



Republic of Liberia

LIBERIA SANITATION AND WATER AGENDA (LISWA)

The Sanitation and Water for All: a Global Framework for Action
-SWA-

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The sanitation and water situation in Liberia requires increased Government commitment, and we have resolved to prioritize water and sanitation delivery in our development agenda. Our Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) to “Lift Liberia” outlines our commitment to increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation by 25% between 2008 and 2012.

The Liberia Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) Agenda agrees with the SWA guiding principles and is committed to achieving the MDGs through the PRS targets. The SWA guiding principles are also enshrined in two key water and sanitation policies adopted in Liberia in 2009: the Integrated Water Resource Management Policy; and the Water Supply and Sanitation Policy. Liberia’s commitment to sanitation and water was further reinforced when H.E. President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf accepted the role of Goodwill Ambassador for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Africa, at the 2nd Africa Water Week in Midrand, South Africa on 10th November 2009.

Liberia signed the *eThekwin*i Declaration (AfricaSan) on Sanitation on 22nd February 2010 which includes a commitment to allocate a minimum of 0.5% of GDP to sanitation and hygiene. The Government’s own financing of the sector is estimated to be around 1% of the total budget in the 2008/2009 fiscal year, which is insufficient to contribute significantly to the MDG targets. However, to ensure greater improvement in achieving the SWA aims in Liberia, the Government has allocated sector Ministries and Agencies 7.3% of PRS water and sanitation costs for fiscal year 2010/2011. This allocation covered the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy (Liberian Hydrological Service); Ministry of Public Works (Bureau of Community Services); Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (Division of Environmental and Occupational Health); and the Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC).

As part of a major drive by the Government, the implementation of the adopted Water Supply and Sanitation Policy (WSSP) will ensure the establishment of a functioning National Water Resources and Sanitation Board (NWRSB) which will enable a significant improvement in the coordination of the sector. Furthermore, the recommended institutional arrangements in the WSSP such as the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Bureau and Directorate for Community Mobilization and Hygiene Promotion, will shortly be implemented.

Liberia is currently engaged in the Country Status Overview (CSO) process and will contribute meaningfully to future GLAAS or JMP surveys.

A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system for the WASH sector will be developed to ascertain up-to-date coverage data in order to capture achievements of the PRS and MDGs and to ensure targeting to the un-served. The M&E data will be essential to facilitate high level advocacy targeting policy and decision-makers. The principle of a sector wide approach will be initiated to galvanize coherence of the sector.

The civil crisis in Liberia damaged to existing infrastructure and resulted in a brain-drain which has affected the capacity of the water and sanitation sector. Our major bottlenecks include insufficient trained manpower and low managerial and logistical resources. Another critical bottleneck is the lack of an effective information management system for the sector to better guide the advocacy, coordination, and planning processes.

In an effort to create strong actionable plans and planning frameworks for the WASH sector, the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy in consultation with other line ministries and agencies is currently leading the formulation of a five-year (2011 – 2015) water and sanitation sector strategic plan (SSP) to be completed by November 2010.

As part of the SSP, the Government and its partners will endeavour to implement a human resource development plan to address the current gap bearing in mind gender mainstreaming.