models for equitable water service delivery, and promoting and adopting key water use behaviors among the target households (HHs). Winrock and its partners will collaborate with Liberian government institutions at the national, county, and local levels to implement a vision where all Liberians access, use, and demand safe, sustainable water services. The project will also collaborate with the private sector and civil society to address challenges preventing Liberia from achieving its goal of providing sustainable water for all.

The project has **3 Key objectives**:

- Local government institutions effectively plan, budget, and oversee water service delivery.
- Equitable and inclusive water service delivery improved and expanded.
- Uptake and maintenance of key water use behaviors among households increased.

C. ACTIVITY THEORY OF CHANGE

The theory of change underlying the Activity’s results framework (Figure 1) above posits that *If* Liberian institutions at national, county, and community levels have sufficient capacity, resources, and will to enforce equitable governance for sustainable management of water services, and *If* water service delivery is professionalized and expanded to sustainably provide equitable and reliable access, and *If* social norms and barriers to adopt and pay for water services are addressed, *Then* access, use, and sustainability of basic drinking water services will increase in target counties of Liberia.

D. GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

The Activity will operate in the two counties of rural Montserrado and Margibi (Figure 1). In these counties, 76-85% of people have access to basic drinking water services, leaving 15-24% without access to safe drinking water¹. Tens of thousands of residents in the two counties still rely on unimproved water sources, such as unprotected wells, springs, or surface water. Although Liberia is a water-rich country, the Liberia Water Point Survey conducted in 2018 found that 40% of the 20,205 water points are non-functional².

In Year 1, Winrock will work collaboratively with the LGI at all levels to undertake an in-depth analysis of the challenges, gaps, and priorities before selecting the intervention sites in Q3 of year 1. The project approach for engaging the private sector will start with select communities (population size 2,500 and above) to test the service delivery models. This focus will enable intensive testing and iteration of products, delivery models, and behavioral interventions so that effective approaches can be scaled up. In addition to scaling up the models to other communities, the project will customize the models to adapt to smaller communities. The project will use a robust process to select private sector service providers, including Annual Program Statements (APS) under Grants Under Contract (GUC). Initial round table discussions with private sector actors and national and LGIs will also be conducted to understand the barriers and opportunities for PPP.

E. OVERVIEW OF YEAR 1 ANNUAL WORK PLAN

This document is the first Annual Work Plan covering the Year 1 period from November 1st, 2022, to September 30th, 2023, per Contract No. 72066923C00001 from USAID/Liberia. All key Year 1 technical activities and intended outputs are oriented towards meeting the program outcomes but will focus primarily on engaging priority Liberian government key stakeholders as well as communities (water users), LGI at all levels, the private sector, and development partners. These stakeholder engagements, combined with literature reviews and lessons learned from previous water investments, will identify county-specific challenges and priorities; the design, development, and execution of critical assessments will inform performance improvement actions to deliver basic safe drinking water to all Liberians in the targeted counties. The outcome of the initial stakeholder consultations at the community, county, and national levels informed the work

¹ Liberia Demographic and Health Survey 2019-20

² Liberia Water Point Survey 2017-18

plan development. The work plan includes the program overview and technical approaches; indicator targets and the key foundational activities that will be implemented during Year 1; and overall management structure and how Winrock will coordinate with other USAID-funded programs and other WASH partners in rural Montserrado and Margibi to drive the WASH agenda in Liberia. Additionally, it provides a work plan matrix (Annex II. Gantt Chart) on key activities that will be implemented to achieve the three strategic objectives.

The initial start-up phase of the program will center on staff recruitment, preparation, and signing of sub-contracts with partners, and stakeholder engagement and consultations at national, county, and local levels to ensure alignment with GOL and USAID priorities in the water sector. This initial mobilization phase will also include office set up; establishment of operational procedures; renewal of Winrock registration in-country; and development of deliverables, including the Branding and Marking Plan, Grants Under Contract (GUC) Manual, Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (AMELP), Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP), draft Construction Quality Control Plan, Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (EMMP), Water Quality Assurance Plan (WQAP), Procurement Plan, Year 1 Work Plan, and Sustainability Plan. Additionally, critical assessments such as the baseline survey, community diagnostics, selection of intervention sites, Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Analysis, and sector-wide institutional and social economic analysis will be conducted within the first six to nine months.

Winrock recognizes that building strong and sustainable institutional capacity requires a multi-layered approach. While the program focuses on moving all Liberians in Montserrado and Margibi counties to at least a basic level of water service, the program will build an ecosystem that supports service delivery at the local level, allowing for responsive/decentralized management of water resources. The project will work with community representatives, such as Community WASH Committees (CWCs), Paramount chiefs, etc., to select community-designed water solutions tailored to each community's specific needs. To ensure inclusivity and appropriateness of the selected water solution based on the context, the project will set up a selection committee that will be comprised of community representatives, LGIs, and national government institutions such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and National WASH Commission (NWASHC) to validate the agreed upon technical solutions. This community-focused approach integrated with governance to create an enabling environment will ultimately lead to water availability, water use, and sustainability of selected interventions.

To facilitate institutional strengthening, Winrock and its partners will prioritize building relationships with and between organizations/institutions. To achieve this, Winrock will establish and operationalize the Activity Advisory Committee (AAC) and work with the existing County WASH Team (CWT) at the county level. The Activity Advisory Committee will comprise national-level counterparts, prominent civil society organizations/stakeholder representatives, and local authorities representatives such as Superintendents and/ or development superintendents (county officials). Creating an inclusive governance structure at the county and local levels will ensure that project deliverables are sustained beyond the life of the project.

Winrock will conduct a project launch event in close coordination with USAID. Winrock proposes to align this event with World Water Day (March 2023) but will refine this further in discussion with USAID and other key stakeholders such as NWASHC and MIA.

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT

Liberia's access to basic drinking water has increased over the past decade through significant donor investments in constructing water supply systems (in urban and rural settings) of all sizes throughout the country. Even though Liberia has benefited from considerable donor investments in the WASH sector throughout the country, the delivery of WASH services still faces significant challenges. These challenges include weakened public institutions with insufficient regulatory frameworks, chronically low and erratic investment and public financing, and the lack of a mechanism for financially self-sustaining water service delivery systems. Additionally, LGIs have limited capacity, funding, and technical expertise at the sub-national (county and district) level. The consequence is an overreliance on donors and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for most water service delivery systems. A significant number of these water systems in both urban and rural areas of the country are nonfunctional. A limited number of communities pay for water and maintenance as community-based management models are predominant in the target counties. Finally, low behavior uptake and user demand, and the belief that water should be free to all citizens cause non-payment for water and systems maintenance or repair. The USAID investments in the water supply sector in Robertsport, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama are also facing management, operational, and financial sustainability challenges.

Our approach is to work with WASH system actors to understand the complex dynamics impacting Liberia's water service delivery. The project will also consider critical lessons learned from the InfraWASH activity through Tetra Tech on Public Private Partnership-led water service delivery models. This approach includes the participation of women, youth, and other marginalized groups in water access and management decision-making, particularly at the local level, to remove barriers to safe water habits. Some examples of these barriers that prevent women from readily accessing water points include; the location of the water points and technological-related difficulties, especially on the pumping system (e.g., the foot pump & height of the pump). If consulted, the women and marginalized groups will inform and influence the siting/location of the water point as well the technological choices. The activity will also support counties, districts, and communities to develop customized plans that increase social accountability, empower stakeholders, and work jointly with stakeholders to analyze data and find ways to adapt our successes and bring them to scale. Similarly, the customized plans will be community-led and reflect each community's unique circumstances and needs.

While Liberia has national policies to deliver water services, those policies often do not have clear regulations and are not implemented. The lack of implementation is mainly due to limited/inadequate resource allocation and a lack of specific budget lines for Water. LGIs made up of county, district, and local officials do not have sufficient capacity to monitor, manage, and oversee water services (Box1). Winrock will establish clear governance frameworks for service delivery and build the capacity of LGIs to operate within them. The project will strengthen the capacity of CWTs and CWCs to be the cornerstone of regulated services, strengthening their ability to design, monitor, contract, and expand access to safe drinking water services responsive to the needs of its users—particularly women, the primary caretakers of domestic water.

The majority of water infrastructure financing comes from donors and private funding. LGIs are often unprepared to maintain infrastructure after the donor leaves. The project phased capacity building strategy changes this paradigm by optimizing CWT and CWC operational and technical capacities to take the lead in managing and maintaining systems through formalized service

delegation to water service providers (WSPs) appropriate to the size of the water systems. These public-private partnerships (PPP) will help reduce reliance on donor funding by increasing resource mobilization from user-generated fees and improving viable business models that leverage national budgets and external funding sources. PPPs will formalize a broad array of linkages between public sector stakeholders and the private sector, from a water utility company to contracting mechanics or artisans to provide preventive and corrective maintenance of communal water points. Learning from USAID's InfraWASH activity, the project will support the private sector in developing scalable and replicable business models based on a comprehensive analysis of the business case and sustainability of the proposed service delivery models. Winrock will begin with intensive capacity building that will set up the systems required for success by working with LGIs to jointly assess current capacity, plan for improvements, and co-design a simple Management Information System (MIS) that will help them track performance-based metrics from the community to the county level. The project will promote different models and document them to match customers' profiles and communities' sizes, increasing private sector engagement and adapting water service delivery based on the context.

3. TECHNICAL APPROACH

OVERALL TECHNICAL APPROACH FOR YEAR 1

The Improved Access to Safe Drinking Water in Liberia Activity will move all Liberians in Montserrado and Margibi Counties to a basic level of water services by strengthening sector governance and creating scalable models for water service delivery that will provide access to trustworthy, reliable, clean, and convenient water services—increasing willingness to pay for drinking water. The activity will work in partnership with local governments, the private sector, and civil society to address challenges preventing Liberia from achieving its goal of providing sustainable water for all.

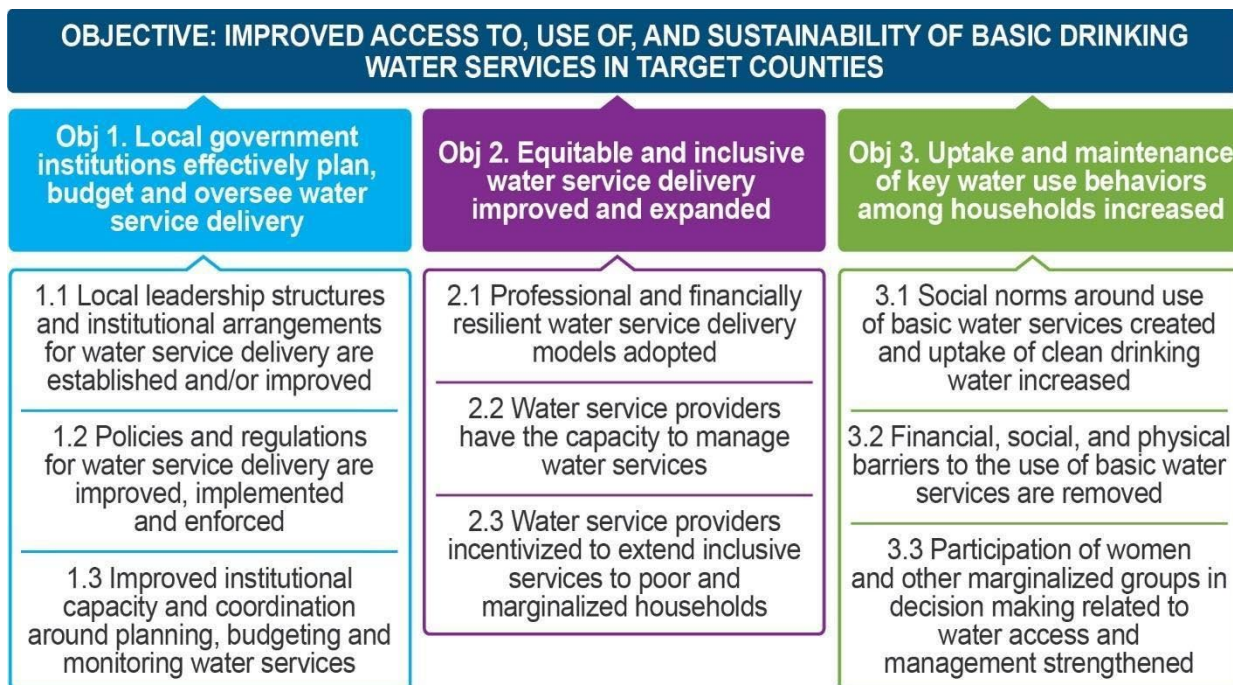


Figure 3: Activity Results Framework³

Partnership with GOL. During Year 1, the project will set a foundation that puts national and county institutions in the driver's seat to build sustainability and scalable service delivery models. This will be done by establishing and operationalizing the AAC already described under section 1(E). The project will work with the existing County WASH Team (CWT) at the county level. The Activity Advisory Committee will comprise national-level counterparts, prominent civil society organizations/stakeholder representatives, and local authorities representatives such as Superintendents and/or development superintendents (county officials). The project will build institutional capacity for the LGI to manage and coordinate donor resources and programs to effectively regulate water services in Margibi and Montserrado in order to expand sustainable services with the appropriate operation, maintenance, and monitoring. Winrock will work at all levels of government (Annex V) to strengthen the water sector, with significant investments going to the local level.

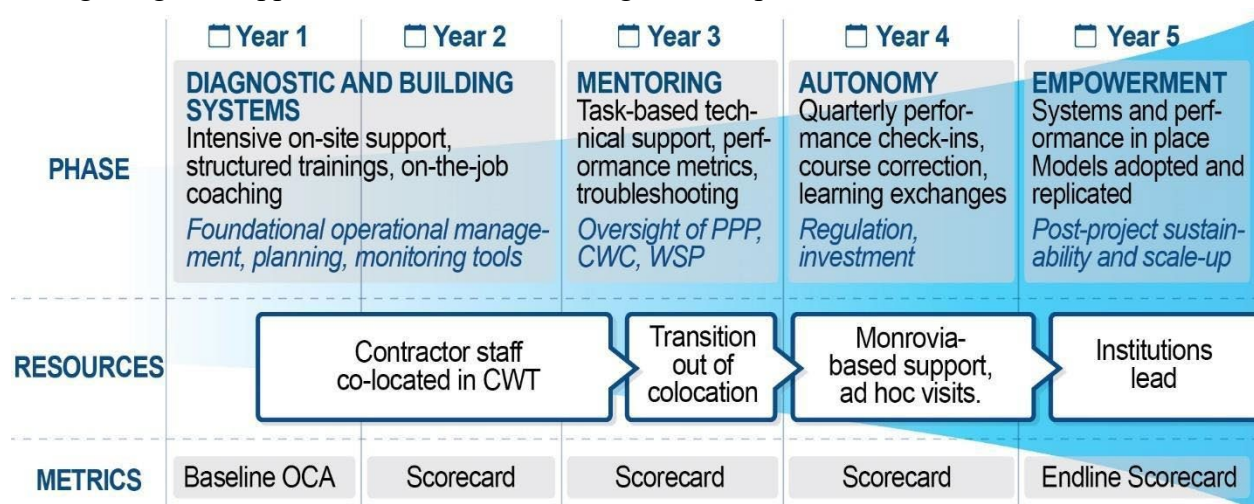
Stakeholder engagement. During Quarter I (Q1) of Year 1, Winrock will engage stakeholders such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA); National WASH Commission (NASHC); Ministry of Public Works (MOPW); WASH Consortium; County superintendents or officials; Ministry of Health (MOH); Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC); and National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL), Private sector partners, community members from the target sites, women leaders, youth and other marginalized groups representatives, International NGOs, and Civil Society Organizations (CSO) representatives. Winrock will build on these engagements throughout the first six months during the implementation of the Foundational Activities to further refine the approaches and target intervention sites in consultation with the respective communities.

Support decentralizing oversight. Initial consultation with stakeholders during the work planning process found that LGIs have limited capacity to manage service delivery effectively. This is due to inadequate financial resources and human resource capacity to monitor and

³

administer service at the community level. During Year 1, Winrock and its partners will jointly work with LGIs to develop a draft framework that will professionalize CWCs and clearly define their roles and responsibilities within the LGI structure (e.g., with tariff setting and collection, monitoring, reporting, and support request) and delegate day-to-day administration of WSPs to CWCs. CWC members (currently, the membership of the CWC executive committee comprises the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Caretaker, Pump mechanics, and co-chair) will be transitioned from a volunteerism mindset to a semi-professional service “authority” that oversees private sector service providers thanks to the generation and negotiated distribution of revenue collected from water tariffs or other forms of payment for water services. The project recognizes that mindset change takes a long time and expects to finalize the framework in Year 2. This will set a solid foundation for integration into the LGI structure and provide a basis for clarifying roles and responsibilities.

Phased capacity building approach for scale and sustainability. The project will implement a phased capacity building strategy to empower and incentivize LGIs and WSPs to engage in partnerships to improve and expand equitable and sustainable pay-for-use water services. This strategy will be built on transparency, accountability, inclusivity, and continuous improvement—using data and evidence for informed and adaptive decision-making. This will be accomplished through targeted support to LGIs to assess, design, and implement water service



delivery models for different community profiles—adapted to different size systems or water points and customer propensity to pay. These profiles can then be replicated and scaled to other communities. The service delivery models will be implemented through a phased capacity building strategy for the LGIs (Figure 3), with intensive technical assistance that will be undertaken in (Years 1–2) and progressively tapering off (Years 3–5). The estimated number of recipients of this technical assistance is 242⁴. The final phase will occur as institutions become more independent and operate around the principles of continuous improvement, revenue optimization, and user

⁴ The total recipient of the phased technical assistance is estimated at 242 over the duration of the Activity in Montserrat and Margibi: LGIs (2 counties X 8 pers.); MOPW WASH Coordinator (2 counties X 1 pers.); CWC (14 towns X 10 pers.); and WSP (14 systems X 6 pers.). This figure will be adjusted as necessary.

satisfaction. Year 1 will mainly focus on the diagnostic and building of systems/joint co-creation of tools for planning, budgeting, and monitoring.

Eliminating barriers and building demand. Utilizing lessons learned from our thematic lead WaterAid, the project will use a community-first approach to revitalize water systems. This approach ensures that service delivery is responsive to households' financial, physical, and social barriers to accessing water, especially women and marginalized groups. This will build trust and drive demand for pay-for-use service models needed to sustain and scale service delivery.

System strengthening Approach: The Improved Access to Safe Drinking Water in Liberia Activity will prioritize utilizing a systems strengthening approach by putting the local government at the center of planning, budgeting, and implementation. The project will reinforce and build out the framework for good governance and accountability that is critical and necessary to deliver water service to all Liberians in Montserrado and Margibi counties per the constitution's provisions, Liberia water policy 2009, and Sustainable Development Goals. During Year 1, the project will establish partnerships with LGIs and national institutions and collaborate with key partners (such as NGOs, CSOs, and UNICEF) to harmonize approaches and select intervention sites. This systems strengthening approach will be geared toward developing an integrated system whereby LGIs provide oversight of service delivery at the community level while retaining regulatory authority and asset ownership. We envision a situation where LGIs will manage water services holistically, incorporating private service providers operating outside the regulatory framework by providing incentives for more equitable services.

Private sector engagement: The project will prioritize partnerships with the private sector to develop service delivery models responsive to small communities characterized by isolated households. The tariff structure and pay-for-use mechanisms will be adjusted and designed based on the community's context and size.

Community-first approach: In Year 1, the project will work with communities (including representatives of marginalized populations, women, and youth), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), LGIs, and ministries to assess barriers to water access and use and design responsive Social Behavior Change (SBC) strategies, tariff structures, and governance models. Based on the GESI and barrier analysis findings, the project will work with LGIs to develop a plan to implement SBC campaigns at the county level and in targeted communities. The SBC will promote behavioral messaging to enhance the uptake of positive water use behaviors through various media combined with a local focus on reinforcing positive behaviors.

Additionally, the project will design feedback loops between users and decision-makers to ensure that water governance, management mechanisms, and messaging are systematically responsive to the needs of women and marginalized groups and result in a measurable change in behaviors and access. This will be measured using indicator W14 to report the percent of water users' concerns and feedback recorded through participation mechanisms (townhalls, coordination meetings, consultation panels) that are acted upon by the local government institutions (LGI), Community WASH Committees (CWC), or water service providers (WSP).

Data from the beneficiary feedback loops will strengthen beneficiary engagement, particularly for accountability. The beneficiary feedback mechanisms will:

- Solicits and listens to, collates, and analyzes feedback.

- Triggers a response or action at the required level within the Activity and/or refers feedback to relevant stakeholders.
- Communicates the response/action taken where relevant back to the original feedback provider and – if appropriate – the wider beneficiary community.

4. DETAILED ACTIVITIES

A. FOUNDATIONAL ACTIVITIES

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND INCEPTION MEETINGS

In Q1, the project will start with robust stakeholder engagement at all levels, including community, county, and national levels. To foster localization from the inception phase of the project, Winrock will adopt a combination of community entry strategies such as town hall meetings, public media, community roundtable discussions, and peer-to-peer awareness. This engagement will inform them of the new project and its objectives, introduce the team to stakeholders at the county and national levels, and initiate the planning for the co-creation of activities in the target two counties to secure buy-in and commitment.

Initial discussions with these organizations will introduce the project and explore the best ways to engage and work together. Besides technical water institutions, Winrock will present the project and conduct initial consultations with key stakeholders to align with the Local Government Act in the first two months to ensure early inputs in project activities from end users and their representatives. Engagement with stakeholders will remain a project-long priority, but consultations between mid-November to mid-December 2022 will focus on gathering inputs and priorities of stakeholders for the work plan. Annex VI provides the list of stakeholders consulted during the work plan development. In mid-January, final inputs may be gathered to finalize the revision of the work plan if needed and to adjust the activities based on feedback from USAID.

Baseline assessments will be conducted to set a solid foundation and rationale for subsequent project activities and interventions across the project’s three strategic objectives. Winrock and its partners will focus on developing and implementing the following foundational tasks during the first six months.

FOUNDATIONAL ACTIVITY 1: CONDUCT BASELINE ASSESSMENTS

To deepen understanding of the current state of play in the water sector, Winrock will design and implement a sector-wide institutional analysis with national and county institutions, including the NWASHC, MOPW (department of community services), NPHIL, Legislative WASH Caucus, MIA, and counties (County and district authorities), (and possibly National Water Resources and Sanitation Board (NWRSB), if found active). The analysis will entail the political and economic incentives and barriers around reform, action, and decision-making that will inform how to work with government actors, tariff policy, and advocacy activities. As part of this assessment, Winrock will identify existing assessments, such as the rapid capacity assessment conducted by USAID Liberia Economic Policy Dialogue Activity (LEPDA) of the sub-national entities. Given that this assessment was conducted in Cape Mount, Lofa, and Nimba Counties, the project will undertake a similar assessment but with expanded scope in Margibi and rural Montserrado. Similarly, a desk review of existing baseline assessments/reports/policies (institutional and socio-economic analyses) by water sector actors will be conducted, including Decentralization of Water,

Sanitation, and Hygiene Services in Liberia, WASH service delivery Case Studies, Water Point Survey 2017, USAID LMWP-11 final report, Liberia WASH BAT (LEPDA), Liberia Local Government Act 2018, USAID Rural water technical brief, etc. This work will also review existing strategic planning documents to identify water service challenges and priorities. Building from what has already been done by other partners, including USAID, will help identify the gaps that require further research and analysis and avoid duplicating efforts.

To complement sector-wide institutional analysis, Winrock will conduct detailed socio-economic diagnostics in selected representative populations that will provide baseline data for program design and geographic targeting. The socio-economic analysis will be critical as income, education, employment, community safety, and social support can significantly affect people's quality of life and ability to make healthy choices, such as paying for clean water versus fetching from free but contaminated water sources. These targeted assessments will include in-depth customer surveys on preferences and willingness and ability to pay, SBC formative research, and water services provider and supply chain assessments. These assessments will build on the findings from the GESI Analysis that will be conducted in January 2023. This GESI Analysis will use a mixed methods approach in gathering data on the existing situation related to GESI, observed gaps, and opportunities from secondary research and primary research through key informant interviews (KII) with target groups such as government officials, and community representatives, NGOs/donors. This is the first step in understanding the situation of women and marginalized groups (such as people living with disabilities), their specific needs regarding drinking water access, and underlying factors that hinder or facilitate their involvement in decision-making processes and their adoption of appropriate behaviors around water usage. Understanding and refining GESI implications of the project will remain a continuous learning process past the initial GESI Analysis (see Task 3.3.1 for additional work on GESI).

A detailed process and steps that will be followed when conducting the baseline are elaborated in the AMELP. The process will include the design of the scope of work of the baseline assessment and a detailed methodology, the development of the data collection tools, the recruitment and training of enumerators in preparation for the data collection activities through household interviews, key informant interviews, and focused group discussions. The project will undertake data collection, analysis, and report writing before submission of the final baseline report to USAID as per the contractual agreement

Summary activities

- Desk review of existing baseline assessments/reports/policies (institutional and socio-economic analyses) by water sector actors, including LEPDA reports, Water Point Survey 2017, LMWP-11 final report, Local Government Act 2018, USAID Rural water technical brief, etc.
- Design of the assessment scope of work and methodology.
- Development of tools for data collection.
- Recruitment and training of the enumerators.
- Data collection, analysis, and reporting.
- Submission of the baseline report.

FOUNDATIONAL ACTIVITY 2: SELECTION OF INTERVENTION SITES

During Q1 and Q2 of Year 1, Winrock will consult with the community, county, and national stakeholders to prepare for the intervention site selection. The consultations at county and national levels will inform them of the new project and its objectives and initiate the planning for the co-creation of activities in the two target counties to secure buy-in and commitment. A stakeholder mapping will follow in each targeted county to identify development partners active in the water sector. This will set the foundation for county-level co-creation workshops to establish county-specific water action plans, identify priority areas/locations for the project to support, and seek county leadership approval.

The project will strengthen the existing CWT that will be the heart of the project's operation at the county level. Discussions with the Margibi County superintendent confirmed that CWT does exist in Margibi county, and they are responsible for county-level WASH oversight functions: planning, budgeting, and oversight/management of county-level water service delivery; contract management and monitoring; and ensuring policy frameworks and implementation guidelines implemented, adapted, and enforced.

During the project's inception phase, the technical staff will jointly work with CWTs to conduct community engagement and awareness of the program intervention to ensure community consultation during the selection phase, as well as the involvement of the CWT in the decision-making process.

The project will develop site selection criteria with key stakeholders in the target counties. This will be done through joint identification and mapping of potential intervention sites based on population size, technical criteria, and consultations with communities. Based on the initial consultation with stakeholders at the national and county level during the development of this work plan, the need to start piloting the service delivery models in select areas where the water source is not fully functional was prioritized and emphasized (Box 2).

The project will consider intervention sites with 2,500+ people during the first phase and scale down to smaller communities as appropriate based on the context of future years of the project. Starting with larger communities will allow the project to engage with stakeholders and private sector actors to establish a dynamic/model which can then be scaled/extended to smaller markets. Our hypothesis is that starting with the smallest communities will scatter project resources and ultimately not yield approaches that can be scaled up. However, this hypothesis will be confirmed against the assessments and stakeholders consultations, as will be the proposed figure of 2,500+ if it is not the correct starting point.

The site selection criteria will be developed in consultation with the COR and then presented to the CWT and the Activity Advisory Committee for review and input for a final submission to USAID for approval.

Based on transparent criteria, the project will initially select 14 communities with populations of 2,500+ people in rural Montserrado and Margibi. This will be done towards the end of Q3 (nine months from the award date) per the contractual obligation with USAID. The design for the selection criteria will consider the following critical elements: community size, existing water infrastructure, gaps in equitable access for marginalized groups, community ability to support a pay-for-use system, the project's ability to address community infrastructure challenges, and active community mobilization. Communities without access to basic drinking water will also be

considered. Additional communities will then be added in future years of the project as models are established.

Summary activities

- Stakeholder consultations at all levels (community, county, and national levels) to introduce the project and secure buy-in and commitment.
- Development of selection criteria with key stakeholders in targeted counties
- Identification and mapping of potential sites for intervention based on population size, technical criteria, and consultations.
- Jointly work with CWTs to conduct community engagement and awareness of the program intervention and agree on selection criteria.
- Select intervention sites based on approved criteria by CWT⁵, Activity Advisory Committee, and USAID.

FOUNDATIONAL ACTIVITY 3: DESIGN A FUNDED INCENTIVE STRATEGY

In preparation for the Year 2 and Year 3 activities, the project will build a strong foundation by designing the grants and construction fund in Year 1. The grant and construction fund will incentivize local water actors (CWCs, WSP/local private sector, and LGIs) toward tangible results. Examples of key focus areas that will be considered for the grants include improved water sector governance, improved services, SBC campaigns, innovative service models, and advocacy. No construction or rehabilitation activities will be undertaken in Year 1. The project will invest in setting up the governance and financial structures that will support the sustainability of investments. However, the preparatory activities, such as feasibility studies in selected sites, will be accomplished by the end of Q4.

In Year 1, the project will design and operationalize the Grants Under Contract (GUC) Manual that will outline the operational and administrative guidelines, policies, and procedures for providing performance-based funding to NGOs, CSOs, and WSPs to implement performance-based deliverables at the national, county, and local levels.

Through these GUCs, the project will co-design incentive structures for milestone achievements toward improved system management, utilizing a mix of in-kind grants and construction funds in consultation with LGIs, CSOs, and the WSPs. The consultations with CSOs and WSPs will focus on obtaining preliminary information and will not discuss any given scope of work prior to releasing an RFA, and will not provide any advantage to a particular organization. The incentive strategy will prioritize performance-based metrics, such as the development of clear benchmarks for improved governance, innovations on operation and maintenance (O&M), SBC-related interventions, advocacy efforts, etc. The Liberian water enterprises, local CSOs, NGOs, and WSPs will be able to obtain support (through funding or in-kind depending on the type of entity, their capacity, and type of activities) through the GUC mechanism to support sustainable expansion and improvement of water service delivery. Local government agencies such as the county

⁵ The CWT is lead by the Ministry of Public Works (MOPW WASH Coordinator), and co-chaired by the Ministry of Health/County Health Team (CHT) Coordinator. The CWT consists of the following: MOPW WASH Coordinator, Ministry of Health/CHT Coordinator, NPHIL/Environmental Health Team, EPA, MIA, MoE, LWSC (where the LWSC operates). This the general composition for both counties

superintendent's office may benefit from in-kind grants only (no direct funding will be provided), following USAID regulations.

In Year 1, the project will prepare and review tender documents to solicit grant applications. The project will issue specific Requests for Applications (RFA) on a rolling basis through the life of the project to undertake different activities, starting with a small grant fund by the end of Q4 in Year 1. Issuing RFPs on a rolling basis will, as much as possible, open the grants to competition and allow the project to explore the cost-effectiveness and sustainability of the proposed intervention to be funded. Special considerations may be applied on a case-by-case basis where there is a need to give specific grants (in-kind to LGI and other types of grants to other grantees depending on the capacity of the organization and nature of the activity) to already pre-identified entities (WSPs, LGIs, or specific networks) although all the grantees will be taken through a due diligence process per the GUC Manual and in compliance with USAID regulations. No funding/cash grants will be provided to LGIs/government entities, which will only be eligible for in-kind support.

The project envisions grants disbursed from Year 1 and through the life of the project to be strategic and catalytic. The grants will support policy strengthening and implementation, capacity building to CWCs and WSP, and, most importantly, service delivery improvements through innovative solutions (e.g., pre-paid water meters technology) that can be scaled within the target counties.

During Q1, Winrock will also engage STTA to support drafting the Construction Quality Control Plan, which will ultimately provide the framework to ensure quality construction in the priority sites starting in Year 2.

Summary activities

- Design of GUC Manual to detail administrative and operational procedures for administering the GUC.
- Operationalize the GUC Manual by developing specific policies and guidelines for administering the grants.
- Design of specific annual program statements and performance-based deliverables/benchmarks such as improved water sector governance, improved services, SBC campaigns, and innovative service models. Consult with CWT and county leadership on performance-based metrics for LGIs, CSOs, and WSPs that can be tied to GUC incentives.
- Preparation of tender documents to solicit applications for grants.

B. TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO ROBERTSPORT, SANNIQUELLIE, AND VOINJAMA WATER SERVICES (TASK 2.2.3)

In our consultations with LWSC during the work planning process, the LWSC indicated that the institution has planned to tender for a new operator in 90-180 days after Feb 2023 (tentatively July 2023). Subsequent high-level meetings have been held to alter this plan and ensure more engagement and ownership of local institutions and communities. On February 10, 2023, the Government of Liberia, through the Local Governments of Lofa, Nimba, and Grand Cape Mount Counties, the MIA, NWASHC, MOPW, and LWSC jointly agreed that the Local Governments and Local Steering Committee of the three counties take over the operation and maintenance of

the respective water treatment plants in three cities, in collaboration with LWSC. This collaboration will operate and maintain the water treatment plants for a transitional period of 6 months, and within the first four months of the transitional period, the plants will be privatized to the local private operators under the supervision of the LGI, LWSC, and Local Steering Committee.

Based on the agreement from February 10th, the Activity will provide multi-pronged technical assistance to the LGI and LWSC through FEI Consulting by 1) review of existing information and evaluations available to understand the capacity and gaps of LGIs; 2) supporting the transitional procurement committee to prepare the tender documents and assist with the tendering process for recruitment of the new private sector service providers for each the three cities; 3) conducting diagnostic for the three treatment plants (building on existing reviews of financial management and capacity); and 4) supporting LGIs & LWSC to design service contracts with selected private WSPs. FEI Consulting may also provide lessons learned from its experience in different countries of comparable socio-economic conditions and contexts to adapt the tendering process and contract to the three water treatment systems and to the Liberian contexts, taking into account the history and political process.

The project will not engage in direct activities with LWSC at the national level and does not plan to inject cash or make any construction improvements in the three cities. However, based on further consultation with USAID and LWSC, in Year 1, Winrock will consult with the local stakeholders in each city through the county authorities and the local steering committee members, and the LWSC Technical Working Group, i.e., a technical team responsible for ensuring the smooth transitioning of the three (3) facilities from the old private operator to the new operator, on the established priorities and plans for the selection a new private operator, and transitioning the management, O&M, and overall oversight of the three towns that have previously benefited from extensive USAID investments during the transitional period. The Project will only provide technical support/assistance for these systems if the institutional framework is a decentralized and delegated management framework: the local government institutions provide oversight and enforcement on water service delivery, and management and O&M are through a performance-based contract with a private operator.

As the transition plan becomes clearer in Year 1, Winrock, with the support of FEI Consulting, will analyze the county authorities and local steering committee requirements to ensure that they have the adequate technical expertise to guarantee the reliability of water services, expand service delivery, and adequately manage contract disputes. Winrock and FEI Consulting will reassess and adapt their initial plan to use a multi-pronged approach to deploy technical assistance: 1) to the local government to provide oversight and enforcement, 2) to the newly recruited service providers to review operations and financial management, Winrock will deploy short-term technical expertise to work with the local authorities and the local steering committees from the three cities to initiate the private sector engagement at the local level and then designing adequate management processes for the PPP mechanism based on below USAID model (Figure 4) that will be revised for the water supply in the three cities.

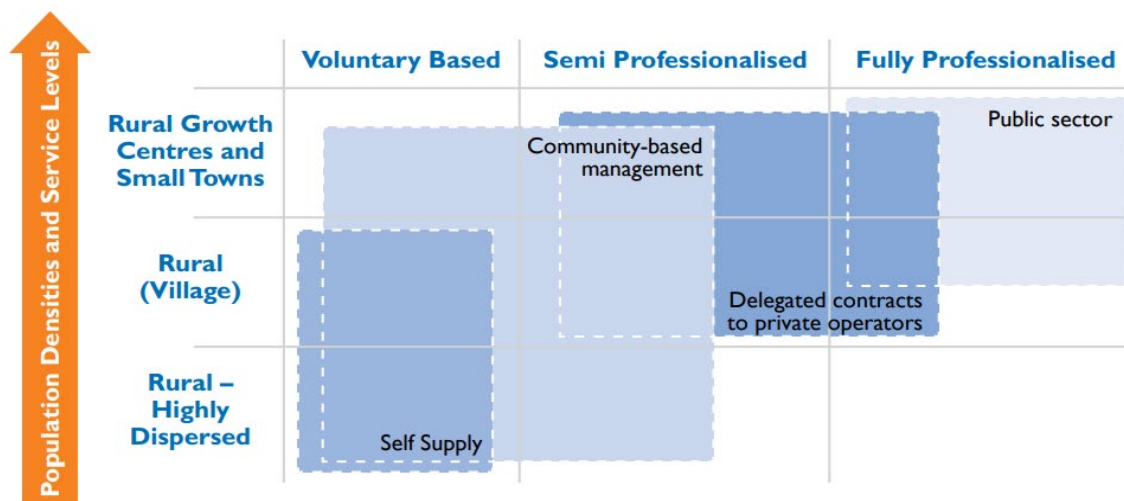


Figure 5: Theoretical model adapted by USAID Washington for management of rural water supply systems

Summary activities

- Review of existing information and evaluations reports available to understand the capacity and gaps of LGIs in the three cities.
- Support the transitional procurement committee to prepare the tender documents and assist with the tendering process for recruitment of the new private sector service providers for each of the three cities.
- Support LGIs, LSCs, & LWSC to design service contracts with selected private WSPs
- Conduct diagnostics for the three treatment plants (including reviews of the financial and management capacities)
- Deploy short-term technical assistance through FEI consulting to:
 - Support Local Government and local steering committee to provide oversight and enforcement on the signed service contract with the private sector operator
 - Support the selected private sector operator for management, operations/maintenance of the water systems.

C. OBJECTIVE 1: LOCAL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS EFFECTIVELY PLAN, BUDGET, AND OVERSEE WATER SERVICE DELIVERY

SUB-OBJECTIVE 1.1: LOCAL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR WATER SERVICE DELIVERY ARE ESTABLISHED AND/OR IMPROVED

In Year 1, the project will aim to set a strong foundation for supporting and strengthening sub-national GOL structures to decentralize government services that regulate and manage service delivery. This will be done by developing a sub-national framework that outlines the roles and responsibilities of LGIs. Based on findings from stakeholder consultation during the preparation of this work plan, the NWASHC Chief Executing Officer alluded to the fact that roles and

responsibilities among multiple national- and county-level institutions overlap based on their constitutional and policy mandate, declaring, “There is a clear need to prioritize addressing the policy overlaps to allow for more decentralized water service delivery models that empower the counties to plan, budget, and implement water service improvements”. The project will convene and support NWASHC and MOPW to clarify and strengthen the role of LGIs in Margibi and Montserrado to address this concern. NWASHC’s role as regulator and MOPW’s role at the county level will be strengthened. The activity will enhance the MOPW WASH coordinators at the county level to effectively coordinate the CWT activities. To ensure that women and marginalized groups are represented at all levels of decision-making, in Year 1, the project will undertake a robust stakeholder consultation to identify champions among the institution’s staff and lawmakers(the legislative caucus for water members). Additionally, in Year 1, the project will develop gender benchmarks in all institutions to lay a foundation for inclusivity criteria in water investments.

Task 1.1.1: Build the case for LGI-managed PPPs for water services

In Year 1, the project will undertake a detailed analysis of existing county and local level policy and regulatory frameworks supporting water service delivery, including the roles and opportunities for public and private entities. This will be done in consultation with USAID LEPDA. The analysis will involve conducting desk reviews and consultation meetings with NWASHC, MOPW, LWSC, MIA, and LGIs at the local level to identify existing policy and regulatory frameworks, unwritten or informal practices, and priorities for addressing the policy gaps. By integrating this activity with the baseline assessment foundational activity, Winrock will identify STTA to conduct the institutional and social analysis. Additionally, Winrock will conduct stakeholder consultations in Q2 to determine county-level policy and governance support priorities by other partners. This will ensure that the project can complement other development partners' support to avoid duplication of efforts and waste of resources.

In Q2, the project will conduct a visioning workshop to discuss the identified gaps further and develop sub-national frameworks that will create an enabling environment for the private sector to engage in the water sector. Participants of the workshop will be drawn from local LGI representatives such as Superintendent, city mayor, resident engineer, NWASHC technical staff, MOPW, LWSC, and private sector representatives, among other institutions. Other USAID projects working on policy space will also be invited to the workshop. Other national-level institutions, such as MIA and NPHIL, will also be invited to participate. The design of the workshop will be shared with USAID for input ahead of the planned date.

Additionally, an exchange visit for national- and county-level institutions and key stakeholders, such as the private sector actors, will be organized and executed in Q4. This visit will be experiential learning for the stakeholders to learn from communities, WSPs, and other government officials about successes and challenges from other communities and LGIs that have utilized innovative professional models for water service delivery. The visit will also explore potential sites to visit within Liberia, such as Peace Island. If deemed relevant after the selection of a few key stakeholder representatives, virtual exchanges such as with WaterAid experiences with Ghana may be considered.

Linked with the mapping of existing service delivery models (under task 2.1.1), a joint analysis and review of the service delivery models will be done to appropriately select one or several models that will be suitable based on the community context. CWTs will be supported to carefully assess the suitability of different approaches with adaptations and refinements based on local

context. Ultimately, this will be a critical preparatory step for activities in Year 2 that will support the exploration and testing of new models to manage water service delivery leading to sustainable and scalable PPPs. The project envisions the development of multiple service models for different sizes based on the type of systems and context at the local level.

Summary activities

- Collaborate with LEPDA in the mapping of PPPs for water service provision.
- Engage NWASHC on the existing policy analysis, identification of legal and regulatory gaps, and priorities for legislation that supports county-level water service delivery.
- Conduct stakeholder engagement meetings to identify county-level policy and governance support priorities by other partners. This will help avoid duplication of efforts with other partners outside of USAID.
- Conduct a visioning workshop to identify gaps and initiate the process for the development of sub-national frameworks for PPPs.
- Conduct a learning event/ exchange visit(s) for LGIs, National Government, and stakeholders to assess innovative professional PPP models within Liberia and in other countries' PPP models.
- Support CWT to review and assess existing service delivery models (in link with mapping under task 2.1.1).

Task 1.1.2: Develop a sub-national framework for water service delivery

In preparation for activities planned for Year 2, the project will establish the Activity Advisory Committee with clear terms of reference to support the NWASHC and the LGIs in laying out a foundational plan for developing the sub-national framework for water service delivery. The Activity Advisory Committee will be at the national level and will comprise a national-level representative from USAID, representatives from relevant ministries or institutions (NWASHC, MOPW, MOH, NPHIL, LWSC), the activity COP, county government representatives (superintendents), and, if relevant and feasible, representatives of WSPs and CSOs. Winrock will convene Activity Advisory Committee meetings on a quarterly basis to review the work plan progress and advocate for policy and regulatory improvements based on evidence from activity interventions and the monitoring systems. The project will use the Activity Advisory Committee to update stakeholders on progress, seek input on the project's direction, and coordinate with other projects in the water sector and donors in the country to avoid overlap, scale activities efficiently, and share lessons learned. The Activity will invite the Activity Advisory Committee to participate in the annual pause-and-reflect sessions.

In Q3, the project will hold stakeholder engagement meetings, including water users, LGIs, CSOs, and private sector partners, to identify water service delivery priorities and the gaps and requirements for a framework at the sub-national level (most likely county-level, but this could also consider CWC level). Based on initial consultation with Margibi County officials, there are gaps regarding a county-level framework for effective water service delivery. Section 2.14 of the Local Government Act 2018 mandates that counties gradually establish administrative departments to implement devolved functions depending upon individual county needs, capabilities, and local financial resources to sustain institutions or departments such as the department of planning, revenue, and budget.

In Year 1, the project will conduct a workshop(s) with Margibi and Montserrado county officials to consult on sub-national framework needs. This will be done by carefully selecting workshop participants comprising senior-level leadership and technical teams such as county and district-level superintendents, city mayors, county administrators, county resident engineers, private sector actors, etc. Representatives from national-level institutions such as MIA, MOPW, and NASHC will be invited to participate and contribute to discussions and analysis of the needs. For this activity, the project will secure a venue, support the counties in drafting the workshop agenda, guide the discussions under the chairmanship of the County Superintendent, support the county in developing templates for capturing the workshop output, and provide technical support in drafting the workshop report. A draft budgetary need for implementing the framework will be one of the outputs of the workshop.

The project envisions that these initial workshops will provide a working draft of key issues to be included in the sub-national framework that will require refinement under guidance from the CWT technical committee. The project will also review existing policy analyses where available to contribute to this working draft. This task is expected to ultimately contribute towards the development of a formal framework for the implementation of water service delivery in Margibi and Montserrado counties. This framework will be fully supported by policies and regulations developed/strengthened under sub-objective 1.2 and implemented through capacity-building efforts and continuous improvement processes under sub-objective 1.3.

Summary activities

- Hold stakeholder engagement meetings, including the water users, LGIs, CSOs, and the private sector, to identify priorities for water service delivery and the sub-national framework needs.
- Consultation with NASHC to identify legal and regulatory frameworks gaps/overlaps etc.
- Formation and definition of role and terms of reference of the Activity Advisory Committee
- Conduct participatory workshops and work with the LGIs and NASHC to draft a sub-national water service delivery framework and county budget needs to implement the framework.
- Review existing policy analysis reports from existing assessments, including LEPDA/UNDP-supported rapid assessments.

Task 1.1.3 Define framework for PPPs for water services at the local level

No activity is planned for this year. However, a preparatory activity to map the private sector actors/water service providers will be done under task 2.1.1.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 1.2: POLICIES AND REGULATIONS FOR WATER SERVICE DELIVERY ARE IMPROVED, IMPLEMENTED, AND ENFORCED

To contribute towards the achievement of solid governance systems, the project will undertake robust stakeholder consultation in Year 1 to discuss mechanisms and modalities for creating an enabling environment for water service delivery. In Q1 and Q2, the key staff will lead consultations with NASHC, the Legislative caucus for water, Ministry of Commerce and other USAID projects such as LEPDA, CWSP, and Breakthrough Action, CSOs among others, to identify gaps

and develop a clear road map for supporting the development or updating of the policies and guidelines that support counties to deliver sustainable water services at the local level. Building on the awareness creation of the Local Government Act planned under task 1.1.1, the project will develop a clear roadmap for supporting LGIs to design and implement policies and regulatory frameworks collaboratively.

The project will empower under-resourced CWTs and other LGIs at the county, district, and local levels to take ownership of their roles to strengthen the monitoring and institutional mandates of the LGIs.

To set the stage for the development of a sub-national framework that outlines roles and responsibilities for LGIs, the project will support MIA to develop clear guidance to county administrations on roles and responsibilities based on the Local Government Act of 2018 and the proposed sub-national framework. NAWASHC, MOPW, MOH, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, and WASH CSOs within the counties may be consulted in this process.

Task 1.2.1: Support the application of policy frameworks

The project will critically analyze the county and national level policy, regulatory gaps, and overlap to enhance the capacity of LGIs in their mandate to develop an approach, regulatory briefs, and implementation guidelines for local bylaws, regulations, and enforcement measures through guidance from NAWASHC.

The project will also conduct stakeholder consultation meetings to discuss mechanisms and modalities for creating an enabling environment for water service delivery. Based on the outcome of the initial policy analysis under 1.1.1 and further analysis under 1.1.2, the project will conduct workshop(s) to review the critical issues and policy gaps as well as identified priorities. The project will propose recommendations and improvements to support the two target counties in drafting new bills, policies, and regulations. This will be a critical step to improve the counties' governance, regulatory, and monitoring capabilities to execute their mandate. This will be done in consultation with NAWASHC to ensure that existing lessons are captured and good practices are scaled up.

The mapping exercise (foundational activity 2) will involve a detailed analysis of existing CWTs, CWCs, and WSPs in the two target counties. Based on information from this mapping, the project will develop trainings and guidelines for county-led implementation of water service delivery that is compliant with national policy and the sub-national framework and continue with adaptations throughout the life of the project. The project will support MIA in consultation with NAWASHC and MOPW in developing terms of reference for CWT and CWC. This will ensure that the CWT and CWC understand their roles and responsibilities regarding implementing county-level water service delivery. NAWASHC will also facilitate the development of a roadmap for refining regulatory framework and institutional arrangements to support the PPPs management models (define clear roles and responsibilities). The LGIs will approve the agreed upon roadmap and provide oversight in the implementation of activities elaborated on the roadmap.

Summary activities

- Identification of policy and regulatory gaps and areas of policy overlap at the county and national levels.
- Stakeholder consultation to discuss mechanisms and modalities for creating an enabling environment for water service delivery.

- Detailed mapping of stakeholders, including existing CWCs, CWT and WSPs
- Review of regulatory frameworks and local policies at the county and district level, identification of gaps and areas of overlaps at the county and national levels.
- Development of training and guidelines for county-led implementation.
- Support the county government and leadership to develop local bylaws, regulations, and enforcement measures to sustain pay-for-use services.
- Support NASHC to develop policy and regulatory frameworks and implementation guidelines, and facilitate the development of a roadmap for refining regulatory framework and institutional arrangements to support the PPPs management models (define clear roles and responsibilities)
- Support NASHC in the development of terms of reference for CWT and CWC.

Task 1.2.2: Strengthen County level monitoring and enforcement

To strengthen the capacity of LGIs to exercise their role in monitoring and enforcement, the project will recruit and co-locate staff at the county level in Q2/3. A technical working group will be formed at the county level involving CWT members to provide leadership and guidance on monitoring and enforcing approved policies. The CWT will assume the overall responsibility for supporting the superintendent to monitor the implementation of the approved policies ensuring that each stakeholder executes their mandate per the constitutional mandate in Liberia. It will also be sensitized to the need to develop feedback loops and communication channels between the LGI, water users, and other stakeholders, and the identification of these channels will commence in Year 1.

The co-located staff will provide job coaching and mentorship to the WASH coordinators from MOPW. With support from the Institutional Development Manager, the Senior Capacity Building Officer will also do one-on-one coaching of the specific members of CWT. The project co-located staff will also orient the CWT on reporting and conduct meetings with the superintendent to report activity progress and highlight monitoring issues that require senior county-level intervention.

In Year 1, the project will also develop the monitoring tools and guidelines for county-level monitoring of water service delivery and will conduct pilot tests of the tools before their rollout in Year 2.

Summary activities

- Facilitate the formation of the technical working group and development of terms of reference for monitoring and enforcement.
- Recruit and co-locate staff at the county level to provide job coaching and mentorship of the WASH coordinators from MOPW and other members of CWT on reporting and monitoring county-level activities.
- Develop monitoring tools and guidelines for county-level monitoring.

Task 1.2.3: Train CWCs in policies and regulations

To strengthen the capacity of CWT in supporting the CWCs and WSPs at the county level, the project will provide support to NASHC and MIA to train the county and/or district LGIs and

CWTs on the Local Government Act 2018 so that they can cascade it down to CWCs in Year 2. Through STTA, the project will support MIA and NASHC to conduct a Training of Trainers to enhance the capacity of LGI staff (County and district level authorities, CWTs) on the Local Government Act 2018. This will be followed by awareness creation meetings at the district, towns and the community level on the decentralization of water service delivery. These awareness creation meetings will aim at educating communities, households, marginalized groups, WSPs, and LGIs on the provisions of the act and the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder. It will also be done by developing policy briefs and regulatory guidelines for decentralized water service delivery for use by CWCs, which will be initiated in Year 1 as well.

Summary activities

- Support MIA and NASHC to train sub-national government officials on Local Government Act through training of trainer, and training roll out at local level.
- Support decentralization by working with key government counterparts (superintendents, County inspector, development superintendents, city mayor, district superintendents/commissioners, county attorney, etc.) to effectively implement their roles in water service delivery.
- Start the development of policy briefs and regulatory guidelines for decentralized water service delivery for use by CWCs.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 1.3: IMPROVED INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY AND COORDINATION AROUND PLANNING, BUDGETING, AND MONITORING WATER SERVICES

Task 1.3.1: Build the capacity of national ministries to support LGIs

In Year 1, the project will aim to involve the national level institutions, especially in supporting the counties through training and rolling out awareness creation on the Local Government Act. Additionally, the project will strengthen MIA capacity to lead and coordinate the decentralization process for water service delivery with NASHC, MOPW, MOH, NPHIL, and LWSC. The project will work with MIA to coordinate with the decentralization committee already established under the NASHC coordination structures. In addition to the national institutions, the decentralization committee comprises CSO and NGO representatives. Working in collaboration with LEPDA and CWSP, the Improved Access to Safe Drinking Water Activity will coordinate the activities from drawing a clear TOR to the development of an annual activity plan to support the decentralization process.

In Year 1, the project will undertake the following activities:

Sector coordination and advocacy for an increased budget. The project will support the counties to plan and prepare their water service delivery annual budget ready for submission to the finance ministry in line with the provisions of the Local Government Act and Appropriation Act. At the national level and with the support of WaterAid, the NASHC will be supported to facilitate sector coordination and implement a data-driven advocacy campaign to increase overall water sector funding targeted at lawmakers and sector coordination mechanisms. Targeted advocacy meetings with the legislators' WASH Caucus and Budget committee will influence the 2023/2024 budget cycle to advocate for an increased budget for WASH. Similarly, the project will support the NASHC and MOPW in actualizing the coordination and annual joint sector review meetings. At the County level, the project will support the development superintendent to take the lead in organizing and executing monthly coordination meetings, ensuring their participation or, at

minimum, their consultation in the annual sector review, and ensuring that information from the county coordination reaches the national level.

Mentoring and coaching County WASH Coordinators. The project will support the LGIs to lead the coordination and monitoring of WASH activities through empowering WASH Coordinators under the leadership of the development superintendent. The County authorities through development superintendent will take up the chairmanship of the WASH coordination meetings. The County WASH Coordination Team generally consists of the Coordinator, a hand pump technician, and Social Worker. The development superintendent will lead the County WASH Coordination Meetings (planning and hosting) and ensure WASH interventions being implemented by NGOs, government institutions, or private individuals are in accordance with the GOL-approved designs, guidelines, and technical specifications; the pump technician ensures proper siting of water points, and is responsible for pumps installation and repairs; and the social worker carries out social mobilization at the community for WASH intervention. This will be done through mentoring and coaching by the project co-located staff at the county level and the CWT. Depending on the need at the county level, the project will assess and explore possibilities of MOPW involvement in joint field monitoring visits, specialized trainings, and development of guidelines based on specific requests from county leaders.

Annual joint sector review meeting. The project will participate and contribute to the yearly joint sector review meetings in the fourth quarter under the leadership of NWASHC in coordination with MOPW and other WASH actors. The project will support the annual sector review meetings through targeted support to the NWASHC to convene the meetings. This will be done by technical assistance in developing the agenda and recommendations on key thematic areas to be included in the technical discussions. The project will support the participation of the county officials in the meeting by providing transport and logistical support to the venue. Finally, the project will also support compiling data and presenting case studies from the counties. The participation of the project in the Annual Joint Sector Review meetings will strengthen sub-national and national-level leadership accountability.

The above activities will be complemented by support to NWASHC to initiate the development of monitoring tools and guidelines for county level LGI's under task 1.2.2

Summary activities

- Technical assistance to NWASHC to lead the coordination efforts for the water sector and data-driven decision-making efforts.
- Support the NWASHC for sector-wide coordination and data-driven decision-making efforts, including co-organization of advocacy meetings with the WASH Legislative Caucus and Budget Committee and joint sector annual review
- Backstop county WASH coordinators through mentorship and coaching by co-located staff.
- Participate in the annual joint sector review, including targeted support to NWASHC to convene the meeting,
- Facilitate NWASHC in the development of monitoring tools and guidelines for the county-level LGIs.

Task 1.3.2: Build county capacity

In Year 1, as part of the Foundational Activities, the project will undertake a baseline organizational capacity assessment with Montserrado and Margibi counties to identify gaps and develop a comprehensive capacity development plan using scorecards to document progress. This capacity assessment of existing LGIs at county and district levels will provide the baseline information for existing capacity and identify gaps and desired capacity for counties to undertake their mandate effectively.

To position LGIs as drivers in the sustainable provision of water services, the project will co-develop a monitoring system during Year 1. The system will entail the development of institutional scorecards and an MIS for LGIs to monitor water access/system functionality and efficiently manage assets through feedback loops with communities.

In Q2, Winrock will utilize the CWT headed by the County Superintendent to implement sector-wide learning. The CWT will play a central role in developing work plans, reviewing progress, and advocating for policy and regulatory improvements based on evidence from activity interventions and monitoring systems.

The project will also provide technical assistance to the counties to develop and implement capacity development plans that will progressively clarify roles/responsibilities, set annual plans, and estimate budgets. In Year 1, this will be done through project-embedded staff who will review job descriptions and roles/responsibility matrices if they exist. The team will conduct KII to get a diagnostic of people's understanding of roles and responsibilities and conduct group meetings to review existing gaps. This process will help the team understand the tools that need to be developed or those missing for these roles to be clarified and what they need to achieve.

The project will work with the county and district superintendents to develop capacity development plans at the county and district level, identify the gaps in water service delivery, and specific activities for addressing the identified gaps. In Montserrado, the project will focus on the rural part of the county plan.

In Q4, a joint Montserrado/Margibi workshop will be conducted to exchange findings and align how the processes can be improved to define budgets and plans.

The project Senior Capacity Building Officers embedded in the counties will support the CWTs in developing methodologies for budgeting and allocating funding for water services extension and significant rehabilitation, technical assistance to communities and WSPs, and contract oversight/enforcement. In Year 1, this will be done through the development of guidelines, tools, and templates.

To revitalize county-level leadership and adaptive management, the project will support the WASH Coordinator to institutionalize monthly WASH meetings to review data on the county's WASH status, organizational capacity progress, and presentations of NGO and CSO activities for improved coordination. This activity will start in Q3 and continue through the life of the project. The co-located staff at the county level will mentor and coach the WASH coordinators to develop an agenda for the meeting, review the list of attendees/participants to invite, and prepare presentations and requests for information. Additionally, the Senior Capacity Building Officers will brief the WASH coordinator on the facilitation of meetings. They will debrief after each session to review what went well and what needs to be reviewed. The debrief meeting will also allow the WASH coordinator to review minutes, action items, etc.

Summary activities

- Facilitate the organizational capacity assessment of existing LGIs at the county and district level (under Foundational Activity 1).
- Develop institutional scorecards and an MIS for LGIs to monitor water access/system functionality and efficiently manage assets through feedback loops with communities.
- Define roles and responsibilities for CWT.
- Facilitate the development of capacity development plans.
- Guide CWT to develop county-level monitoring tools and guidelines for budgeting
- Support the WASH coordinator in institutionalizing monthly meetings.
- Provide mentorship and coaching to the LGIs.

Task 1.3.3: Develop and strengthen the capacity of CWCs to monitor and regulate the water services

To enhance the capacity of CWCs to implement efficient water service delivery models effectively, the project will start with mapping the existing CWCs at the county level. The mapping exercise will cover all communities in the target counties. The project recognizes that some communities do not have CWCs. During Year 1, the project will set up a roadmap to support the formation of new CWCs and the development of scorecards in the 14 target communities. Where CWCs exist, the project will conduct a baseline organizational capacity assessment and jointly develop a scorecard to track performance over time. The project will also create awareness of the CWC bylaws.

Based on identified gaps under the capacity assessments, in Q4, the project will work with CWC to define roles and responsibilities, as well as develop a clearly outlined capacity building plan/steps for the CWC to improve their capacity from their existing to their envisioned status. This will be done through a learning-by-doing approach covering asset management, monitoring, and regulating water services.

The capacity building plan will prioritize several elements, including governance, by supporting the development of clear job descriptions, bylaws, contract management, procurement, financial management, service provision, conflict resolution, and community consultations and mechanisms for supporting inclusivity, including promoting women's participation in decision-making.

CWCs currently undertake their work as volunteers. To move away from this practice, the project will work with the local authorities, including the superintendent, city mayor, CWT, etc., to draw a roadmap for professionalizing CWC services under a pay-for-use service model. The project acknowledges that setting up a fully operational pay-for-use model will require critical decisions on tariff setting as well as reinforcing the revenues (money set aside to support the operations of CWC, O&M as well as expansion of water facilities), and the buy-in of users that will be closely consulted through Objective 3.

In Year 1, the project will formulate an advocacy plan for the county governments to allocate funds for CWTs to train CWCs and normalize CWC stipends by incorporating them into service provision agreements. The project will develop a mentorship program for CWT to CWC with a clearly elaborated training curriculum that is long-term instead of one-off trainings.

Summary Activities

- Mapping of existing CWCs
- Conduct baseline capacity assessment for existing CWCs.
- Establish a roadmap to support the formation and professionalization of CWCs within the community.
- Development of a capacity building plan.
- Co-design training curriculum/modules for the CWCs with CWT and WASH coordinators based on the agreed capacity-building plan.
- Create awareness of the bylaw of the CWCs.
- Define roles and responsibilities for the CWCs.

D. OBJECTIVE 2: EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE WATER SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVED AND EXPANDED

To deliver equitable and reliable access to water to diverse communities throughout the two target counties, Winrock will support LGIs to test and deploy various service delivery models. Given the context in Liberia regarding the demand for improved water services, larger communities are better positioned to sustain cost-recoverable service provision through performance-based contracts with private sector service providers. Therefore, Winrock and its partners will initially develop and test delivery models in those communities of over 2,500 people and facilitate PPPs between water service providers and LGIs based on clear governance frameworks among institutions, water users, and the private sector.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 2.1: PROFESSIONAL AND FINANCIALLY RESILIENT WATER SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS ADOPTED

To contribute towards the objective of delivering equitable and reliable access to water to diverse communities throughout our two target counties, Winrock will guide CWTs and CWCs to facilitate a community-driven process for the design and adoption of customer-centered water service delivery models in target areas. The project will develop a checklist to guide this process in ensuring transparency, participation, local empowerment, demand-responsiveness, accountability, and improved local capacity with particular consideration for women and marginalized groups. In all target communities, the project will promote WSP models operated by qualified private sector professionals linked to LGI oversight.

Task 2.1.1: Design pay-for-use water services in target communities and towns.

In Year 1, the project will establish the foundation for sustainable service delivery models by ensuring robust stakeholder consultations with the LGIs and the users to analyze the existing models and design suitable models based on the context at the local level. This will be done by assessing current water services alongside the demand situation. Ultimately, layering of participatory design of water service delivery models with support to operators (water enterprises) and demand creation activities will result in the sustainability of models and their replication by WSPs and LGIs.

The project will also identify and collect more information on performance indicators for existing water schemes (financial and technical capacity) to provide O&M services and determine whether

or not the model is working. Similarly, the project technical team will identify whether there is an existing Life Cycle Cost analysis at existing facilities and establish the willingness to pay/ability to pay (based on formative research under foundation activity and further analysis under Objective 3).

Design water service improvement plans. Based on a robust joint analysis of the existing systems, the project will work with CWTs and CWCs in Montserrado and Margibi counties to carefully design water service delivery improvement plans. In Year 1, the project will analyze the status of existing infrastructure and supportive regulation and institutional framework for private sector participation. Similarly, the project will conduct a detailed analysis of the Peace Island PPP model (contractual arrangements, regulations, roles, and responsibilities in use). To draw a comparison between projects that are managed through PPP and those that are managed by public entities, the project will conduct a detailed critical analysis of the Kakata water scheme and identify underlying causes of non-functionality. The analysis will be instrumental in guiding counties not to repeat mistakes, including critical lessons learned from the PPP model attempted in Voinjama, Sanniquellie, and Robertsport. The counties will be oriented to initiate the design of the service delivery models incorporating lessons learned from other existing models, including key learnings from the exchange /learning visits under Objective 1. The project will integrate stakeholder engagement with water users, advocacy, women’s groups, and private sector actors into the design process of the water service improvement plans to ensure that women and marginalized groups are involved in the decision-making process, and that plans are responsive to the water access needs and challenges of communities.

Building on the outcome of the willingness and ability to pay for service surveys conducted under Objective 3 during the formative research, the project will identify if there are existing Life Cycle Costs at existing water facilities. This information will be critical for the counties to establish the appropriate water tariff based on the findings of the willingness to pay/ability to pay survey. Evidence-based tariff setting will ultimately lead to the sustainability of selected pay-for-use service delivery models.

Selection of water service delivery model for pilots. To promote the private sector's participation in equitable water service access in the two target counties, in Year 1, the project will start mapping WSPs and private sector actors in Margibi and Montserrado counties in coordination with the LEPDA project. For learning purposes, the project will conduct detailed research on the institutional arrangement and financial viability models in use at the three cities (Robertsport, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama) through the support of FEI Consulting.

Designing contract agreements between CWCs and WSPs. In communities with private sector service providers, the project will provide tailored implementation support/coaching to CWCs and CWTs to evaluate, negotiate, and manage formal contractual arrangements with the WSP that define clear lines of responsibility and accountability in service delivery. The contracts will outline the roles and responsibilities of the WSP and CWC in managing/oversight water systems and set terms for establishing user fee structures. Services could range from a simple operation, maintenance, and upkeep of protected dug wells to selling treated water⁶.

⁶ The users of these facilities will be counted as beneficiaries under the provisions of the contract as long as the wells and service matches the definitions of basic water service in the PIRS, i.e. 30minutes roundtrip for the following types of drinking water sources: piped drinking water supply on-premises; public tap/standpost; **tube well/borehole**; **protected dug well**, protected

Coaching and mentoring of CWCs. While the project aims to prepare the CWCs to be ultimately responsible for the day-to-day oversight of WSPs, LGIs will retain contract management. With support from NWASHC and MIA, the county government will undertake orientation sessions with CWCs to ensure that they operate under national and county regulations and be endorsed by CWT. Coaching and mentoring will continue throughout the life of the program, with more intense training in Year 1 and Year 2. Sustainability check-ins will occur between CWT, CWCs, and WSP starting from Year 2 to review progress based on performance metrics, which will inform adaptations to the pilots and the project implementation support activities. To prepare for the sustainability check-ins, the project will develop specific details to be included in the metrics and benchmarks to be followed in subsequent years.

Summary Activities

- Mapping of WSPs/private sector actors in Margibi and rural Montserrado + three cities (Robertsport, Sanniquellie, Voinjama).
- Identify and collect more information on performance indicators (financial & technical capacity) to provide O&M services and identify key reasons why the model is working or not.
- Conduct private sector roundtable discussions to identify challenges, opportunities and co-investments areas.
- Identify existing Life Cycle Costs at existing facilities and establish the willingness to pay/ability to pay).
- Conduct a detailed analysis of the status of existing infrastructure and supportive regulation and institutional framework for private sector participation.
- For learning purposes, conduct detailed research on institutional arrangement and financial viability models in use at the three cities.
- Conduct assessment/ detailed analysis and performance evaluation of existing PPP model: System success and failure challenges, including the Peace Island PPP model (contractual arrangements, regulations, roles, and responsibilities in use).
- Mapping existing service delivery models, e.g., a detailed analysis of the Kakata water scheme to identify underlying causes of non-functionality, will be instrumental in guiding counties not to repeat mistakes.
- Selection of service delivery management models jointly with the community (CWC) and LGIs (CWT, LWSC, and MIA), and prepare for private sector to pilot the model in year 2.
- Coaching and mentoring of CWCs for designing water service delivery plans.

spring; rainwater; and/or **bottled water (when another basic service is used for hand washing, cooking or other basic personal hygiene purposes).**

These beneficiaries will be counted under indicator HL.8.1-1 if they did not have access to basic water prior to the project's intervention, or under HL.8.1-3 if the intervention improves the service quality of an existing basic water service.

Task 2.1.2: Implement service provision improvements and management models

In Year 1, the project will undertake a stakeholder engagement to collaboratively design and develop the tools for administering the GUC and the construction fund, which will target small-scale infrastructure improvements or repairs and in-kind contributions of materials and/or technical/other support (see Foundational Activity 3).

Initiate engineering and social feasibility studies. In Q3 and Q4 of Year 1, the project will initiate engineering and social feasibility studies in selected intervention sites to pilot the service delivery models. Service expansion will not start until Year 2. This preparatory phase is necessary to allow the project adequate time to work with CWCs and WSPs to co-design applications for the project's grant and construction fund. Starting the construction activities in Year 2 will ensure that the requisite capacity is built for those WSPs selected to receive the financial resources to implement the pilots developed under task 2.1.1.

Preparatory activities for construction:

Scoping Visits/Situational Analysis (SA). Scoping visits and SA will be initiated and completed in Q3-4 of Year 1), with the participation of the CWT and the communities, including women. This will form the basis for master planning and essentially all subsequent work. Using the data of potential sites, Winrock will obtain updated demographic maps and population data from the LISGIS. Based on transparent criteria (populations of 2,500+ people in Montserrado and Margibi), Winrock will initially identify the 14 communities with Foundational Activity 2. These will be mapped as potential intervention sites.

Final Selection of Sites. Selection criteria will be finalized with the CWTs headed by County Superintendents , and USAID to address community size, existing water infrastructure, gaps in equitable access for marginalized groups, community ability to support a pay-for-use system, the project's ability to address community infrastructure challenges, etc. The interventions may include infrastructure needs, such as repairs, rehabilitation, and/or improvement of community-managed small-town water service delivery with kiosks or hand pumps in rural and peri-urban settlements; and reservoir or tower distribution or building a reservoir or expansion service delivery with new water service delivery system with kiosks or pumps. Clear responsibilities will be established between community members, CWT, and the WSP to ensure long-term community ownership (via town authorities) so that water delivery services remain functional. Winrock will require CWT and CWC support to facilitate community engagement plans to support repairs, improvements, and expansion of basic water service delivery.

Current Water Service Delivery Models Analyzed. Winrock will institute a landscape analysis that summarizes existing models installed and piloted in Liberia. Examples include community-managed small-town water service delivery with kiosks or hand pumps in rural and peri-urban settlements and reservoir or tower distribution like those USAID-funded systems in Sanniquellie and Voinjama. The landscape analysis will entail a review of the designs (system design, bill of quantity, technical specifications) and an analysis of current water service delivery models for efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and inclusiveness to inform water tariffs. This analysis will assist in selecting the service delivery model jointly with the community and LGIs.

The collection of detailed data on willingness and ability to pay and customer priorities through surveys or consultations will inform the recommendations for future service models, siting, and

payment schemes. Draft designs of the water systems will aim to be completed by the end of Y1 or early in Year 2 to account for possible reduced access during the rainy season.

Utilization of Local Subcontractor (Where Necessary). Access to basic water service delivery will range from repairs/improvement to rehabilitative/new construction works utilizing external firms. Winrock will subcontract with additional local entities for technical services as required, such as environmental impact analysis. Depending on the types and sizes of the repairs/improvement and rehabilitation/construction packages, Winrock expects limited participation of local contractors for the supplies and repair or construction services. Winrock will subcontract small-scale repairs, improvement, or construction activities, including communal water point protection and upgrades, water distribution kiosk improvements, and water extraction. This stage will most likely not be able to start until Year 2 but planning with Winrock's operations teams will be initiated in Year 1 to ensure processes are efficiently followed.

Construction Works - Preparation. In Quarter 3 the project will recruit A & E firm to undertake preliminary assessments and develop drafts designs and BOQs. Q4 will focus primarily on finalizing the draft technical designs, the final site selection, and the identification of external firms (if possible) and/or local subcontractor necessary before construction activities and the process for rehabilitation. Approvals from USAID and Liberian institutions for any construction will be planned and sought according to timelines and procedures, starting in Year 2. One component of preparation for the construction phase will include finalizing the Construction Management Plan (CMP), which is the Standard Operating Procedure, and the draft Construction Quality Assurance Plan that will be submitted in Q2.

Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan (EMMP) / Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA). In Q4, Winrock will aim to submit the Project Brief to the Liberia Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and, on that basis, request a permit authorizing it to commence the construction/rehabilitation of the water service systems in the selected communities for Year 2. Winrock and the EPA will jointly complete a scoping visit. Depending on the type and extent of the construction works (excavation, clearing of the site, etc.), the EPA may request Winrock to conduct an ESIA. In this case, Winrock will hire a certified local environmental firm to conduct an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) ahead of construction/reconstruction works. The ESIA report, along with its Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP), will be submitted to the EPA for approval, granting Winrock the environmental permits for the installation of water systems in Montserrado and Margibi Counties. The EMMP, developed with STTA support, will be submitted to USAID in Q2.

Summary Activities

- Initiate engineering and social feasibility studies for select intervention sites.
- Scoping visits/ SA, the final selection of sites, and the start of feasibility/engineering design studies and procurement planning.
- Develop EMMP, Construction Quality Assurance Plan, and ESIA.
- Review different management models to check suitability for the context in the two target counties.
- Selection of service delivery model jointly with the community (CWC) and LGIs (CWT, LWSC, MIA) to be piloted.

- Work with CWCs and WSPs to co-design applications, procedures and processes, criteria for qualification, etc.) for the project’s grant and construction fund.

Task 2.1.3: Recognize and celebrate successes

No activity is planned for Year 1.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 2.2: WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS HAVE THE CAPACITY TO MANAGE WATER SERVICES

To ensure equitable and inclusive service delivery models are developed and expanded, the project will establish mutually reinforcing relationships between LGIs and WSPs, from analyzing existing service delivery models to selecting suitable models to pilot in Year 2. This rapport between the LGIs and the WSP is critical and necessary for the sustainability and replication of successful models after the pilots. Where the WSPs do not exist, the project will engage potential private sector actors that are investing in other products, such as energy solutions, to establish their appetite for investing in the water sector. The project will co-create solutions with private sector actors, define the business case, and help develop business plans. The project will layer capacity building efforts to LGIs to strengthen systems for monitoring, enforcing, and backstopping water services, with technical assistance to WSPs to improve their operational/financial viability and customer orientation.

Task 2.2.1: Build county capacity to monitor and backstop CWCs and WSPs.

The project will jointly work with CWTs to institutionalize performance-based monitoring systems/processes to enhance the capacity of the county government to monitor and backstop the CWCs and WSPs sustainably. During Year 1, Winrock will engage stakeholders to deepen their understanding of existing data-driven decision-making tools being utilized by the county government. Similarly, the project will work with NWASHC to develop and systemize the use of the MIS platform by CWCs and WSPs to upload water system performance metrics (revenue, operation costs, functionality, and inclusivity). The MIS system may be piloted in a selected community.

Development of capacity building plans and training the LGIs. The project will train the County WASH Coordinator to analyze data from the MIS and develop monthly progress reports for the CWT. Before implementing this activity, the project will get buy-in from county leadership to instill a culture of reporting beyond the project activity period. Additionally, through the support of the national government institutions such as NWASHC and MIA, the project will develop training manuals and how-to guides to support CWTs in diagnosing/troubleshooting performance issues and challenges—such as disputes between water users and service providers, system breakdowns, and tariff collection. Coaching of the CWTs undertaking this training and support to CWCs will start in Year 1 and continue through the life of the project (also see Task 1.3.2). The management models will be iteratively developed with pilot communities to ensure local buy-in and ownership. The project will gather lessons learned and best practices from these pilot communities before scale-up to additional locations on a rolling basis. Municipalities, townships, or other LGIs will also be involved where appropriate. Through the co-located staff, the project will provide mentorship to LGIs to use the MIS to enforce contracts and identify opportunities for service improvement and expansion based on WSP business. Roles and responsibilities for LGIs and WSPs will be defined.

To conduct these activities, the project will provide on-the-job coaching, as well as specific capacity-building workshops involving County WASH Coordinators as well as relevant stakeholders such as WSPs representatives or other actors. The capacity building workshops/trainings will be carefully planned to ensure that the target participants (County WASH coordinators) are not overwhelmed considering their workload.

Summary Activities

- Capacity-building workshops with County WASH Coordinators and WSPs.
- Development of performance-based scorecards and MIS-based monitoring tools (see also Task 1.3.2).
- Define roles and responsibilities for LGIs and WSPs.
- Pilot the MIS system with a selected community.
- Develop a coaching and mentorship program by the co-located staff and develop training manuals/how-to guides.

Task 2.2.2: Build private sector service provision capacity

The mapping of the private sector in Task 2.1.1 will be critical to initiate the process of building the cadre of private sector WSP that will effectively manage the service delivery. This activity under task 2.1.1 will serve as the base to understand the capacity gaps to prepare for this activity.

Task 2.2.3: Provide capacity-building services to LWSC and WSPs in Robertsport, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama

Discussed in section B above.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 2.3: WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS INCENTIVIZED TO EXTEND INCLUSIVE SERVICES TO POOR AND MARGINALIZED HOUSEHOLDS

Task 2.3.1: Engage at national level to establish policies responsive to barriers to water access for poor households.

Building on the policy gap analysis under Objective 1, the project will work with NWASHC to prioritize plans for developing regulations, monitoring, and enforcement frameworks. The project will also collaborate with NWASHC to explore open source MIS system options between mWater and Water Point Data Exchange (WPdx) to ensure that processes are systemized to promote inclusive service delivery to all Liberians in the two target counties (Task 2.2.1). CWT, CWC, and WSP routine monitoring, water services functionality, and other water sector performance data will be stored on the agreed MIS system (mWater or WPdx) for use by stakeholders. mWater and WPdx are both cloud based that has secure servers with customizable privacy settings to allow users to share relevant data as required. mWater and WPdx platforms can provide CWCs, CWTs, and WSPs tools to collect, monitor, and analyze performance metrics pertinent to their functionality. Recognizing that data collected by a single institution offers limited insights into the broader system, the project will serve as the aggregator as the MIS platform is gradually introduced and scaled at the county level. The project MEL team will train LGI and CWT on how to use the

MIS system for data collection and visualization so that the system can be sustainable. Responsibility for tracking and analyzing data will be principally housed in CWTs.

Support MIA in collaboration with NASHC to develop guidelines for CWTs, LWSC, and NGOs. The project will work with MIA through a consultative process that includes target stakeholders to develop guidelines that will review how to identify and implement locally appropriate options for balancing the cost recovery of water systems with inclusive access. Examples of factors that will be considered to promote equity and inclusivity include targeted subsidies, such as flexible tariff structures, whereby a sliding fee structure is established so that most vulnerable members of the community access water free or for a reduced fee. Additionally, cross-subsidies will be explored with CWCs and WSPs during the design phase of the service delivery models under (Task 2.1.1). Considerations will include social tariffs or small fees to subsidize services to the most vulnerable. Other options may include the apportionment and ring-fencing of revenue collection for the technical and financial viability of the systems. For example, the water service delivery contract between the WSP and CWC would clearly indicate that a percentage (for example 80%) of the revenue collection is allocated to the private operator for O&M; 15% for the replacement and rehabilitation account; and 5% allotted for the CWC account.

To measure the effectiveness of this approach, Winrock will work with NASHC to apply the principles of Collaboration Learning and Adapting (CLA) from the start of the project through the life of the project. This will ensure that the team is building evidence of successful approaches to subsidization, including learning generated from CWTs in Montserrado and Margibi. This learning will inform advocacy campaigns (1.3.1) and the design or adaptation of national inclusion policies.

Summary Activities

- Work with NASHC to establish regulations, monitoring, and enforcement frameworks and processes to promote inclusive service delivery.
- Prioritization of policy and regulatory framework for inclusivity.
- Development of guidelines for CWT, LWSC, and NGOs on minimum standards for water supply, tariff guidelines, and infrastructure design guidelines (e.g., standards, specifications, dimensions, etc.), among others.
- Analysis of tariff structures and exploration of pro-poor tariff mechanisms.

E. OBJECTIVE 3: UPTAKE AND MAINTENANCE OF KEY WATER USE BEHAVIORS AMONG HOUSEHOLDS INCREASED

SUB-OBJECTIVE 3.1: SOCIAL NORMS AROUND USE OF BASIC WATER SERVICES CREATED AND UPTAKE OF CLEAN DRINKING WATER INCREASED

In Year 1, the project, with WaterAid leadership, will work with the communities to assess social norms related to clean drinking water in the target communities and ensure they are clearly identified and understood by the local stakeholders and communities. The initial activities for Year 1 will include formative research, barrier analysis, and GESI analysis. Through the GUC mechanism to be implemented in Year 2, the project will support the local CSOs and community groups to design and lead campaigns to increase the use of clean drinking water and the importance of payment for water services.

Task 3.1.1: Conduct formative research on water use behaviors

In Year 1, the project will conduct formative research on water use behaviors with targeted communities through the engagement of STTA with support from WaterAid Liberia and the WaterAid regional team. The project will start by developing a scope of work for formative research, then will recruit and train enumerators on data collection protocol.

The project will actively involve the water users in designing and implementing research questions to understand behaviors and barriers to access/use. Additionally, the project will establish operational partnerships with local community groups and CSOs to support the community by using a human-centered design approach to create positive social norms around water behaviors through organizing and executing creative design workshops that will lead to the design of SBC campaigns and actions. Human-centered design involves the users throughout the process, understanding what they need and working with them to develop interventions that will bring about change. Using this approach, regular feedback sessions are conducted to gather feedback and improve the services to the users' needs. To achieve this, the project will work with communities and CSOs to field test, optimize, and institutionalize approaches and tools for data collection. The project will ensure to conduct a formative research in partnership with local community groups and CSOs.

Building on the WaterAid network of CSOs, the project will consult with a wide range of stakeholders to validate the findings and seek their recommendations on SBC strategies that have worked. The project will also closely collaborate with Breakthrough Action to learn from prior research findings and establish gaps and areas that need further analysis. Similarly, the project will coordinate with the PSI-led Countywide Sanitation Project in rural Montserrado to design and harmonize the strategies/approaches for conducting formative research to avoid duplications, specifically in Montserrado, where there is geographical overlap.

The formative research, once completed, will help inform the decision of the project's targeted population to know why they behave as they do and how to get new ideas across to them. It will generate more evidence about the barriers, what motivates them, attitudes, and practices needed to develop a relevant approach. A report of the formative research findings will be shared with USAID for approval and then disseminated to other stakeholders.

Summary Activities

- Design the questionnaire for the formative research in partnership with local community groups and CSOs through a creative design workshop.
- Work with communities and CSOs to develop research methodology, scope of work, tools, strategy, plans, and approaches for formative research. Collaborate with CWSP and Breakthrough Action on approaches and strategies for the research.
- Recruit STTA to lead research and select and train enumerators.
- Work with communities and CSOs to field test, and optimize approaches and tools.
- Conduct formative research in partnership with local community groups and CSOs.
- Complete data collection, analysis, and validate the report. Share with USAID for approval and dissemination with other stakeholders.

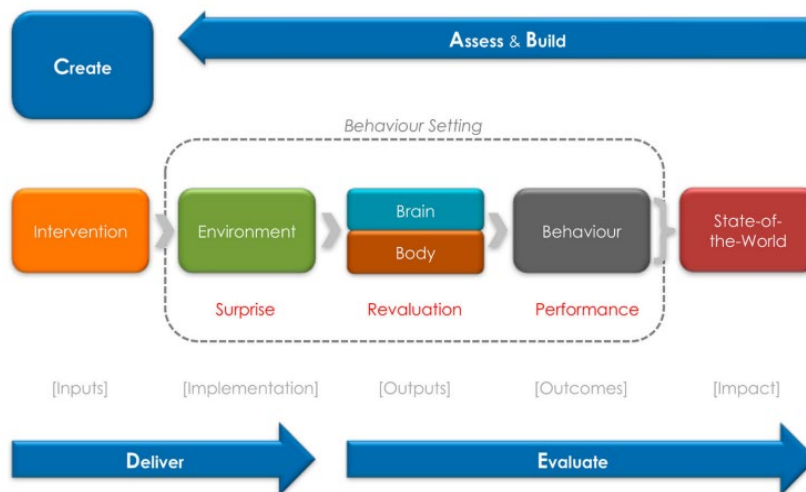
Task 3.1.2: Implement SBC and marketing activities with partners through an adaptive, learning-by-doing approach

Based on findings from the formative research, consultations with beneficiary communities, LGIs, Breakthrough Action activity, and the Countywide Sanitation project, Winrock and its partner WaterAid will work with the 14 target communities to develop activities and messages to support positive behavior changes and actions to increase the uptake of drinking water. These messages will be developed in Q4 after the SBC campaign strategy is developed. Before the end of Q4, the project will conduct one SBC session on a local or other radio station after the messages are vetted and approved by the Mission. Similarly, SBC champions (women groups/youth groups) will be identified and trained to create awareness in the communities (door-to-door or town hall sessions).

The project will organize one co-creation and design workshop to design SBC campaigns and actions jointly with relevant stakeholders, including LGIs and beneficiary communities. To ensure that local stakeholders are well represented, CSOs will be invited to participate in the design workshop.

Development of community action plans. Community action planning using champions and influencers, transect walks, and various communication media will capture consensus on beneficial water uses, infrastructure decisions, the equitable extension of services, citizen behaviors, water pricing, and enforcement mechanisms.

The project will use the Behavior Centered Design (BCD) approach for behavior change interventions. The BCD approach ([developed by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine](#)) is a simple and proven way to create a program for change that works.



In Year 1 and throughout the life of the project, the participation of women and marginalized groups in every stage of implementation will be prioritized, and water users will be encouraged to analyze accessibility, women’s and girls’ safety, and inclusion from multiple perspectives.

SBC Communication. In consultation with the CSOs, the project will facilitate SBC communication activities using locally designed messages. This will be done through mobilizing local CWTs, Community Health Workers (CHWs), Environmental Health Technicians (EHTs),

local leaders such as paramount chiefs and clan chiefs, youth champions, and CWCs to empower users to make informed decisions when prioritizing water sources for different uses.

Summary activities

- Conduct stakeholder engagements, including consultation with beneficiary communities to develop community action plans.
- Organize one co-creation and design workshop to design SBC campaigns and actions jointly with relevant stakeholders, including LGIs, and beneficiary communities, to increase awareness of water use and management by developing messages and materials through the workshop. To ensure that local stakeholders are well represented, CSOs will be invited to the design workshop to provide their input.
- Identify and train SBC champions (women groups/youth groups) to raise awareness in the communities (door-to-door or town hall sessions).
- Support SBC communication and budgeting. This will include working with communities, CSOs, and LGIs to design communication materials tailored around safe water practices (water handling, collection from safe sources and collection processes, behavior towards payment for water, etc.). Materials will be used to raise awareness on radios and during townhall meetings/door-to-door.

Task 3.1.3: Increase water quality awareness

Although this activity will be undertaken in Year 2, coordination with activities under Objective 1 will be critical to ensure that CWCs are identified and trained on modalities for reviewing and addressing water quality-related risks. Similarly, the project will ensure that the community bylaws created are clear about practices that will improve.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 3.2: FINANCIAL, SOCIAL, AND PHYSICAL BARRIERS TO THE USE OF BASIC WATER SERVICES ARE REMOVED

Task 3.2.1: Develop approaches for inclusive local investment decisions

To accomplish this task, in Year 1, the project will lay the foundation for developing community action plans by following specific activities that will guide communities to adopt and maintain their water use behaviors.

In-depth discussions with county authorities and NASHC. Based on the baseline study and formative research findings, the project will facilitate in-depth discussions with county authorities and NASHC on the ability and willingness to pay for water. The results will be synthesized into a report capturing an analysis of demand, supply chain issues, financial capacity, and social and physical barriers.

Development of water service delivery improvement plans. The project will work with beneficiary communities in rural Montserrado and Margibi Counties with support from county authorities to initiate the development of water service delivery improvement plans (Task 2.1.2). The plans will use actual costs and revenues to build system viability over time and address existing barriers (e.g., water quality, access/distance, cost of service). This activity will continue into Year 2. We envision that this preparatory activity, implemented in Year 1, will inform the development of funding requests to strengthen investment options/solutions that LGIs will select in Year 2 under Task 2.3.3.

In preparation for developing local financing mechanisms planned for Year 2, the project will map out the existing Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) in the selected target intervention areas. Using the VSLA approach from Year 2 through the life of the project will empower the communities to mobilize local resources to address water system upkeep and expansion efforts in partnership with CWCs and WSPs.

VSLAs, also known as Community Savings and Loans Associations, are a community-based savings mechanism that enables collective savings and serves as a loan system. It requires the voluntary participation of members in the association to save and borrow money and ensure a form of social insurance. The association is managed by its members and is not regulated by external entities, which gives a sense of ownership to the association. The advantage of the system is that it encourages people to meet in groups, with a common objective, self-determining governing rules, and democratic governance and collective accountability. VSLAs serve a variety of purposes based on the priorities of each member. For example, members draw on their savings or loans to pay for children's school fees, to reinvest in business, and to buy food or agricultural inputs to improve nutrition. For this project, VSLAs will serve as a source of community financing mechanism that will provide financial empowerment communities to invest in their household and community WASH facilities. Importantly, communities will leverage it to construct new water facilities or repair broken waterpoints and, by extension, ensuring sustainability of WASH facilities.

Summary Activities

- Develop and deliver a report to NWASHC, CWT, county, and district superintendent on the ability and willingness to pay for water (based on the baseline study).
- Build community consensus to address any barriers and advocate for evidence-based decision-making through a creative design workshop in partnership with local community groups and CSOs.
- Work with target communities to develop a service delivery improvement plan using actual costs and revenues.
- Map existing VSLAs in the target intervention areas in preparation for the development of financing mechanisms planned for Year 2.
- Develop community action plans.

Task 3.2.2: Assist CWCs and WSPs to monitor and address barriers

In Year 1, this activity will center around identifying CWCs and WSPs under Objective 2. The co-creation workshop under Task 3.1.2 will be a critical preparatory activity to identify barriers and define strategies for addressing barriers.

Task 3.2.3: Implement advocacy campaigns

Advocacy campaigns will be implemented in subsequent years once sufficient data have been gathered on priorities for the sector.

SUB-OBJECTIVE 3.3: PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND OTHER MARGINALIZED GROUPS IN DECISION MAKING RELATED TO WATER ACCESS AND MANAGEMENT STRENGTHENED

Task 3.3.1: Understand decision-making systems and address barriers to women and marginalized groups' participation

As part of the institutional assessment under Foundational Activity 1, the project will identify and map decision-making pathways in the water sector at county and community levels and analyze the participation of stakeholders at each step, with a particular focus on the participation of women and marginalized groups. Part of the analysis will include leadership beliefs and social norms around the inclusion of women and marginalized groups that hinder participation or consideration. The project will use results to support the development, review, and promotion of policies, bylaws, training manuals, and guidelines that ensure the active participation of all stakeholders.

Summary Activities

- GESI analysis.
- Develop strategies that involve women in decision-making processes based on analysis from institutional assessment, formative research, and barrier analysis at the county level. The findings of these assessments will also inform project recommendations to CWT on sector coordination, the creation of guidance for CWC formation, and selection criteria that allow women to be selected in key decision-making roles. The project envisions a situation where women will participate in key decisions such as management of water supply at the CWC level, influencing sitting and budgeting for infrastructure development and type of fee/tariff structure for water based on the context.
- Conduct a policy gap analysis to identify barriers to women's involvement.
- Develop a roadmap for documenting community norms and laws.
- This activity will inform GESI interventions by providing options on the kind of GESI issues to focus on. Similarly, it will set out the GESI benchmark.

Task 3.3.2: Form partnerships with pro-women organizations to identify pathways to improve participation of women and marginalized groups

The project intends to engage and form partnerships with pro-women organizations. Target organizations have past successes in giving voice to women's issues and changing systems to better address the needs of women/vulnerable populations (e.g., organizing empowerment trainings for women, supporting female influencers, and providing mentorship/support to youth champions to develop their leadership and advocacy skills). To prepare for this activity that will be accomplished in Year 2 and through the life of the program, in Year 1, the project will start to identify and consult with pro-women organizations through meetings/workshops to present the findings of formative research and results for the barrier analysis and discuss possible solutions. Depending on findings, the project may also prepare a scope of work for an RFP to select some pro-poor women organization(s) that could be funded through grants under GUC from Year 2.

Additionally, through WaterAid, the project will continue to promote "WASH hour," a weekly radio program highlighting WASH issues in Liberia (supported by WaterAid), and "Her-Voice," a new WaterAid radio program using women to influence the use of improved water services. The

program is broadcast on the national Liberia Broadcasting System, which has nationwide coverage and an average listenership of 214,000 people⁷.

In Year 1, the project will start to develop feedback loops between users and decision-makers at the local level, including CWT, CWC, superintendent, and head of household, to ensure that water governance, management mechanisms, and messaging are systematically responsive to the needs of women and marginalized groups and result in a measurable change in behaviors and access

Summary Activities

- Identification and consultation of pro-women organizations at meetings/workshops, findings of formative research.
- Form partnerships with pro-women organizations to identify pathways to improve participation of women and marginalized groups.
- Promotion of radio programs.
- Start the development of a feedback loop for the needs of women and marginalized groups.

Task 3.3.3: Amplify women's voices on issues related to water services, women, and vulnerable populations

This activity will start in Year 2.

5. CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

A. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To track and assess the performance of the interventions, the project's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) team will develop the AMELP in consultation with USAID/Liberia, GOL, and end beneficiaries. Winrock's HO Analytics, Gender, Inclusion, Learning, and Evaluation (AGILE) Unit will support the MEL team in developing AMELP, which will be submitted to USAID within 60 days of the project start date. It will include a results framework, theory of change, key performance indicators, operational definitions of indicators, baseline, targets, plans for data management, data quality, CLA, and performance indicator reference sheets. Furthermore, the AMELP will describe the overall project MEL system. It will be developed using a collaborative process with consortium partners. The MEL team will facilitate training in Q4 with programmatic staff (Winrock and WaterAid) and the DELTA team to review and agree on operational definition target setting by indicators and key elements of the AMELP, including the results framework, theory of change, performance indicators, and learning questions.

After the AMELP is developed, the MEL team will conduct the baseline assessment (with AGILE guidance). The baseline assessment will cover institutional and socio-economic analysis with national and county institutions as well as data (through sample survey and/or through existing databases) on the performance indicators of the project (in particular concerning water services coverage and use, cost recovery, the ratio of female and marginalized groups reporting year-round reliable access, and representation in governance mechanisms of water services). The MEL Team will develop data collection tools and establish a data collection mechanism to operationalize the

⁷ <https://internews.org/first-public-media-ratings-results-released-liberia>

Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) included in the AMELP. After developing data collection tools and templates, the MEL team will work with the home office AGILE Unit to customize and deploy the Winrock MIS. The MEL Director will use the AMELP and the data collection tools to train Activity staff and partners. The performance indicators and indicator reference sheets will also guide baseline data collection.

B. LEARNING AND ADAPTATION

The project will collaborate with stakeholders to share knowledge and reduce duplication of effort during activities implementation by drawing on evidence from various sources, reflecting on implementation, and applying learning by adapting within activities implementation. The project will use strategic collaboration, continuous learning, and adaptive management to connect all activity components.

The CLA approach will surround the MEL system within an ongoing process of review and reflection to assess and share findings from ongoing implementation, identify knowledge and information gaps that are not addressed through MEL approaches, and develop adaptive management strategies in response to new knowledge and learning. It is an iterative approach throughout implementation that allows the project team and stakeholders to act on new information, learn from it, and employ course corrections, strategic adjustments, reallocating resources, and sharing lessons learned. Winrock will use the CLA approach to engage stakeholders, facilitate opportunities to learn from implementation, and integrate that learning into the activity.

CLA engagement will occur throughout implementation and during dedicated convenings, including an annual Pause and Reflect event in Q4 that brings together a subset of stakeholders, including USAID, the project team, key partners, and actively involved community officials. Pause and Reflect events will be an opportunity to discuss implementation results and management and implementation impediments in an open, thoughtful manner. The Pause and Reflect event discussions will inform needed adjustments to the program direction and priorities and support any revisions to the AMELP and other key activity documents. Winrock will also hold a quarterly project review meeting for the project team and more focused learning events with geographic or thematic sub-sets of stakeholders throughout implementation that will be scheduled over the life of the project.

Learning will occur throughout the implementation by engaging stakeholders to provide feedback on implementation strategies and activities as they occur. Winrock will establish feedback loops between itself, its stakeholders, and water users tailored to the type of activity and audience. This will be documented in a beneficiary feedback tracker and will document quarterly findings and observations. Winrock is open to non-traditional learning approaches, including learning from initiatives that are not working as anticipated. Winrock will engage in monthly adaptive management meetings facilitated by the technical team in each county, where the technical team can review performance and context monitoring data and share qualitative information on the status and effectiveness of ongoing activities. This will enable quick recognition of challenges and agile responses to address them. Winrock learning culture, led by the COP and MEL Director, will inform relationships with stakeholders, creating an environment where institutional stakeholders from USAID, communities and other actors are engaged to provide ongoing feedback on activity approaches and effectiveness. Additionally, Winrock will hold semi-annual learning committee meetings to review and share learning with stakeholders, including civil society, national

ministries, and county LGIs, as well as quarterly town hall meetings in direct intervention communities to help gauge implementation progress and share information in direct intervention communities.

The project will establish a Learning and Research Agenda to enable a continuous flow of information to Activity management, staff, partners, and other key stakeholders, including the Private Sector/WSP. The data will be used for adaptive management and to build an evidence base that will lead to an improved understanding of the key factors of sustainability, local engagement, and long-term resilience within the sector. The research questions for the learning agenda are detailed in Table 1 below. Through the CLA process and Pause and Reflect meetings, new learning questions will be incorporated in the agenda as the implementation evolves.

Table 1. Learning Questions

Theme	Learning Questions
Water Services Governance	<p>What are the enabling conditions for the successful decentralization of water service provision?</p> <p>How can information systems be designed and used to enhance effective decision-making, financing, and operational effectiveness?</p> <p>What are the barriers and enabling conditions to tariff setting and enforcement in the water sector in Liberia?</p> <p>How can water governance be tailored according to technology choice, management model, and population size?</p>
Private Sector Participation in Water Services Provision	<p>What are the key conditions for a supportive enabling environment for private sector participation and financing?</p> <p>What conditions encourage customer responsiveness and operator accountability?</p> <p>What are successful models for water service delivery in Liberia, and how can they be scaled?</p> <p>How can the private sector be supported to enhance revenue collection systems and improve financial planning?</p>
Equitable and Inclusive Services and SBC	<p>What financial, social, and physical barriers exist to reliable access to basic drinking water services, and what are examples of how communities can address them?</p> <p>What is the difference between access and use of basic water services, and how can the gap be closed?</p> <p>How can cross-subsidies for the poor and marginalized be effectively designed and used to ensure equitable services?</p> <p>How does the standard of water service provision affect willingness to pay for basic water use (reliability, cost, quality, quantity, convenience)?</p> <p>How can citizen engagement enhance WSP and LGI accountability for equitable service provision?</p>

C. COLLABORATION

COLLABORATION WITH OTHER USAID-FUNDED PROGRAMS AND OTHER WASH PARTNERS IN LIBERIA

To support CLA, Winrock will engage other USAID/donor-funded projects working in relevant or complementary sectors, such as the Countywide Sanitation Activity and Breakthrough Action, to improve efficiencies and reduce duplication of efforts. Deep-dive discussions and mapping of geographical and thematic overlap will be done between the two programs to establish clear areas of collaboration and synergies. Winrock will collaborate with Countywide Sanitation to develop common approaches for governance and private sector-led interventions, particularly in Montserrado county. Similarly, the project will collaborate with LEPDA to ensure synergies and complementarities on policy and governance-related activities. These relationships and consultations will be further developed through Foundational Activities. The project will actively participate in four USAID-led Thematic Working Groups (TWG), including Governance TWG, Private Sector TWG, Communication and Social Behavior Change (CSBC TWG), and MEL TWG. The project will also collaborate with other WASH sector partners, including WASH Consortium members, UNICEF, Catholic Relief Services, and other donor-funded projects (e.g., World Bank). The project will also collaborate with the private sector to develop professionalized service delivery models.

Winrock will conduct a project launch event in close coordination with USAID. Winrock proposes to align this event with World Water Day (March 22, 2023) but will refine this further in discussion with USAID and other key stakeholders. This date, marking the global day for water, will have a theme appropriate to the intention of the Improved Access to Safe Drinking Water in Liberia Activity: *Accelerating Change through Partnerships and Cooperation* (provisional title by UN Water). *Accelerating Change* will be the same theme for World Toilet Day in November, providing opportunities to look for synergies with the USAID Countywide Sanitation Activity around the launch.

COLLABORATION WITH GOL

To ensure that the project's best practices are widely adopted within the water sector in Liberia, Winrock will closely collaborate with other WASH partners working in Margibi and rural Montserrado counties. This collaboration will harmonize approaches and strategies for supporting the LGIs (Superintendent, City Mayor, County resident engineer, CWT, County WASH coordinator, etc.) to execute their mandate of providing sustainable WASH services to their constituents. The project will actively participate in the monthly WASH partners coordination meetings at the county level as well as the national level annual Joint Sector review meetings. The County Superintendent or development superintendent will lead the WASH coordination meetings. The project will provide guidance and templates for setting up the meeting agenda and capturing the minutes, including ensuring that the County WASH Coordinator is capable and fully supported to follow up on the agreed action points. This will be done by empowering the County WASH Coordinator to capture (what, when, and by who). Besides supporting the County WASH Coordinator to conduct the monthly meetings regularly, the project team will utilize the time allocation for partners to report to share knowledge and provide an overall update on the progress of the project, including lessons learned, highlight key challenges and barriers as well as offer possible solutions to address the challenges

Overall, in Year 1, the project will begin by fostering a Liberia-led, county-owned learning process. This will be done by inculcating the culture of learning among the county officials by

ensuring that the learning agenda is included as an integral part of the county-led M&E Plan from the onset of the project. The project will collaboratively develop and structure Learning Questions guided by CLA principles so that findings, evidence, and learning are systematically shared, reviewed, and re-incorporated into Project and Liberia-wide sector planning processes. The project MEL Director will oversee the CLA process and establish a culture of learning and adaptation within the project team by developing informal and formal feedback mechanisms for learning, documenting findings, and adapting plans based on data and evidence. Additionally, the project will conduct a Pause-and-Reflect session with key stakeholders and USAID in Y1. Finally, Winrock will also begin discussions with the Margibi and Montserrado county governments about embedding project staff (two in each county) in their WASH services.

D. SUSTAINABILITY

In Year 1, the project will develop a comprehensive Sustainability Plan by the end of the second quarter. This will be done in consultation with USAID, national- and county-level leadership, communities, and other stakeholders to gather their input on sustainable water service delivery strategies in the two target counties with the goal that any water infrastructure built, rehabilitated, or repaired during the life of the project has a system in place to sustainably maintain it without further USAID support.

The Sustainability Plan will aim at covering in greater these key sustainability factors: (a) who will be responsible for service provision and O&M, with the WSP contracted for this role, under the supervision of the CWC, and how it can access and request CWT technical support and oversight as needed; (b) how will funds flow to support the sustainability of the service, starting from users fees or tariff collection, sharing of revenue between WSP and CWC, best practices for financial management and transparency of payments; (c) how will service functionality be measured, supported and enforced, to avoid or reduce risks of breakdown or dysfunction, including notions of preventative and corrective maintenance, capital expenditure (CapEx) vs. operational expenditure (OpEx), and linking community/users feedback loops to decision makers.

To contribute towards sustainability, the project will adopt a systems strengthening approach. From the project's inception phase and through the life of the project, sustainability will be a centerpiece of implementation. The project's systems strengthening approach integrates adaptive management techniques with mutually reinforcing cornerstones: WASH actors understanding the complex dynamics impacting Liberia's water service delivery and gaps identified and addressed in stakeholder connections; counties, districts, and communities supported to develop customized plans that increase social accountability, empowering stakeholders to create a shared vision for change; and capacity of stakeholders built to develop a joint approach to solve problems. Winrock will work jointly with stakeholders to analyze data, understand its implications, and help to develop the practice of using learning to drive decisions. The project will maximize the participation and inclusion of women and marginalized groups as key water users and invest in their ideas as entrepreneurs. These will provide a foundation for sustainable outcomes.

Through the project's commitment to promoting common agenda among WASH sectors in Liberia to address key challenges in the water sector using a structured form of collaboration, Winrock will identify gaps in stakeholder connections, like those between LGIs and national ministries, that can be strengthened to enhance the resilience of WSPs to respond to external shocks. Winrock will also create connections between national and subnational actors to facilitate the development of a subnational framework. The framework will clarify institutional roles to avoid the conflicting

mandates hindering successful water governance. Winrock will work with sub-national stakeholders to develop WASH plans that put local systems at the center of implementation and transform systems. It will facilitate the introduction of the collective impact and support capacity development to NASHC as the backbone organization and the actor responsible for sector coordination.

The project will work with stakeholders to define a common vision and priorities for gender equity, youth engagement, and private sector engagement in water service delivery. This will promote mutually reinforcing activities that leverage interdependent systems between the WASH actors and stakeholders. System resilience will be strengthened through the mutual social accountability of jointly creating solutions that address identified risks. The collective impact will strengthen social accountability, transparency, and participation to build a shared vision for the sector through the subnational and private sector frameworks that LGIs can adopt and implement. By Year 4, the collective impact model can run independently to provide a self-sustaining platform to strengthen the connections, networks, and partnerships within Liberia's WASH Sector.

LGIs do not have current levels of capacity that support long-term sustainable service delivery, and privately operated WSPs have not been able to reach cost recovery under current operations. Winrock will trigger increased domestic resource mobilization and investment through strengthening connections and partnerships that facilitate community engagement, improved efficiency, greater accountability, and an increased customer base. Donor support can diminish over time, with domestic resources unpacked progressively by communities, WSPs, and LGIs.

6. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

Redacted

ANNEX 1. YEAR 1 SCHEDULE OF DELIVERABLES

Redacted

ANNEX II. SUMMARY GANTT CHART

Redacted

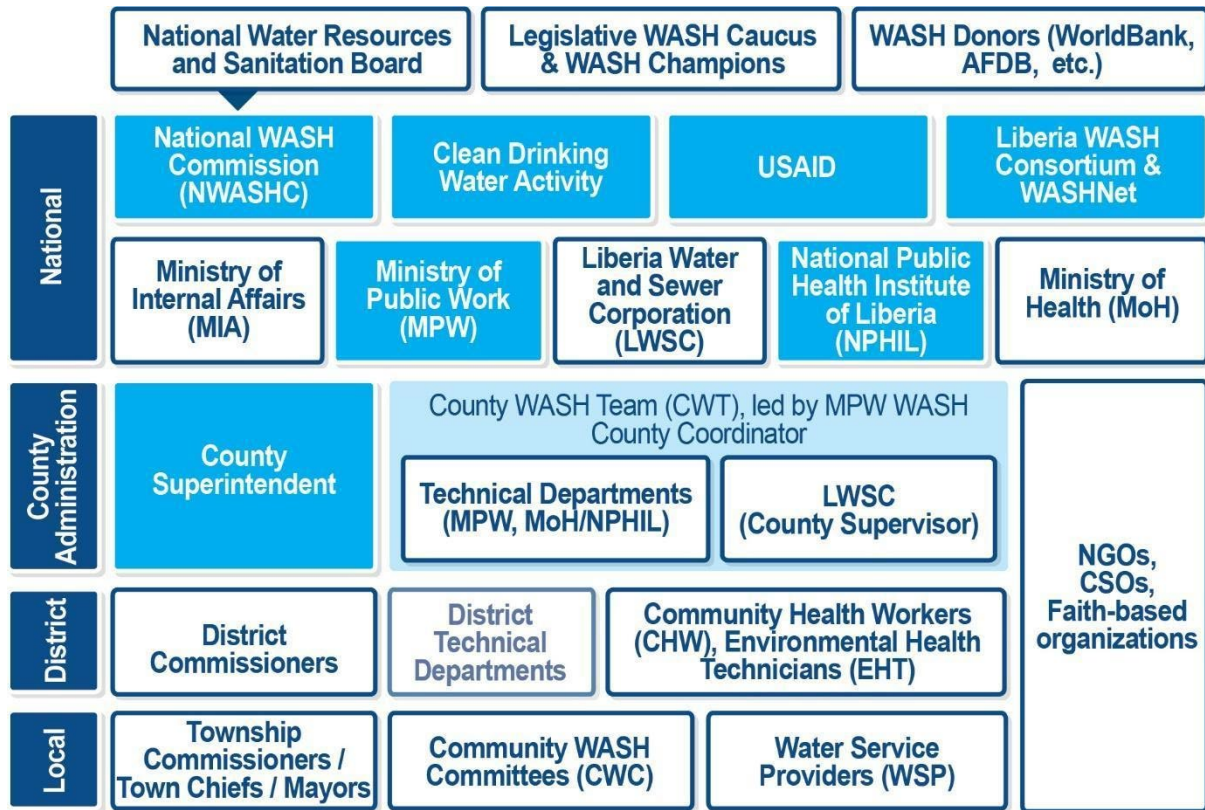
ANNEX III. ILLUSTRATIVE ANNUAL BUDGET

Redacted

ANNEX IV. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Redacted

ANNEX V. INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE



ANNEX VI. STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED DURING PREPARATION OF THE WORKPLAN

Redacted