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# IMPROVED ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER IN LIBERIA ACTIVITY SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

April 30, 2023

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

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**Approved Date:** March 1, 2024

**Version:** 3

**Contract/Agreement Number:** 72066923C00001

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

## **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.

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## ACRONYMS

AAC	Activity Advisory Committee
A&E	Architecture and Engineering
AMELP	Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan
CWT	County WASH Team
CWC	Community WASH Committee
CSO	Civil Society Organization
GOL	Government of Liberia
LGI	Local Government Institution
LWSC	Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MIS	Management information system
MPW	Ministry of Public Works
NWASHC	National WASH Commission
O&M	Operations and Management
PDU	Project Development Unit
SBC	Social Behavior Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WSP	Water Service Provider

## I. INTRODUCTION

To support the Government of Liberia (GOL) in improving the delivery of good quality, reliable, and safe water services to 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.


The project aims to elevate 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. Winrock and its partners will collaborate with Liberian government institutions (LGI) 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.

## II. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

### A. OVERVIEW

Lack of mechanism for financially self-sustaining water service delivery systems has been a major challenge in Liberia. Sustainability in the context of this Activity refers to the long-term strategy that ensures continued supply of basic drinking water services to the rural population in Margibi and Rural Montserrado. Establishing commercially viable, self-sustaining water service delivery systems that are driven by the local demand, supported by the private sector, and led by the local Government will ultimately reduce over reliance on donor funding and contribute to long term sustainability. Ensuring availability and sustainable management of water services is key to achievement of GOL 2018-2023 pro-poor agenda for prosperity and development.

The Activity's sustainability approach is based on ensuring that any water infrastructure built, rehabilitated, or repaired during the project's life has a system to operate and maintain sustainably without further USAID support. To achieve this, the Activity will use a systems-strengthening approach and phased capacity-building approach through:

- Performance optimization: improve LGI efficiency; set foundational procedures, policies, and systems that reinforce roles and responsibilities; streamline regulations and policies to reduce inefficiencies; and jointly develop performance management tools with LGIs to improve evidence-driven decision-making, transparency, and accountability.
- Customer orientation:  a supply-and-demand approach and promote scale up of successful models; establish accountability initiatives between water users and LGIs to incentivize water service providers (WSPs) to deliver responsive services; and initiate demand-generating social behavior change (SBC) campaigns to encourage communities to use and pay for safe water services.
- Leverage partnerships: establish formal partnerships between LGIs and WSPs; strengthen community consultation channels; facilitate partnerships with communities, civil society organizations (CSOs), and women's and other marginalized organizations to drive consumer behaviors; and ensure effective feedback loop between community, local, and national stakeholders to learn from successes, failures, opportunities for replication, etc.

A key aspect of sustainability for this Activity will be strengthening and integrating the private sector into the water service delivery system. LGIs do not currently have levels of capacity that support long-term sustainable service delivery, and at-scale privately operated WSPs have not been able to demonstrate cost recovery under current operations. Winrock will catalyze increased domestic resource mobilization through public-private partnerships (PPP) that 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 at the community level. To ensure sustainability of the infrastructure supported through the project, LGIs will be supported to:

- Design cost-efficient, private sector-led service delivery models.
- Integrate the Life Cycle Cost approach in planning and implementation, whereby the funds for operations and management (O&M) will be ring-fenced for repair and maintenance.
- Build a tariff/fee structure in consultation with the communities based on ability and willingness to pay.
- Contract Architecture and Engineering (A&E) firms to guarantee the quality of infrastructure from the design to implementation.
- Facilitate performance-based contracting with private sector operators.

To promote local ownership of activities within local and national stakeholders and reinforce the sustainability of interventions, the Activity Advisory Committee (AAC) will include national-level institutions, the Activity COP, and representatives from civil society, USAID, and local authorities such as the County Superintendents. The AAC will work with the existing LGIs to ensure the sustainability of activities and impact. It will be involved in key Activity decisions, such as site selection. It will meet quarterly to review progress, coordinate resources and priorities, share lessons learned, and provide input on project direction. The AAC will also be part of the annual Pause and Reflect workshop, in addition to key partners and community officials, where stakeholders can openly discuss implementation results, management, and adaptation.

#### **Pause and Reflect**

The Activity will hold annual Pause and Reflect Workshops to review data and lessons learned with key local stakeholders. This information will help to inform the approach, validate results, and allocate resources.

#### **Data-Driven Decision Making**

The Activity will work jointly with stakeholders to analyze data, understand its implications, and help to develop the practice of using learning to drive decisions. The Activity will identify gaps in stakeholder connections, like those between LGIs and national ministries, that can be strengthened to enhance WSPs' resilience to respond to external shocks. This supports the Activity's commitment to promoting a common agenda among WASH actors in Liberia to address key challenges in the water sector (including poor coordination among actors, weakened public institutions with insufficient regulatory and monitoring frameworks, chronically low and erratic investment and public financing, etc.) using a structured form of collaboration where there is formal framework for public institutions to collaborate with private sector actors and other development partners. By involving local stakeholders in data-driven decision-making and adaptive management of the Activity's direction based on inputs from the AAC, the Activity will foster local ownership, buy-in, and a culture of evidence-based decisions among LGIs.

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

The Activity will use a **phased capacity building approach** to strengthen LGIs' abilities to manage water services sustainably. As the decentralization of water service delivery and management is critical, the Activity will strengthen and empower LGIs to make short- and long-term plans, budget, allocate existing resources, manage staff and contracts, coordinate stakeholders, monitor performance, and address problems that arise. Using a phased approach, the Activity will gradually build autonomy within LGIs to fulfill their roles successfully. LGIs made up of county, district, and local officials do not have sufficient capacity to monitor, manage, and oversee water services. Once the Activity works with local authorities to establish a clear governance framework for service delivery and build the capacity of LGIs to operate within the framework, then their ability to design, monitor, contract, and expand access to safe drinking water services responsive to the needs of its users will improve. Additionally, performance monitoring establishes metrics not only for technical performance but also generates accountability and an evidence base from which decision-makers can inform policy, budget, etc. When individuals and governments have data and are held accountable to meet certain performance goals, they are more likely to prioritize those activities in terms of resource allocation, for example. . The Activity will reinforce the roles and responsibilities of key government stakeholders at the local, county, and national levels, directly engaging LGIs to define their goals to build local ownership and leadership. To support the LGIs in sustaining these services, the Activity will strengthen the enabling environment through clearly defined policies and regulations. In Years 1-4, the Activity will actively strengthen the capacity of LGIs; by the end of Year 4, the Activity will transition to provide basic coaching to the LGIs as they lead implementation of interventions more independently. In Year 5, the Activity anticipates that LGIs should have the capacity to sustain the targeted interventions, assuming that the enabling environment and resource allocation is sufficient for the LGIs to operate at those levels. There are several factors that will affect sustainability that are beyond the scope of this Activity, such as adequate budget allocations for LGIs to maintain and oversee water service delivery, changes in government and subsequent changes to institutional arrangements at national and sub-national levels, turnover of LGIs and their staff, and repeal or de-prioritization of the LGA of 2018, among others.

### **ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY INTERVENTIONS**

#### ***1. Decentralized government services regulate and manage water service delivery through functional sub-national framework***

The project will **adopt a systems strengthening approach**, creating connections between national and subnational actors to facilitate the development of a subnational framework and contribute towards sustainability. In alignment with USAID's Local Capacity Strengthening Policy, the Activity will start with and work through the local system to build capacity that will contribute to sustainable outcomes. Putting the local authorities at the forefront will not only create ownership but also ensure that they are heavily involved in the design and strategic choices of what needs to be included in the subnational framework. The subnational framework will clarify institutional roles and responsibilities to avoid the conflicting mandates hindering successful water governance in Liberia. This will help institutions be better organized in the long term, minimizing duplication of efforts, and minimizing gaps in governance. To operationalize decentralized water service governance, the Activity will work with subnational LGIs to develop WASH plans that put local systems at the center of implementation and transform systems. Supporting decentralized service

delivery will empower the local authorities to play a much stronger role equipping them with necessary skills and capacity to sustainably support the system long after the project ends.

## ***2. LGIs have inclusive mechanisms to provide input to the budgeting cycle in the water sector, including planning, implementation, and monitoring***

The Activity will strengthen LGI's capacities to plan and budget for development activities at the local level through the legally recognized Project Development Unit (PDU) per the LGA Act of 2018. To achieve this, the Activity will assess the capacity of PDU, County WASH Teams (CWT), and Community WASH Committees (CWCs) and develop capacity improvement plans accordingly. The Activity will co-locate staff at the county LGI to coach and mentor on planning, budgeting, and execution of plans. A key critical assumption is that the financial resources to implement decentralized services such as water will also be devolved from the national to the local level, requiring advocacy at the national level and support from political leaders.

The water sector is underfunded (i.e., expenditure through public financing). The Liberia's fragile economy has resulted in reallocation of government budget to "GOL competing priorities", and an apparent decline or neglect in budget allocation to the water sector. Moreover, much of the budget allocated to water in recent years has been directed to staff salaries; and spending on water supply infrastructure and basic services, is not only low but very erratic. Other challenges maintaining water supply systems include the lack of investment funds: national and local governments rarely include significant funding for water services or maintenance and repairs in their budgets. At the sub-national level, NGO direct intervention, limited community engagement, and water systems installed without long-term sustainability plans or mechanisms for routine O&M, and financial plans for how to pay for them. Systems do not generate enough income through water sales to be financially self-sustaining. The Liberia water sector is highly dependent on foreign donor financing; the opportunity or possibility to increase resources for the sector is limited without an increase in budget allocation from the national government; there is not private sector investment in the sector. The Activity will work with national and subnational government (including NWASHC, MPW and LGIs) leveraging Legislative WASH Caucus support for commitment to water sector objectives, motivate them built water provision funding in their budget, and for improvements in the efficiency of current disbursement of funding to the sector. Other innovative financing scheme for low-income households: Increased access to microfinance and income generating activities addressing the ability to pay for the services by the poor and the marginalized; and Savings and Credit Cooperatives and solidarity lending groups, such as Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) or Revolving funds and savings group schemes, are established and active to address water system upkeep (and expansion) efforts in partnership with CWCs and WSPs. Activity will also work with the LGIs to allot portion of the Social Development Funds and County Development Funds and the Revenue Sharing Scheme in support of water services delivery services.

## ***3. Local stakeholders define and implement a common vision for collective impact***

To contribute towards collective impact, the Activity will work with stakeholders, including the National WASH Commission (NWASHC), CWTs, County Superintendents, and other LGIs, to define a common vision and priorities for gender equity, youth engagement and private sector engagement in water service delivery. Deliberate efforts to attain inclusivity and equity in water service delivery is key to global and country level efforts on supporting the "leaving no one behind principle" in line with the human right to water. This will promote mutually reinforcing activities



that leverage interdependent systems between the WASH actors and stakeholders. The social accountability of jointly creating solutions that address identified risks will strengthen system resilience. The collective impact will strengthen social accountability, transparency, and participation to build a shared vision for the sector through the sub-national and private sector frameworks that LGIs can adopt and implement. By Year 4, the collective impact model is anticipated to run independently to provide an autonomous platform to strengthen the connections, networks, and partnerships within Liberia's WASH sector. The GOL will be able to monitor progress and make data-driven decisions to drive effective performance on water service delivery, a vital part of creating accountability.

Through the leadership of the County Superintendent, the Activity will support CWT members in scaling up coordination efforts at the local level. At the national level, since NWASHC is the main institution responsible for sector coordination in Liberia, the Activity will work with the NWASHC team to secure a commitment to institutionalizing WASH meetings and mechanisms for national level, national/subnational, and subnational coordination and cooperation efforts. Additionally, coordination of activities across national-level ministries such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), NWASHC, Ministry of Public Works (MPW), and other actors will be critical for sustainability. Coordination across national and sub national level institutions will reduce duplication and maximize efficient utilization of available resources. It also increases system-wide understanding of roles and responsibilities, and provides a platform for institutions to hold their colleagues/partners accountable. The transparent sharing of information is important for long-term sustainability as it affects decision-making, resource allocation, and demand for those services.

### **C. OBJECTIVE 2: EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE WATER SERVICE DELIVERY IMPROVED AND EXPANDED**

The Activity will facilitate relationships between private sector WSPs, LGIs, and communities based on clear regulatory frameworks, financial viability, and customer satisfaction. These three pillars are essential to the sustainability of private sector-managed, community-oriented water service delivery. The Activity will work with CWTs, CWCs, and their communities to establish customer-centered water service delivery models, including pay-for-use services, to increase long-term financial viability. Sustainability of water infrastructure is directly linked to availability of financing for continued operation and maintenance. Promoting pay-for-use services will ultimately increase the financial resource base allowing for ring-fencing of operation and maintenance funds thus reducing the need for donor/external funding. Implementation of pay-for-use water services with clearly determined tariffs for user fees is critical in laying the foundation for sustainability improved sustainability. Both LGIs and WSPs in these models must have the technical capacity to monitor/enforce and successfully operate, respectively, the water services. Therefore, the Activity will build their capacities: LGI capacity building will focus on monitoring, enforcing, and backstopping CWCs and WSPs; WSP capacity building will focus on technical assistance, business development, adaptive management, improvements in service delivery and customer feedback. This will provide the foundation for LGIs and WSPs to operate and monitor these systems sustainably. As part of the capacity building package, the Activity will support WSPs in developing applications/accessing financing to improve long-term business viability, which is a key aspect in the assessment of all service delivery models. There is the assumption that private sector actors will commit to financially viable models, pursue financing, and continue using tools such as financial analysis to determine tariffs (and future price adjustments) after they stop



receiving direct support from the Activity. The knowledge and skills gained through technical assistance combined with the monitoring tools and enforcement mechanisms and connections to finance will guarantee sustainability and continuity of water service delivery.

The LEPDA report on enabling environment for Private sector underscores the need to maximize and optimize on the untapped potential for private sector engagement/development in the water sector. As a result of multiple private sector engagement meetings, there is a clear business case for water service providers to invest in the water sector. Based on multiple private sector engagement meetings the Activity has a clear understanding of the perceptions, challenges, and risk factors that have impacted the private sector involvement or inhibited their involvement in the water sector. Inadequate funding and lack of regulatory framework remains a fundamental challenge that prevents WSP to take up , risks in investing in water sector. However, they have expressed willingness to work with the Activity to roll out the models when approved. All private sector actors engaged have been mapped (construction, service, power, manufacturers, and suppliers).

This general strategy also applies to the three water treatment plants in Robertsport, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama. The Activity will provide guidance and coaching to the counties and Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC) throughout the procurement process. Then, once the private sector operators are contracted, the Activity will provide targeted technical assistance based on assessed gaps to build their capacity to manage these plants for long-term viability. By building capacity throughout the process, the LWSC/counties/LGIs will be equipped with the skills and experience to conduct similar procurement processes in the future, if/when needed, while expanding the pool of capable/trained private sector operators.

The Activity will also invest in improvements to water infrastructure in Margibi and Montserrado Counties as part of its incentive mechanism to encourage local buy-in and investment. The sustainability of these water infrastructures is crucial. There is a risk of these falling into disrepair and needing a continual cycle of donor funding to repair and maintain this infrastructure. To avoid this, for each water infrastructure activity, the Activity will:

- Work with the LGIs to identify who will be responsible for service provision and O&M (WSP under the supervision of the CWC) and facilitate linkages with the PDU/LGIs, which will provide technical support and oversight. Clear roles and responsibilities and oversight on O&M will ensure reliability and accountability and reduce the non-functionality of water infrastructure.
- Work with the LGIs, WSPs, and communities to establish a reliable flow of funds through user fees, tariff collection, and revenue sharing between the WSP and CWC, and establish best practices for financial management and payment transparency. Non-revenue water continues to pose a challenge to commercial viability of the water systems and hence establishing viable financial management and payment mechanisms will contribute towards recovery of O and M costs that is key to sustainability of water service provision.
- Work with these actors to establish a monitoring system that will include monitoring service delivery, infrastructure functionality, and customer satisfaction/feedback -- all of which will assist in identifying/avoiding/addressing breakdowns and deciding when to invest in capital vs. operational expenditure. Monitoring and reporting performance of water system considering life cycle costs is essential for sustainability. Providing reliable, quality water services is critical in establishing financial viability and trust with customers – if customers can rely on receiving good service, which is repaired quickly when issues

occur, then they are more likely to be willing to pay for those services. This in turn assists in the long-term financial viability – a more reliable influx of funds allows LGIs, WSPs to plan for repairs and expansion efforts while covering their standard operating costs.

This iterative process will begin in Year 1 by facilitating key linkages, clarifying frameworks, and identifying potential service delivery models and opportunities for water infrastructure improvement. The Activity anticipates that capacity building will be most active from Years 2-4, with a transition to lighter touch coaching in Year 5. This depends on when WSPs come on board in certain communities, which could extend the capacity building into Year 5 at select sites.

#### **ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY INTERVENTIONS**

##### ***1. Financially resilient water service delivery models are adopted and functional***

These are water service delivery model analyzed for efficiency, cost effectiveness and inclusiveness; tested and piloted that are responsive to barriers; and scaled- up private-sector managed models of community-oriented water service delivery for rural and peri-urban settlement setting.

To provide sustainable access to reliable water service delivery for residents, the Activity has identified and presented to USAID and Winrock International Home Office (HO) four water service delivery models (based on research and experience from the region) to pilot in the Phase One intervention communities (15 Gate - Sarah Johnson Quarter, Baypolu, Yarnwuellie, and Dolo's Town). The PPP visioning workshop will be used to begin the process of working with private sector actors to design pay-for-use systems based on the identified models in consultation with the communities and LGIs. The process will include adopting knowledge and feedback from the in-person and virtual exchange visits and developing innovative technologies/practices to improve revenue collection, financial transparency, and accountability. It is anticipated that once revenue collection efficiency is improved, reinvesting the funds for O&M will guarantee that repairs and maintenance will be sustainably carried out. The Activity will provide technical assistance to WSPs to develop business and performance improvement plans, which will include financial analysis and support for access to financing opportunities. This will improve their business efficiency and quality of service delivery to communities and improve their financial viability. Maximizing their profit margin while ensuring customer satisfaction is critical to sustainability – satisfied customers are more willing to continue paying for services, which allows WSPs to improve financial planning and reinvest into services they provide. The Activity will facilitate linkages between the different levels of the water service delivery system (community, WSPs, LGIs) and an information flow. This will ensure that WSPs have sufficient information to determine appropriate pricing structures at the county level that ensure long-term profitability and affordability for poor households.

##### ***2. LGIs and WSPs demonstrate improved capacity to sustain the three water treatment plants in Sanniquilie, Robertsport, and Voinjima***

The Activity will support the LGIs and LWSC in procuring private operators to manage the water schemes in the three cities. A key aspect of this support will be capacity building services that strengthen operations/financial management of water treatment plants in Robertsport, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama. To complement the support provided to LGIs, the Activity may also provide technical assistance to the contracted private sector provider(s) in operations, customer service, financial management, and management information systems (MIS). The Activity will

support the operationalization of the Local Government Act of 2018 to give LGIs a role in water governance and that empowers the PDU at the County LGI to monitor and enforce policies. Part of this support framework will include the development of dispute resolution mechanisms, so actors have a way by which they can address issues that arise in the future.

#### **D. OBJECTIVE 3: UPTAKE AND MAINTENANCE OF KEY WATER USE BEHAVIORS AMONG HOUSEHOLDS INCREASED**

The Activity will maximize the participation and inclusion of women and marginalized groups as key water users and invest in their ideas as entrepreneurs. Ensuring adequate water for the household is often a responsibility that is delegated to women – they typically are the ones collecting water. By intentionally engaging them as active parts of the water service delivery system, and giving them a voice during planning, design, etc., the Activity aims to establish a more inclusive, responsive system overall. Similarly, marginalized people often do not have a seat at the decision table and their perspectives on their needs, wants, limitations, etc. are lost resulting in water systems that do not cater to or take them into consideration. When significant portions of the populations are not involved from the start, the resulting systems may be inefficient and not used to their full potential, damaging long-term viability. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the LGIs, coupled with training and mentorship to women-led organizations to play a more significant role in water service delivery, will contribute towards sustainability by leading to more responsive, holistic water systems that take into consideration the needs of the entire population and not just those typically represented amongst key decision-makers. An important part of the sustainability strategy is fostering community behavior change, particularly in how they see and value quality water services, to encourage buy-in to pay-for-use systems that best support long-term private sector involvement and sustainability. Activities under Objective 3 will be implemented throughout the Activity through Year 5. However, the Activity does anticipate changes in consumer behavior as demonstrated by those paying for basic water services (for example) before Year 5.

#### **ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY INTERVENTIONS**

##### ***1. Improved participation of women as water users and entrepreneurs***

Active participation of women in the water service delivery system is vital for sustainability, given their roles in families and communities. The Activity will support the LGIs in setting up gender benchmarks in all institutional arrangements that lay the foundation for inclusivity criteria in water investments. Empowering women in roles other than water users within this system is vital. The Activity will work with LGIs and WSPs to set up transparent and effective mechanisms to facilitate, enhance, support, and strengthen women's participation in water service delivery decision-making. To magnify women's role in decision-making, the Activity will conduct empowerment trainings for women, support female influencers in communities, and provide mentorship to women (and youth) champions to strengthen their leadership and advocacy skills. Giving women and youth voices in how water service delivery is designed, planned, maintained, etc. will help create more responsive systems. Empowering these potential customers with leadership and advocacy skills will help them provide feedback to LGIs and WSPs – a critical information flow to ensure reliable, quality, water service delivery long-term.

The Activity will support LGIs to develop local policy and frameworks that protect the value of women (and youth) as users (participation in decision making related to water access and management) and entrepreneurs (leading initiatives). The Activity will provide mentorship to

women and youth champions and professional coaching and mentoring network of women - improving women's decision-making power and productivity as actors in the water sector. As an advocate they must be skilled in creating a well-argued and persuasive case in their favor. The Activity will support women in developing the relationships (network of champions, including mentors) they need to succeed.

## ***2. Safe water habits (Pay-for Use) are adopted and maintained***

Fostering social behavior change (SBC) that supports water service delivery concepts such as pay-for-use will support sustainability. There must be a juncture between community (consumer) preferences, needs, and capacity and what the LGIs and WSPs provide. The Activity will promote community action planning, intensive SBC and social marketing activities, and campaigns for safe water habits. The Activity will work with communities to develop community-driven approaches toward promoting pay-for-use water services to maximize local buy-in and adoption rates. People are often more willing to listen and learn from their peers; therefore, the Activity will engage local CSOs and community groups to lead campaigns to create awareness of the importance of payment for water services. To ensure that the regulatory framework is conducive to these behaviors, the Activity will support LGIs to develop oversight and enforcement of policies, regulations, and bylaws (inclusion, safe water habits, social norms, etc.) at the local level. This will also help foster transparency and trust between LGIs, WSPs, and their communities.

### *Regulatory Framework.*

These “Compliance and Regulatory frameworks” are legal (i.e., mutually agreed) mechanisms that will exist at the national and subnational levels. They can be mandatory/coercive (national/subnational laws and regulations, contractual obligations) or voluntary (integrity pacts, codes of conduct, etc.). These compliance and regulatory frameworks are sets of guidelines and best practices. The community will follow these guidelines to meet regulatory requirements, improve processes, strengthen security, and achieve objectives (such as promoting safe water habits – access and use of “Pay-for-Use that are sustainable public water service delivery. Compliance can be compared to law set by government legislation – it is mandatory to abide by these to avoid legal actions. Frameworks on the other hand offer a set of best practices and guidance that help the community ensure safety and gain customer trust.

The Activity will work national and subnational local authorities including the LGIs, WSPs, Women Groups, and CSOs to ensure framework that reflect transparency and accountability. The following should form integral part of the compliance and regulatory frameworks: Revenue collection and management including revenue sharing, and maintaining and management of financial accounts including escrow accounts; Soliciting and recruitment of WSPs/PPP and contracting; Access and use of “Pay for use service”; Use of unprotected water sources including surface water; Social norms - perceived informal, unwritten rules of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that are considered acceptable in a particular social group or culture, for example water should be free; Delays and/or delinquency in payment of tariff; and accumulation of arrears; Water tariffing and unfair practices; CWC and WSP contract agreement; Women inclusivity – user and as entrepreneur, and access to financing; Protection for water systems(vandalism); Water System Monitoring and reporting; Establishing minimum standards

for Water Quality testing and monitoring; Environmental sanitation (vicinity of water system); laws against child labor, i.e., children fetching water at the system or other employment regulations; etc.; and Infractions.

### *Building Trust and Transparency*

Trust happens when the Activity leaders are transparent. Increasing transparency is the accessible first step for the Activity's leaders to take to build trust. Trust will be earned by saying what the Activity will do, sharing why and delivering what the Activity said it would — transparently. Transparency can be thought of as being open and honest, expressing one's opinions and being direct. Transparency will help to build trust and respect. The Activity will help build a sense of trust and respect between the Activity and stakeholders which is essential for creating a positive workplace culture. When stakeholders see the Activity speaking its mind and being honest with others, they'll likely be inspired to do likewise. This mutual cause of developing honesty will naturally breed trust in the community. Being transparent include Speaking honestly to stakeholders and staff, disclosing information, providing feedback, Staying professional, sharing Activity performance, etc.

In the community, trust and transparency can create a positive work environment where stakeholders feel valued and motivated to contribute to the Activity 's success. The Activity will enhance transparency, necessary for building trust. Transparency help helps build stronger relationships with your customers/community and with the Activity employees. Stakeholders will have more confidence in the Activity leadership and the decisions that are being made within the Activity because they know exactly what is happening and why it is happening. Transparency fosters trust between stakeholders, which leads to better communication and collaboration, which increases trust. Effective collaboration can increase stakeholders' satisfaction, engagement, and productivity.

### **III. MONITORING SUSTAINABILITY**

The Activity will monitor progress on sustainability throughout the interventions. See the Sustainability Matrix for complete details. The Activity will conduct several high-level monitoring activities, such as the annual Pause and Reflect and AAC Meetings as well as internal data reviews and learning sessions to continually review, analyze, and discuss data and lessons learned from Activity participants and stakeholders. Information gathered through the monitoring and learning activities will inform strategy, decision-making, and activities to support sustainable interventions.

**Table 1. Sustainability Matrix**

Project Component / Activity	Interventions to be Sustained	Conditions/Resources Required for Sustainability	Measurement of Sustainability	How Sustainability will be Achieved	Process for monitoring progress on the sustainability elements
Objective 1: LGIs effectively plan, budget, and oversee water service delivery	Decentralized government services regulate and manage water service delivery through sub-national framework	<p>LGIs (PDU) are empowered to monitor and enforce policies through the decentralized system.</p> <p>LGIs (PDU) maintain qualified staff to conduct activities.</p> <p>Improved capacity of LGIs (PDU) to monitor and enforce policies.</p> <p>Sub-national framework for water service delivery that is properly followed by relevant LGIs.</p> <p>Policies/regulations enacted or strengthened that support the framework.</p> <p>Improved capacity of national ministries MIA, NWASHC, MPW WASH Coordinator, and WASH Actors for WASH coordination activities.</p> <p>Agreed common vision and priorities for gender equity, youth engagement, and private sector engagement in water service delivery reflected in framework.</p>	<p>LGIs (PDU) develop and conduct trainings for CWCs, and WSPs independently.</p> <p>LGIs (PDU) actively monitor and enforce policies, conducting conflict mitigation when needed.</p> <p>MIA – actively leads and coordinates the decentralization process for water service delivery.</p> <p>NWASHC – actively facilitate sector coordination and implement advocacy campaign to increase sector funding targeted at lawmakers.</p> <p>MPW and WASH actors - Annual Joint Sector Review</p> <p>Monthly WASH meetings institutionalized by WASH Coordinators (national/subnational) reviewing data improved coordination</p>	<p>Organize exchange visits for national- and county-level stakeholders to learn about private-sector models for water service delivery.</p> <p>Develop sub-national framework through assistance to NWASHC (also working with MPW, LWSC, and LGIs).</p> <p>Build capacity/coach LGIs on implementing the policies/framework, including technical assistance LGIs will provide to CWCs and WSPs.</p> <p>Work with subnational LGIs to develop WASH plans that put local systems at the center of implementation and transform systems.</p>	<p>Routine monitoring of LGIs (PDU)-led trainings of CWCs and WSPs.</p> <p>Participate in Town Hall Meetings led by LGIs (PDU).</p>



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	<p>LGIs (PDU) have inclusive mechanisms to provide input to the planning, implementation, funding, and monitoring of the National Budget for the water sector.</p>	<p>Transparent and effective subnational LGIs (PDU) in the area of water service delivery.</p> <p>Improved LGIs (PDU) capacity in water service delivery with private operators.</p> <p>Active and effective working relationship between water sector actors.</p> <p>There is increased funding for the water sector.</p> <p>Commitment and mechanism for national/sub-national coordination and cooperation to ensure input into planning, funding, etc.</p>	<p>LGIs (PDU) are actively engaged in planning and developing water projects.</p> <p>LGIs provide inputs in the National Budget.</p> <p>Two-way information flow between sub-national and national institutions.</p> <p>CWCs actively monitor and regulate water services to identify gaps, breakdowns, quality of service, etc., and request/allocate resources accordingly.</p> <p>LGIs access resources to fund their work, ideally from internally generated revenue.</p>	<p>Assess and build LGIs (PDU) capacity in planning, budgeting, and oversight for water service delivery.</p> <p>Strengthen accountability between sub-national and national leadership through NWASHC Annual Joint Sector Review.</p> <p>Support NWASHC to facilitate a campaign to increase sector funding.</p> <p>Co-locate staff at the county level to coach and mentor on all aspects of planning, budgeting, and execution of plans.</p> <p>Support LGIs (CWTs) in developing, strengthening CWCs on governance, contract, and financial management, and regulating water services.</p>	<p>Review of LGIs (PDU) local development plans and budgets.</p> <p>Monitoring activities as per AMELP.</p> <p>Routine monitoring of Activity capacity building activities; and review of capacity and training reports.</p>
	<p>Policies and regulations for water service delivery are adapted, implemented, and enforced</p>	<p>Transparent and effective subnational LGIs (PDU) in water service delivery.</p> <p>Improved LGIs (PDU) capacity for effective implementation and enforcement of policies and regulations.</p> <p>Improved monitoring and regulatory systems, including clear reporting and</p>	<p>LGIs (PDU) are actively monitoring the implementation and enforcing the policies and regulations.</p> <p>LGI (PDU) conduct training for CWCs and WSPs in policies and regulations.</p> <p>LGIs (PDU) are implementing and</p>	<p>Prepare policy and regulatory briefs and implementation guidelines for local bylaws, regulations, and enforcement measures that govern customers in sustaining pay-for-use services.</p> <p>Establish an effective mechanism to resolve intra-communal disputes.</p>	<p>Townhalls by LGIs (PDU) to socialize policies and regulations</p> <p>Review monitoring and compliance reports for infractions.</p> <p>Review of annual organizational scorecards.</p> <p>Participate in LGIs (PDU) meetings; review LGIs</p>



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		<p>compliance structures for infractions and feedback loops between stakeholders for county-level monitoring and enforcement.</p> <p>LGIs (PDU) have inclusive mechanisms to implement and enforce the policies and regulations.</p>	<p>enforcing actions for sustaining pay-for-use services.</p> <p>Effective information flow between LGIs, WSPs, and water users.</p>	<p>Train CWCs/LGIs in policies and regulations.</p> <p>Assist NWASHC, MPW, and NPHIL in establishing and implementing monitoring and regulatory systems with feedback loops between LGIs, WSPs, and consumers.</p>	<p>(PDU) local development plans.</p> <p>Obtain beneficiary or community testimonials on policies and regulation enforcement.</p>
Objective 2: Equitable and inclusive water service delivery improved and expanded	Professional and financially resilient water service delivery models are adopted, and functional	<p>Efficient, cost effective, and inclusive community-led processes that determine the best sustainable water service delivery models.</p> <p>Increased community willingness and ability to pay; and commitment to adopt safe water habits – pay-for-use service.</p> <p>Successful service provision improvements/models are adopted and scaled up.</p> <p>CWCs and WSPs are empowered to inform appropriate pricing structures at the county level that ensure long-term profitability and affordability for poor households.</p> <p>Regulations, monitoring, and enforcement frameworks are in place to promote inclusive service delivery.</p>	<p>CWCs effectively and efficiently manage an inclusive water service with the oversight of WSP (technical and administrative lead) and LGIs.</p> <p>LGIs (PDU) actively engage in dispute settlement/ conflict resolution between water users and service providers, system breakdowns, and tariff collection.</p>	<p>Design a “pay-for-use system” through a participatory process with CWTs/CWCs and communities.</p> <p>Introduce/facilitate innovative technologies to improve revenue collection and financial transparency.</p> <p>WSP guided in developing business and performance improvement plans.</p> <p>Issue GUCs to WSPs to reduce the risk of piloting new/innovative models.</p> <p>Provide business development training to improve WSP business efficiency and quality of service delivery to communities.</p> <p>Develop MIS platform to be used by CWCs and WSPs to upload water system performance metrics.</p>	<p>Site visits to targeted communities and towns.</p> <p>Routine interviews/surveys of Activity’s beneficiaries.</p> <p>Review reports of routine capacity building/training activities of the Activity beneficiaries.</p> <p>Monitoring activities as per AMELP.</p> <p>Review of annual organizational scorecards.</p>

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				Conduct learning events/exchange visits to encourage adoption of successful models.	
	WSPs successfully manage water services	<p>WSPs can implement improved/new service delivery models.</p> <p>Interest among WSPs/entrepreneurs to establish, improve, or expand water sector business.</p> <p>Consumers are willing to pay for services at a rate that can support the business.</p> <p>WSPs have sufficient information and capacity to properly price services.</p> <p>Effective feedback loop established between WSPs and consumers.</p> <p>Supportive regulatory framework/enabling environment for WSPs in the water sector.</p> <p>LGIs (PDU) are empowered to monitor and enforce policies; and WSP maintain qualified staff.</p>	<p>Expansion of water services provided by WSPs.</p> <p>WSPs able to collect revenue and self-sustain without subsidy.</p> <p>Increase in consumers paying for water services.</p> <p>LGIs (PDU) are actively engaged in providing oversight and enforcement.</p> <p>WSP actively engaged with the review of operations and financial management.</p> <p>LGIs (PDU) develop and conduct trainings for WSPs.</p> <p>LGIs (PDU) trained on conflict resolution, and WSPs in tariff policies, setting and managing tariffs transparently.</p>	<p>Build county capacity to monitor and support WSPs and CWCs through a performance-based monitoring system/process.</p> <p>Build private sector capacity, including enterprise providing products and services (e.g. maintenance service providers, retail outlets for spare parts) and WSPs (or aspiring WSPs).</p> <p>Technical assistance to the WSP in operations, customer service, financial management, and MIS.</p> <p>Technical support to the LGIs (PDU) to implement tariff policies.</p> <p>Capacity building services that strengthen operations/financial management of water treatment plants in Robertsport, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama.</p>	<p>Site visits to targeted communities and towns.</p> <p>Routine interviews/surveys of Activity's beneficiaries.</p> <p>Review of reports of routine capacity building/training activities of the Activity beneficiaries.</p> <p>Monitoring activities as per AMELP</p> <p>Review of annual organizational scorecards.</p>
	WSPs extend services to poor and marginalized households	Policy/enabling environment exists that promotes inclusive service delivery.	Poor and marginalized households have access to basic water services.	Work with NASHC to enforce inclusive regulations, monitoring, and frameworks, including options like	Review of capacity assessments/scorecards and monitoring of LGIs and their implementation.

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		<p>Tariffs (including government- or community-led subsidies or other social measures) are properly implemented.</p> <p>LGIs adopt inclusive practices in O&amp;M of water systems.</p> <p>WSPs have a business case and capacity to extend services.</p>	<p>WSPs extend services without long-term subsidies.</p>	<p>subsidies (e.g. flexible tariff structures, social tariffs).</p> <p>Support LGIs to design and implement community-appropriate tariff structures.</p> <p>Train LGIs on conflict resolution to resolve tariff disputes/non-payment.</p> <p>Work with WSPs, CWCs to incorporate tariff collection in their service agreements.</p> <p>Provide technical assistance to WSPs in operations, customer service, financial management, and MIS.</p> <p>Pilot inclusive business models with WSPs.</p>	<p>Attend town hall meetings to solicit community feedback.</p> <p>Monitoring per the AMELP.</p>
<p>Objective 3: Uptake and Maintenance of Key Water Use Behaviors Among Households Increased</p>	<p>Safe water habits (Pay-for Use) are adopted and maintained</p>	<p>Community/LGI buy-in and active support of safe water habits, pay-for-use water.</p> <p>Local CSOs and community groups lead campaigns to increase the use and importance of payment of water services.</p> <p>Regulations, monitoring, and enforcement frameworks in place to promote inclusive service delivery and adoption and maintenance of safe water habits</p> <p>LGIs oversee and enforce policies, regulations and</p>	<p>SBC and social marketing activities are actively being implemented in partnership with stakeholders (local leaders, youth champions, and CWCs).</p> <p>Residents in the two target counties demonstrate a technical understanding of safe water habits (pay-for-use service) and behavior change practices.</p>	<p>Conduct market research to understand communities' beliefs, needs, etc., related to water use behavior.</p> <p>Facilitate SBC campaigns/marketing with CSOs and other community leaders.</p> <p>Train LGIs (CWCs, NPHIL, EPA) on water quality risk, establish responsibilities for WSP related to water quality, including on requirements of related policies, regulations, and bylaws.</p>	<p>Review results from water quality tests and environmental spot-checks shared with customers.</p> <p>Monthly and Quarterly town halls.</p> <p>Routine interviews/surveys of Activity's beneficiaries.</p>

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		<p>bylaws (inclusion, safe water habits, social norms)</p> <p>Increased awareness and understanding of the importance of water quality among target communities.</p> <p>SBC messaging is targeted and tailored to the communities.</p>			
	<p>Poor and marginalized groups have access to basic water services</p>	<p>Adoption of pay-per-use system(s).</p> <p>Development and adoption of approaches for inclusive local investment decisions.</p> <p>Increased access to microfinance and income generating activities addressing the ability to pay for the services by the poor and the marginalized.</p> <p>Private sector investment(s) to reduce financial barriers.</p> <p>LGIs (PDU) and CWC empowered to monitor microfinance and income generating activities.</p> <p>Physical, social, and financial barriers to access basic water services are removed.</p>	<p>Savings and Credit Cooperatives and solidarity lending groups, such as Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) or Revolving funds and savings group schemes, are established and active to address water system upkeep (and expansion) efforts in partnership with CWCs and WSPs.</p> <p>Low-income and marginalized households have access to basic water services.</p>	<p>Work with communities to develop water service delivery improvement plans with real costs to assist in funding requests from LGIs.</p> <p>Support the development of local financing mechanisms, such as Village Savings and Loans Associations.</p> <p>Work with WSPs, CWCs to develop inclusive business models, with potential support through GUCs.</p> <p>Support LGIs, CSOs, and communities to design advocacy campaigns for increased funding and/or regulatory change.</p> <p>Support LGIs to have inclusive mechanisms to provide input to the planning, implementation, funding, and monitoring.</p>	<p>Monthly and Quarterly town halls; review local development plans.</p> <p>Routine interviews/surveys of Activity's beneficiaries.</p> <p>Monitoring activities as per AMELP.</p> <p>Review of organizational scorecards.</p> <p>Review of beneficiary' or community testimonials on activities.</p> <p>Monitoring and analysis of GUC process, successes, and lessons.</p>

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	<p>Participation of women and other marginalized groups as decision makers in the water service delivery system</p>	<p>Gender/inclusivity benchmarks are included in all institutional arrangements that lay the foundation for inclusivity criteria in water investments.</p> <p>Market inclusivity initiatives in place to enable access to finance by women groups / vulnerable groups.</p> <p>Transparent and effective mechanism(s) are in place to facilitate, enhance, support, and strengthen women's participation in decision making and empowerment in water service delivery.</p> <p>Decision-making systems in place that address barriers to women and marginalized groups' participation in the water sector at county and community.</p> <p>Acceptance by national and subnational governments that women participating in decision making and leading initiatives is positive.</p> <p>Women and marginal groups have access to resources to fund their work.</p>	<p>Active representation of women and consultation of diverse voices at all levels of leadership and decision-making; and empowerment.</p> <p>Women groups incentivized and actively participate in decision making, lead initiatives and/or act as change agents.</p> <p>Monthly or quarterly town halls organized by LGs (PDU) where stakeholders can voice their water service delivery concerns, women's consultation panels.</p> <p>Campaign focused on recruiting and retaining female agents - focal point businesses.</p>	<p>Facilitate/advocate for local policy and legal framework that recognizes the legitimacy and value of women and youth in water governance (participation in decision making).</p> <p>Incorporate gender benchmarks in all institutional arrangements that encourage inclusivity criteria in water investments.</p> <p>Conduct/facilitate empowerment trainings for women, supporting female influencers, and providing support to youth champions to develop their leadership and advocacy skills.</p> <p>Conduct/facilitate professional coaching and mentoring network of women - improving women's decision-making power and productivity as actors in the water sector.</p> <p>Promote town halls through CWCs and mentor town hall facilitators on ways to increase active/meaningful participation of women and marginalized groups.</p>	<p>Conduct formative research on gender in rural water projects</p> <p>Baseline Survey.</p> <p>Attend Monthly and Quarterly town halls.</p> <p>Routine surveys of Activity beneficiaries and community leaders</p> <p>Review reports from annual vulnerability assessments.</p>