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IMPROVED ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER IN LIBERIA ACTIVITY

Quarterly Report, FY2023 Quarter 2

2nd Quarter

January 01 to March 13, 2023

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COR Name: Zulfikar Gorar

Submitted by: Doris Kaberia, Chief of Party

Winrock International

2451 Crystal Drive, Suite 700 | Arlington,
Virginia 22202, USA

Email:

doris.kaberia@winrock.org

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Acronyms

AGILE	Analytics, Gender, Inclusion, Learning, and Evaluation
AMELP	Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan
BOQ	Bill of Quantity
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
DELTA	USAID Data Evaluation and Technical Assistance
EMMP	Environmental Monitoring and Mitigation Plan
FY	Fiscal Year
GESI	Gender, Equity, and Social Inclusion
GOL	Government of Liberia
GUC	Grants Under Contract
HO	Winrock Home Office
IDIQ	Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity
IP	Implementing Partner
IT	Information Technology
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LEGIS	Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geoinformation services
LEPDA	Liberia Economic Policy Dialogue Activity
LGIs	Local Government Institutions
LTTA	Long-Term Technical Assistance
LWSC	Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MIS	Management Information System
MOH	Ministry of Health
MPW	Ministry of Public Works
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPHIL	National Public Health Institute of Liberia
NWASHC	National WASH Commission
NWRSB	National Water Resources and Sanitation Board
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheets
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
Q	Quarter
QASP	Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan
RFP	Request for Proposal
SA	Situational Analysis
SBC	Social Behavior Change Communication
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence

STTA	Short term Technical Assistance
TBD	To be determined
TOR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Thematic Working Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WQAP	Water Quality Assurance Plan
WSP	Water Service Provider

I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW/SUMMARY

Program Name:	Improved Access To Safe Drinking Water In Liberia Activity
Activity Start Date And End Date:	November 1, 2022 to October 31, 2027
Name of Prime Implementing Partner:	Winrock International
[Contract/Agreement] Number:	72066923C00001
Name of Subcontractors/Subawardees:	FEI Consulting and WaterAid
Major Counterpart Organizations	
Geographic Coverage (cities and or countries)	Rural Montserrado and Margibi Counties in Liberia
Reporting Period:	January 01 to March 31, 2023

I.1 Program Description/Introduction

A. Authorization

To support the Government of Liberia (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 Activity aims to move Liberians in Montserrado and Margibi Counties to 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. 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 Activity 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 Activity 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.

This quarterly report describes the Improved Access to Safe Drinking Water in Liberia Activity's progress from January 1 to March 31, 2023 (Quarter 2, Fiscal Year 2023).

I.2 Summary of Results to Date

N/A, no data collected yet in Q2

Standard Indicators	Baseline FY 2023	Annual Target	Q1 FY23	Q2 FY23	Q3 FY23	Q4 FY23	Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%)	On Target Y/N
<i>HL.8.3-3: Number of water and sanitation sector institutions strengthened to manage water resources or improve water supply and sanitation services as a result of U.S. Government (USG) assistance</i>	2022	3	0	0				
<i>HL.8.4-1: Value of new funding mobilized to the water and sanitation sectors as a result of USG assistance</i>	2022	0	0	0				
<i>CBLD-9: Percent of USG assisted organizations with improved performance</i>	2022	0	0	0				
<i>HL.8.1-1: Number of people gaining access to basic drinking water service as a result of USG assistance</i>	2022	0	0	0				
<i>HL.8.1-3: Number of people receiving improved service quality from an existing basic or safely managed drinking water service as a result of USG assistance</i>	2022	2,500	0	0				

Note: The Results Performance Column depicts level of achievement expressed as a percentage of Actual versus Planned.

2. ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

2.1 Progress Narrative

The Improved Access to Safe Drinking Water in Liberia Activity Quarter 2 (Q2) report summarizes the achievements during the period of January to March 2023. This quarter, the Activity made significant progress with key mobilization tasks including recruitment of staff, office set up, timely submission of contract deliverables, and initiation of foundational activities. During Q2, the Activity continued with stakeholder consultations to lay the foundation for sustainability through collaborative efforts with the national institutions and local government institutions (LGIs) to build an ecosystem that supports service delivery at the local level. The Activity phased capacity building strategy remains instrumental in empowering and incentivizing LGIs and Water Service Providers (WSPs) to improve and expand equitable and sustainable pay-for-use water services.

Laying the groundwork for public-private partnerships (PPP), the activity conducted a round table discussion with private sector actors jointly with PSI to explore the opportunities and barriers for private sector investments. Additionally, the Activity continued stakeholder engagements and consultations through follow up meetings with GOL ministries and agencies including the NWASHC, MIA, MPW, NPHIL, and LWSC among others. Similarly, planning meetings were held with the County and local authorities in Margibi and Rural Montserrado. Monthly coordination meetings with other USAID-funded projects such as LEPDA, Countywide Sanitation Activity, and DELTA continued throughout the quarter. The Activity also participated in various USAID and national-level coordination meetings including the USAID Implementing Partners (IP) quarterly meeting, joint sector review by all the WASH actors, and WASH accountability forum organized by the Legislative Caucus for Water.

During the reporting period, the Activity conducted a GESI analysis which consisted of a systematic review of existing secondary data combined with primary data collection through key informant interviews (KII). The analysis highlighted the need for activities to account for women as girls as more than just beneficiaries of water services and engage men as agents of change, among other key findings.

Operational Context

During Q2, the key staff continued with stakeholder consultations in Margibi and Rural Montserrado to deepen Activity understanding of the local context. Follow up meetings with MIA, NPHIL, LWSC, NWASHC, MIA, and MPW as well as the private sector round table discussion elaborated on challenges and opportunities in the water sector. A weak governance system, inadequate capacity, and limited private sector engagement/participation ranks among the top challenges in the sector. The implementation and operationalization of LGA Act of 2018 remains the top opportunity to actualize sustainable water service delivery at the local level. Although there are capacity challenges at the LGI level, the project remains committed to apply the phased capacity building approach to

Support men to respect women for better leadership

Mr. Peter TogKpa, from MPW (Montserrado County WASH Coordinator), stated that some work was done by WaterAid to promote men to respect women and provide them the opportunity to serve in water management within their community. This type of gender-enabling work should be promoted as good practice for the project.

enhance and strengthen the existing capacity while building a system where LGIs take the lead in developing the required regulatory framework to sustainably manage water service delivery at the local level.

The transition agreement for the three major water treatment plants in Robertsport, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama was signed on February 10, 2023, and implementation of agreed activities was initiated. In the transition period, stakeholders agreed that the outstation water systems to be operated by the LWSC in collaboration with the Superintendents and the Local Steering Committees for the next six months beginning February 2023 – July 2023, with the mandate to ensure that local private operator takes over the operation and maintenance of the system through competitive bidding process within the first four months of the transitional period.

2.2 Implementation Status

2.2.1 Foundational Activities

Foundational Activity I: Conduct Baseline Assessments

Baseline Assessment



The Activity hired 29 independent enumerators through an open and competitive process to support data collection activities over the project's life. Activity staff trained enumerators on USAID data collection ethics, Winrock code of conduct, privacy and confidentiality during data collection, community entry ethics, research with vulnerable populations, informed consent, do no harm principles, ethics in human subject research, etc. The training also provided the opportunity to observe the newly selected enumerators to identify those who demonstrated

a good understanding of USAID's data collection principles and could play a leading role during the data collection. The baseline assessment will measure the counties' capacity building and access to water indicators. Once completed, it will help establish benchmarks and measure LGI performance over the project's life. The Activity is preparing the baseline assessment data collection tools and protocol.

Community Diagnostics; Sector-wide Institutional and Socio-economic Analysis; and Subnational Institutional Framework, Structure, Policies, and Guidelines

During Q2, a local WASH Specialist was hired to provide a Short-Term Technical Assistance (STTA) to the Activity for three tasks: 1) Community Diagnostics; 2) Sector-wide Institutional and Socio-economic Analysis; and 3) Subnational Institutional Framework, Structure, Policies and Guidelines Document. The assignment is scheduled to start on April 3 and will run through July 30, 2023.

Foundational Activity 2: Selection of Intervention Sites Mapping Potential Sites for Interventions (Sites Selection)

During Q2, the Activity worked closely with the USAID-funded DELTA Project and LISGIS to obtain the political maps (showing the various towns/villages, road networks, water bodies, etc.) and the 2008 population figures for the project counties. While the Liberia 2022 population census has been ongoing, the final data has not been released for public use. The Activity will utilize the available maps and population figures to identify and map out the potential intervention sites. The LISGIS/Demographic Unit 2008 population figures for the town/villages were reviewed and the preliminary findings show that the population figures for majority of the towns/villages is less than 1,000 people. Given the Activity strategy for private sector engagement in designing viable service delivery models in towns/villages with populations of 2500⁺, the Activity will validate the population figures during the community diagnostics to re-evaluate the business case as an incentive for direct PPP investment.

Foundational Activity 3: Design a Funded Incentive Strategy

The Activity designed the Grants Under Contract (GUC) Manual which outlines the operational and administrative guidelines, policies, and procedures for providing grants to NGOs, CSOs, and WSPs to implement performance-based deliverables at the national, county, and local levels. During the quarter, the GUC manual was finalized and submitted to USAID.

Additionally, the Activity drafted and submitted a Scope of Work to recruit Architecture and Engineering firm to USAID. The A&E firm will provide the needed support to develop the technical designs and BOQs, consult on construction contractor selection process, and provide construction oversight (see Objective 2 for additional information regarding the A&E firm).

2.2.2 Objective 1: Local Government Institutions Effectively Plan, Budget, and oversee Water Service Delivery

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

In Q2, the Activity held a series of meetings with the USAID LEPDA Project and Countywide Sanitation Activity for a deep dive into existing policy and regulatory frameworks analysis in the WASH sector including opportunities for public private partnerships. Linked to the foundational activity on the baseline assessment, the Activity has recruited an STTA to conduct the sector-wide institutional and socio-economic analysis 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.

County-Level Stakeholders and Roles and Responsibility Within the County

During the stakeholder consultative and engagement meetings held with the Development Superintendents of Montserrado and Margibi Counties, the Activity clarified that the CWT and the PMU/PMT were *not* the local government bodies responsible for county level planning, budgeting, and oversight/management of the water sector. CWT is an ad hoc team with a specific function to coordinate the WASH activities at the county level. The 2018 Local Government Act assigns the responsibility for planning, budgeting, and oversight to the LGIs. To ensure that Activity support at the county level is sustainable, the capacity strengthening efforts will focus on the institutions in Annex B taking into consideration their functions (see Table 3).

The Development Superintendents of Montserrado and Margibi Counties recommended that the Activity focus its capacity strengthening assessment and interventions at the Planning and Development Unit (PDU) level, the LGI that will plan, budget, and manage the water service delivery per the Local Government Decentralization Act. This institutional arrangement will consist of the Development Superintendent (Head/Lead), County Project Planner, County Engineer, County Fiscal Person/Focal Point, County Inspector (representative of the Superintendent), County Attorney (legal practitioner – compliance), County Gender Officer, Women and Youth group representatives, and Local Civil Society Organizations representatives.

Therefore, the Activity will work with the county leadership (county administration), the PDU (subnational water service provision oversight), the CWT (GOL coordination of WASH activities), and the CWC (community-level water service provision oversight) as lead institutions. Given that the Government Decentralization Act is still in the initial stages of operationalization, the Activity will start working with the PDU. It will adjust accordingly once the institutional framework is amended or modified.

Task 1.1.2: Develop sub national framework for water service delivery.

Activity Advisory Committee (AAC) Planning

The AAC will be responsible for providing input and recommendations on overall strategic direction to the Activity over the next five years of implementation. This quarter, the Activity developed the TOR in consultation with key stakeholders including the NWASHC, MIA, MPW, NPHIL, and the county authorities. The AAC will comprise of key stakeholders in the sector, including USAID, the National WASH Commission (NWASHC), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Ministry of Public Works (MPW), National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL), Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC), LGIs (county), CSOs, and Activity staff. The committee chairmanship is still under discussion and decisions on AAC leadership will be made next quarter. The first AAC meeting will be held in the Q3 once the chairmanship and co-chair is determined.

2.2.3 Objective 2: Equitable and Inclusive Water Service Delivery Improved and Expanded

Draft Designs and BOQs - Water Supply System

During Q2, Winrock submitted a formal request to amend the timeline for submission of the draft design and BOQs for the construction of water system, a contractual deliverable that was due to USAID after 120 days of the award of the contract. The original due date would precede site selection, identification of proposed infrastructure, and necessary consultations of local communities and end-users. The Activity worked with USAID to develop a revised timeline using a phased approach to select initial priority intervention sites and develop designs and BOQs by July 31, 2023, following assessments and consultation with AAC. Once these sites are selected, the Activity will proceed with site-specific feasibility and engineering studies and community consultations. The initial phase will target communities that are sufficiently large to benefit from economies of scale offered by small town water systems¹. These water supply schemes are generally independent single town piped schemes with varied water demand capacities and providing basic water service to the population.

¹ Small town water systems are managed by community that do not provide household connections and whose service is limited to stand taps.

Following USAID formal approval of the deadline extension, the Activity initiated a landscape analysis of existing models installed and being piloted in Liberia. The Activity collected system designs, BoQs, and technical specifications from stakeholders for review and analysis for efficiency and cost-effectiveness and relevance of the models.

Recruitment of A&E Firms to conduct detailed feasibility and engineering study

Using a phased approach, the Activity will conduct the initial feasibility/engineering study in four sites/towns in one or two selected districts. The next phase will target to complete the remaining ten sites/communities. The Activity will begin construction activities for Phase 1 sites while the design process continues for Phase 2 sites. For this construction, which include civil engineering structure, elevated structure for tanks, sizing of new tanks, pipes or fitting, sizing of electric pump and power system, etc., the Activity will contract a US registered, locally licensed architecture and engineering (A&E) firm to conduct the detailed feasibility/engineering studies, hydraulics calculation, and produce the technical drawings and specifications, and BOQs (costing inclusive). These analyses will define the type of technologies and assist selecting the service delivery model that is tailored to work best and that are most likely to be sustainable and scalable.

Technical Assistance to support procurement of new private operator in Voinjima, Sanniquillie, and Roberstport water supply systems

During the quarter, the Activity participated in a Stakeholder Technical Working Group meeting at LWSC offices on January 31, 2023. The planning meeting reviewed the concept note for the transition of the water treatment plants from Pump and Tank to LWSC. The concept note maintained two key objectives for the three treatment plants: to keep the system running after the exit of Pump and Tank and to find three local firms/operators to operate and manage the treatment plants. A key outcome of the meeting was drafting and finalizing the transition plan and roadmap for the procurement of private sector operators.

Additionally, the Activity participated in the turnover event on February 10, 2023, in Voinjima where the joint transition agreement was formally signed between LWSC, LSC, and County Authorities. The event formed part of a formal handing over process of the three treatment plants to LWSC. Subsequently, Activity staff participated in the first procurement meetings for recruitment of new private operators for Robertsport, Sanniquillie, and Voinjama water treatment plants on March 17, March 21, and March 24, 2023, respectively. A roadmap for the development and launch of tender documents for identification of private sector operators was discussed and timelines agreed upon by LSC, County Authorities, and LWSC, ending with a handover of the plants by the end of June 2023. FEI Consulting and USAID staff also participated in these first procurement meetings.

During the quarter, subsequent discussions were held with USAID to discuss critical observations during the first procurement meetings. A key gap identified is inadequate capacities at the county level to lead and develop quality procurement documents. An agreement was reached to onboard FEI Consulting, a subcontractor under the Activity that specializes in institutional and utility capacity strengthening to provide technical support to the procurement process for recruitment of new private operators. While LWSC continues to provide the operation and maintenance during the transition period, FEI Consulting will take the lead role in supporting the LSCs and local authorities through the public procurement process to ensure compliance with public procurement act. FEI formally joined the Activity on February 20, 2023.

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

Private sector round table discussion

During the quarter, the Activity jointly facilitated a private sector round table discussion with PSI on February 8, 2023. The roundtable discussion explored current challenges and existing opportunities for private sector investment in the water sector. The participants included USAID team, PSI, and representatives from ten private sector actors from the WASH sector. Key among the challenges/barriers identified during the meeting include: Regulatory and policy frameworks that support private sector engagement in the water sector, limited/inadequate viable business case options in rural settings, limited/unavailability of concrete information on willingness and ability to pay in the rural areas, and limited financial opportunities to support private sector ventures, among others. As part of the next step to clearly elaborate the role of private sector actors, the participants proposed a more programmatic session with the Activity team and GOL key institutions such as NASHC, MIA, MPW, LWSC, and NPHIL, among others. The Activity will use a two-pronged approach to engage with the private sector actors moving forward. First, Activity staff, PSI, and USAID PPP specialists held a meeting on February 8, 2023 to discuss how both projects can collectively engage with private sector actors and potential synergies between the approaches. Secondly, next quarter the Activity will conduct a workshop session with the private sector actors on PPP investment in the WASH Sector and how to work together for the benefit of both projects. Prioritizing partnerships with the private sector to develop service delivery models is key for the sustainability of small communities characterized by isolated households.



Figure 2. Participants of the private sector round table meeting on February 8, 2023

2.2.4 Objective 3: Uptake and Maintenance of Key Water Use Behaviors Among Households Increased

During the reporting period, the Activity conducted a GESI analysis which consisted of a systematic review of existing secondary data combined with primary data collection through key informant interviews (KII).

The research team consisted of the Senior GESI Adviser in the Winrock Home Office, with support from the Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Director. The team adopted a mixed methods approach in gathering data on the existing situation related to GESI, observed gaps, and opportunities within a limited target sample.

Before the primary data collection phase, the team carried out a literature review of key GESI

considerations in Liberia. The desk review examined policy documents and reports from existing activities and projects to provide the background and framework for existing and recent efforts relevant to the strategic planning of the USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy. This offered background context and insights that helped the team prepare for KIIs.

Key findings from the GESI analysis include:

- The need for the Activity to conduct a GESI mapping to replicate other projects’ success.
- Activities should account for women and girls as more than just beneficiaries of water services and engage men as agents of change.
- By working to change discriminatory legal, social, and cultural norms, activities can enable women and girls to become water change agents.
- Participatory approaches should be key during Activity implementation.
- Integrate gender considerations into training modules.
- Engage community leaders and other influential community members to raise awareness of the importance of addressing GESI considerations in water management and consider prevention and reporting of SGBV issues.
- Consider the location, timing, and structure of meetings.

Water users are effective managers of the water system

“Our community borehole used to be managed by a man, and at that time, we used to experience a lot of problems with the borehole because he was too busy to manage it, which led to consistent breakdowns. The community later agreed to hand over the borehole management to the woman leader, and this handover aided in the improvement of consistency in the community’s water system.” – Women Representative – Morris Farm, Todee District, Montserrado.

2.3 Implementation challenges

The recruitment of some technical program positions remained a challenge through the quarter. (See Section on Management and Administrative Issues for additional information). This has affected resources available for some activities, which was compounded by the higher-than-anticipated level of effort required for the work related to the water treatment plants. The Activity has therefore had to adjust resource/staff allocation and carefully prioritize to ensure activities move ahead as planned.

2.4 PMP Update

During the quarter under review, the project held separate meetings with DELTA to review and discuss the key contents of the AMELP as the Activity team revised the document. The AMELP explains how the Activity will measure its performance, achieve its objectives, and contribute to USAID/Liberia’s DO4. Additionally, the Activity developed data collection instruments and reporting templates for some of its indicators and worked with USAID to create a Development Information Solution (DIS) account for the Activity.

Additionally, the MEL team completed the baseline data collectors training pre-planning activities and carried out a two-day training on March 28 and 29, 2023 at Corina Hotel (see Foundational

Activity 1 for additional information).

3. INTEGRATION OF CROSSCUTTING ISSUES AND USAID FORWARD PRIORITIES

Some of these cross-cutting issues have not been addressed by the project activities yet. As the project moves from startup to full implementation, we will have more to report on these *cross-cutting* issues in future reports.

3.1 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

See Section 2.2.4 Objective 3 for information on the GESI Analysis.

3.2 Sustainability Mechanisms

A draft sustainability plan is under development and will be finalized and shared with USAID next quarter.

3.3 Environmental Compliance

The Activity is revising key environmental compliance documents including the EMMP and WQAP.

3.4 Global Climate Change

3.5 Policy and Governance Support

3.6 Local Capacity Development

3.7 Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Global Development Alliance (GDA) Impacts

3.8 Science, Technology, and Innovation Impacts

4. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Official Launch - Liberia Safe Drinking Water Activity

During Q2, the Activity team prepared for the official launch event now scheduled for May 17, 2023. Various internal planning meetings were held with USAID to discuss components of the launch including the agenda, identification of participants, and content development. The primary purpose of the launch is to: Build political buy-in from Liberian institutions; involve local stakeholders and local community representatives early in the Activity to ensure its goals are aligned with local priorities; strengthen county leadership's visibility and responsibility over basic services; and raise visibility on USAID's investments in Liberia.

Additionally, during Quarter 2, the Activity engaged with the DELTA team to provide support on

facilitation and content development for the launch based on a SOW drafted in consultation with USAID.

Winrock Chief Global Program Officer Visit

Winrock's Chief Global Program Officer, Joyjit Deb Roy, visited Liberia and held consultative/engagement meetings with key stakeholders including USAID and MIA from March 19-24. Highlights of the visit included presentation to Activity staff about Winrock International's global vision and strategic priorities including the focus in West Africa and Winrock expectations for the Activity to uphold USAID compliance and fulfill commitments to support the GOL key priorities in the water sector. Various meetings were held with USAID (Mission Director, CO, and COR); Liberia Economic Policy Dialogue Activity (LEPDA) Legal Advisor; Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) Deputy Minister - Research and Development; Dolo Town local authority (Paramount chief, Commissioners, Dolo Town Administrator, Block leaders, Women group leader, youth group leader, former private operator, etc.); Margibi County Local Authority (County local authority including Assistant Superintendent, County Inspector, County Attorney, etc.); and the Zinc Camp Community local leaderships and community members.

The upcountry visit to Dolo Town provided the opportunity for a site visit and guided tour of the Dolo Town Water System Network. The Chief Global Programs Officer also had the opportunity to inspect the office space for the incoming co-located Staff in Margibi County provided by the local authorities.

Coordination meetings

In Q2, three monthly coordination meetings with LEPDA and Countywide Sanitation Activity were held on January 25, February 22, and March 29, 2023. The three projects presented priorities on their respective work plans and identified potential areas of collaboration. The three projects agreed on building on what LEPDA has achieved and moving forward with collaborative efforts to support subnational frameworks for water service delivery. LEPDA also shared various studies/assessments/reports during the monthly meetings and deep dive discussions on findings and existing gaps. It is anticipated that through these monthly meetings, the three projects will enhance synergies and collaborative efforts to maximize impact of USAID investments in the target counties.

A coordination meeting with the Countywide Sanitation Activity was held with PSI on January 18, 2023, to further discuss water governance, private sector engagement, and SBC approaches. The two projects identified specific areas of synergies and complementarities in Rural Montserrado where there is a geographical overlap.

Stakeholder consultation meetings

The Activity held a consultative meeting with NASHC CEO on January 19 to discuss their participation in the AAC, and the CEO proposed members to the AAC. On Jan 18, 2023, the DCOP technical held a meeting with Development Superintendents (Montserrado and Margibi Counties) to discuss the roles and functions of Project Management Team (PMT). Similarly, the roles and responsibilities were discussed along with the function of the County WASH Team (CWT).

A consultative meeting with NPHIL Director for Environmental and Occupation Health was held on January 9 to discuss the institutional role on water quality monitoring and WASH. Critical challenges on regulatory framework for enforcements and water safety planning were highlighted.

The Activity held a stakeholder consultation meeting with Montserrado county authorities on January 10 at county offices in Bensonville. The key participants of the meeting were County

Superintendent, Development Superintendent, City Mayor, County Inspector, Resident Engineer, District Superintendents, MPW representatives, and CWT members, among others. The Activity was introduced, and participants discussed the LGA Act and decentralization on water service delivery mandate.

Celebration of World Water Day

During Q2, the Activity developed a press release for the World Water Day and obtained approval from USAID to publish in two local newspapers and broadcast in radio stations. The press release was published on March 22, 2023, on (Daily Observer, Vol 23, No. 51 and Heritage, Vol. 25, No. 355,265) and their respective web pages. The content was also broadcasted on Radio Liberia Broadcasting System (for Monrovia audiences) and Joy FM (for Kakata and surroundings).

Participation in the WASH Accountability Forum

In Q2, the Activity participated and presented at the WASH Accountability forum on March 13, 2023. The meeting was organized by the Legislative Caucus for Water and had participants from key GOL institutions, key donors including USAID, INGOs, and CSOs, among others. The meeting explored budgetary allocations and expenditure for the water sector across different government institutions as well as partner organizations. Among the key outcome of the meeting is the need for the legislative caucus to advocate for specific budget lines for water across different institutions that have the mandate for water service delivery. The caucus recommended the relevant institutions to develop project-based budgeting.

Participation in Joint Sector Review Meeting

During the quarter, the Activity participated in the 3rd WASH Joint Sector Review Steering Committee Meeting held on January 27, 2023. During the meeting, partners under the leadership of NWASHC reviewed and provided inputs to the TOR that highlighted the roles and responsibilities for steering and technical committees. A brief presentation of the inception report by the Stockholm Water Institute was also done. As an action point from the meeting, partners, and stakeholders agreed to separate the steering and technical committee meetings and revise their terms of reference. The need to form specific committees for decentralization, capacity building, and coordination was also emphasized.

Additionally, the Activity team participated in a follow up Joint Sector Review planning meeting on March 1, 2023. During the meeting, the consultant presented updates on the following: government line ministries and agencies are expected to support the sector and objectives of the JSR Steering committee; actions that will be carried out by the Committee in the next five years; timeline leading up to the JSR meeting scheduled for April 25 – 27, 2023; and updates on the Technical Committee on financing, Technical Committee on Decentralization, JSR 2023 roadmap, Compact Concept Paper focusing on the Government of Liberia commitments, and 2023 JSR Event Draft Budget. Participants commented on the commitments in the Compact Concept Paper including considering climate change in carrying out the commitments. NWASHC CEO emphasized the need for climate change be seriously considered in the compact concept paper. He mentioned that the millennium goal has some financial provisions for climate change and Liberia stands a chance to benefit.

5. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Redacted

6. LESSON LEARNED

The private sector actors meeting with USAID and the Activity team on Feb 8, 2023 and subsequent individual meetings held with some private sector actors showed the private sectors’ interest in the water sector. It highlighted the potential for an ongoing Private-Public-Partnership in the sector and for possible collaborations to improve access to safe drinking water. The meeting laid the groundwork for public-private partnerships (PPP), and discussed key challenges/barriers that include regulatory and policy frameworks that support private sector engagement in the water sector, limited/inadequate viable business case options in rural settings, limited/unavailability of concrete information on willingness and ability to pay in the rural areas, and limited access to finance to support private sector venture to the water sector.

7. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER INCLUDING UPCOMING EVENTS

Table 1. Priorities for Next Quarter

Component	Key Priorities
Foundational Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conduct baseline assessment for Activity indicators. ● Develop selection criteria with key stakeholder in targeted counties. ● Identification and mapping of potential sites for intervention based on population size, technical criteria, and consultations. ● Operationalize the GUC Manual by developing specific policies and guidelines for administering the grants.
Objective 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage NWASHC on the existing policy analysis, identify 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. ● Consultation with NWASHC to identify legal and regulatory frameworks gaps/overlaps. ● Review regulatory frameworks and local policies at the county and district levels.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify policy and regulatory gaps, areas of policy overlaps at the county and national levels. ● Support the two counties to develop local bylaws, regulations, and enforcement measures in sustaining pay-for-use services. ● Recruit and co-locate staff at the county level. ● Support decentralization by working with key government counterparts to effectively implement their roles in water services delivery. ● Start the development of policy briefs and regulatory guidelines for decentralized water service delivery for use by CWCs. ● Support the NASHC for sector wide coordination and data driven decision making efforts, including co-organization of advocacy meetings with 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 NASHC to convene the meeting. ● Develop institutional scorecards and an MIS for LGIs to monitor water access/system functionality and efficiently manage assets through feedback loops. ● Define roles and responsibilities for CWT. ● Facilitate the development of capacity development plans and provide mentoring and coaching for LGI s. ● Map existing CWCs and conduct baseline capacity assessment for existing CWCs.
Objective 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Map WSPs in Margibi and Rural Montserrado and three Cities (Robertsport, Sanniquellie, Voinjama). ● 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), Kakata water scheme to identify underlying causes of non-functionality. ● Identify existing Life Cycle Costs at existing facilities and establish the willingness to pay/ability to pay. ● Initiate engineering and social feasibility studies for select intervention sites. ● Scoping visits/Situational analysis (SA). ● Review different management models to check suitability for the context in the two target counties. ● Selection of service delivery model jointly with community (CWC) and LGIs (CWT, LWSC, MIA). ● Define roles and responsibilities for LGIs and WSPs on monitoring and supporting the CWCs. ● Deploy short-term technical expertise to analyze LWSC needs and requirements and to assist USAID and LWSC in designing adequate management processes for the PPP mechanism. ● Prioritization of policy and regulatory framework for inclusivity.
Objective 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with communities and CSOs to develop strategy, plans, approaches, and tools. ● Conduct of Formative Research in partnership with local community groups and CSOs. ● Complete data collection, analysis, and validate report. ● 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.
Cross-Cutting Activities	

Management and Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit and onboard additional project staff.
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Table 2. Events for Next Quarter

Event	Anticipated Date	Participants	Press Involvement (Yes/No)	USAID Representation (Yes/No)	Additional Information
Stakeholder engagement meetings - LGIs, CWT, CSOs - Margibi	April 13, 2023	LGI, CWT, CSO	No	No	
Stakeholder engagement meetings - LGIs, CWT, CSOs - Montserrado	April 20, 2023	LGI, CWT, CSO	No	No	
Stakeholder engagement meetings - Private sectors	April 27, 2023	Private Sector Actors -- Service Provision	No	No	
Activity Advisory Committee Meeting	TBD	ACC Members	No	No	USAID will observe
Activity Launch	May 17, 2023	GOL officials, USAID, LGIs, Community Reps., CSOs	Yes	Yes	
Conduct participatory workshops and work with the LGIs and NWASHC to draft a sub-national water service delivery framework. To be coordinate with act 55 of <i>Task 1.1.1</i>	April	LGI, NWASHC	No	No	

8. HOW IMPLEMENTING PARTNER HAS ADDRESSED COR COMMENTS FROM THE LAST QUARTERLY OR SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

N/A. No outstanding COR comments from last quarterly report.

ANNEX A: PROGRESS SUMMARY

N/A, no data collected yet in Q2.

Table 1(a): PMP Indicator progress - USAID Standard Indicators and Project Custom Indicators

[Strategic Objective]											
Indicator	Data Source	Baseline data		FY 2023		Quarterly Status – FY 2023				Annual Performance Achieved to Date (in %)	Comment(s)
		Year	Value	Annual Cumulative Planned target	Annual Cumulative Actual	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Goal: Improved access to, use of, and sustainability of basic drinking water services in target counties											
W1: Percent of targeted population with access to basic water services in target counties	Survey	2022	77%	77%	0	0	0				
W2: Percent of households using basic water services	Survey	2022	69%	69%	0	0	0				
W3: Percent of cost recovered for target WSPs	WSP records	2022	0%	0%	0	0	0				
W15: Collection-to-Operational Expenses (OpEx) Ratio for target WSPs	WSP records	2022	0	0	0	0	0				
Intermediate Result 1: Local government institutions to effectively plan, budget, and oversee water service delivery											
HL.8.3-3: Number of water and sanitation sector institutions strengthened to manage water resources or improve water supply and sanitation services as a result of U.S. Government (USG) assistance	OCA Scorecard, and records of improvement plan	2022	0	3	0	0	0				
W4: Number of policies and regulations for water service delivery developed or improved and implemented	Local and national government, civil society, and private sector records	2022	0	5	0	0	0				
HL.8.4-1: Value of new funding mobilized to the water and sanitation sectors as a result of USG assistance	Funders, and secondary sources such as internal Activity documentation, public and private sector financial records, media reports, and other	2022	0	0	0	0	0				

	sources.											
CBLD-9: Percent of USG-assisted organizations with improved performance	Organizational Capacity Assessment; records of improvement plan	2022	0%	0%	0	0	0					
W5: Percent of planning, budgeting, and service oversight targets set in the performance improvement plan of CWTs that is achieved	Organizational Capacity Assessment Scorecard and records of improvement plan	2022	0%	5%	0	0	0					
W6: Percent of County budget allocated to water services and infrastructure by LGIs in the targeted counties	Local government records and documentation	2022	0%	0%	0	0	0					
W7: Percent of WSPs and CWCs that report receiving adequate monitoring support from the CWT	WSPs and CWCs Report	2022	0%	0%	0	0	0					
Intermediate Result 2: Equitable and inclusive water service delivery improved and expanded												
HL.8.1-1: Number of people gaining access to basic drinking water service as a result of USG assistance	Construction report, Utility records and CWC, WSP Data, and surveys of households	2022	0	0	0	0	0					
HL.8.1-3: Number of people receiving improved service quality from an existing basic or safely managed drinking water service as a result of USG assistance	Utility records, Survey, and WSP Data	2022	0	2,500	0	0	0					
W8: Percent of users who are female or from marginalized groups reporting year-round reliable access to basic services	Water users in targeted communities.	2022	0%	0%	0	0	0					
W9: Percent of water users reporting year-round reliable access to basic water services, with a downtime of water systems of less than 30 days	Water users in targeted communities	2022	33%	33%	0	0	0					
W10: Number of WSPs assisted with technical, business capacity, or access to finance	Activity records	2022	0	0	0	0	0					
W11: Number of PPPs established for water services provision	WSP and Activity records	2022	0	0	0	0	0					
Intermediate Result 3: Uptake and maintenance of key water use behaviors among households increased												
W12: Percent of targeted population reporting paying regularly for basic water	Targeted population	2022	13%	0%	0	0	0					

services											
W13: Percent of members of CWCs involved in decision-making related to water access and management who are women or from other marginalized groups	Attendance records	2022	0%	10%	0	0	0				
W14: Percent of water users' concerns and feedback recorded through participation mechanisms (town halls, coordination meetings, consultation panels) that are acted upon by the LGI, CWC, or WSP	Compliant form, public records and meeting registers	2022	0%	10%	0	0	0				

ANNEX B: COUNTY-LEVEL INSTITUTIONS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS

County WASH Team (CWT)
<p>The CWT is constituted of representatives of a variety of national-level GOL ministries and agencies working at the county level, with the sole function of coordinating WASH activities at the subnational level. These entities maintain reporting responsibility with their mother entities (ministries and agencies). The CWT consists of MPW WASH Coordinator, EHT of NPHIL, EPA, CHT of MOH, LWSC, etc. that are implementing or responsible for a variety of water service delivery interventions. At the subnational level, the CWT reports to the Development Superintendent. This is an ad hoc arrangement constituted during the Ebola crisis to coordinate WASH intervention at the county level.</p>
Project Management Team or Committee (PMU/PMC).
<p>The PMT/PMC has its primary function of managing the Social Development Fund (SDF) and the County Development Fund (CDF). It coordinates projects under these fundings. It is an ad hoc arrangement and is constituted annually by the county legislative caucus.</p>
Project Planning and Development Unit
<p>Under the leadership of the County Development Superintendent (DS), the Project Planning and Development Unit has the mandate and is responsible for planning and development of all projects in the county including water, agriculture, and infrastructure (roads/bridges, etc.). The unit consists of three MIA staff (the County Project Planner, County Engineer, and County Fiscal Officer) who work with and under the supervision of the Development Superintendents. Their function is planning and development of projects including monitoring.</p>