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Project Title: Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project (RWSSP)

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Project Summary

This paper will present on the activities of Community Mobilization and Empowerment (CME) and Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) under the capacity building component of the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project (RWSSP) in Sierra Leone. The objectives are to increase sustainable access to safe water and basic sanitation, and to develop a comprehensive national framework for RWSS investments. The objective of the CME and CLTS is to empower communities to improve their hygiene and sanitation practices and to sustainably manage their Water facilities. The activities will take into account the relevance of gender and climate change issues.



1. Background

Community Mobilization and Empowerment and Community Led Total Sanitation activities

The Government of Sierra Leone has secured a loan and grants to provide reliable access to safe and sustainable water supply which has remain a major challenge to national development. More than half of the population depends on surface water sources and more than 80% of the rural population lack proper sanitation and hygiene facilities. The lack of access to clean water will be exacerbated by projected climate change. The individual capacity to build resilience is extremely low, leaving the water sector vulnerable. One main challenges in the RWSS sector has been the lack of capacity of local communities.

2. Beneficiary profile

The project will directly benefit an estimated 600,000 people of whom about 47% are women. It covers 5 Districts namely Bonthe, Kambia, Koinadugu, Kono and Pujehun. The project will promote the use of improved sanitation facilities and an estimated 42,860 households will be enabled to improve their hygiene and sanitation habits. At least 13,100 households (92,000 people) will gain access to improved sanitation facilities, thereby significantly reducing water-related diseases. The project activities will establish 2000 WASH committees in at least 360 in Kono, 480 in Koinadugu, 220 in Bonthe, 480 in Kambia, and 480 in Pujehun with Committee executives including 50% female representatives. In total 22, 385 people age above 18 will be trained on the operation, management and maintenance of rural water supply and sanitation in relation to climate change resilience.

3. Achievements and challenges

The CME and CLTS activities have achieved 65% of its target. There is a 70% functional WASH committee in the five locations. There have been 30% increases in the number of improved household sanitation facilities/latrines. The challenge is only 20% ODF has been achieved by the project though 90% functionality of all the rehabilitated and newly constructed water points and sanitation facilities constructed. There has been evidence of reduced incidence of diarrheal disease during the past season and currently 5 to 10% increase in girl child school attendance in the districts. The raining season with heavy rain fall in the country poses a big challenge to the WASH committees' activities and construction stops at some point in the season. Behavioral change also poses a risk for sustainability. ***"A 12 years old girl, Boimanya living in Yonnie village at Pujehun district said she use to spend 20 minutes to fetch 20 liters of water from the river to wash in the morning before going to school now spends less than 5 minutes to collect water at the stand post given her more time to prepare for school"***

4. Project support and sustainability

The RWSSP is financed by the AFDB with government counterpart funding, co financed by DFID, GEF and RWSSI. The executing agency is the Sierra Leone Water Company, (SALWACO) in collaboration with 5 participating District Councils, NGOs and contractors together with and under monitoring from the Ministry of Water Resources (MoWR), Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) and Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). The district councils will assume ownership and are sensitized on their roles in the operation and maintenance of WASH facilities. To participate in project monitoring; provide ongoing technical support to the WASH committees; set aside a special budget for meeting the cost for fixing major break down beyond the ability of the communities and for future expansion and collaboration with key stakeholders (e.g. SALWACO, Water Directorate and relevant sector ministries (MHS, MWR, MEST,) in project implementation and further support. They Monitor extension services provision by NGOs and organize District monthly WASH coordination meetings quarterly.



5. Future plans

The RWSSP will be completed in 2018 leaving 600 000 people with improved water supply and sanitation facilities in five districts in Sierra Leone. Two thousand (2000) WASH committees have been established, trained and functional. The question remains is how will the communities continue to operate and manage the facilities sustainably. The project exit strategy has been based on establishment of WASH committees at the least level. The district and local councils will take ownership of the facilities while playing oversight and supervision role over the WASH committees thereby creating a sustainable communications platform in which exchange of ideas can ensure and further friendly communications can take place to inform a bottom-up decision-making process in the WASH sector. They will also create community-based adaptation planning, and household-level risk reduction interventions to build resilience to climate impact and gender mainstreaming. The DC and LC will monitor the effectiveness of WASH committee and improve quality of local capacity building efforts based on monitoring results. Higher operation and maintenance costs of facilities will be referred to the DC development fund. Committees are trained on fund mobilization and financial management to up keep their facilities. Collaboration with key institutions is also mapped for sustainability.



(a)Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) Facility in Bonthe District b) Borehole with Solar powered pump Water facility



Community Mobilization and Sensitization on WASH in Kambia District



TOT of WASH Committees