



# SDG 6.5.1 Stakeholder Consultation Report

## Liberia

September 30, 2023

## Executive Summary

This report outlines the process of Data Collection and Reporting for the Third Cycle of Reporting on SDG 6.5.1 in Liberia.

Tasked with the responsibility of data collection and reporting, Liberia's national focal point worked closely with a consultant hired to facilitate the process. The following points give a summary of the process:

1. A parallel approach was adopted for the stakeholder consultation.
2. Blank SDG 6.5.1 survey forms were distributed to a wide range of stakeholders (government, academia, CSOs, gender experts, etc.)
3. Stakeholders were engaged (by the focal point, facilitator and technical team) via email, phone calls, teleconferencing, and in-person meetings to ensure that each stakeholder filled out the survey forms
4. The results were received and the survey scores were tabulated by the facilitator and averaged across responses from various stakeholder
5. A validation workshop was hosted, bringing in a diverse range of stakeholders (31 participants). See Annex 1 for list.
6. Stakeholders discussed and debated survey result scores during the validation workshop
7. The scores were then adjusted based on justification presented by different participants
8. Consensus was reached on each score and agreed upon by the participants
9. The survey report was compiled by a technical committee (led by focal point and facilitator)
10. The focal point submitted the draft survey report to the SDG 6.5.1 Help Desk to provide support and undertake quality assurance.

The three main highlights of the process were: a) Getting stakeholders to fill out the survey form; b) Convening stakeholders to validate the scores; and c) Compiling the final report.

For the survey form, it was challenging to get stakeholders to commit time to filling out the form. Most participants only filled out the form after repeated engagement through calls and in-person meetings. Additionally, most participants only provided scores and did not write texts in the "status and progress" nor "way forward" sections of the form. However, the validation workshop was used to solve this problem thus filling this gap.

During the Validation workshop, participants were given an overview of the process through PowerPoint presentations by the focal point, the facilitator and other SDG focal points present. After that, participants were broken up into four groups as per the four sections of the survey (Group 1: Enabling Environment; Group 2: Institutions and Participation; Group 3: Management Instruments; and Group 4: Financing).

The survey forms were then distributed to the various groups to do two things during their breakout session: 1) Debate the score and come to a consensus within their group (and mark agree, disagree or n/a to the scores for each question within their section); and 2) Fill out the

“status and progress” and “way forward” sections as well as the “climate change considerations” sections where applicable.

Based on the results from the breakout session, consensus was made on the scores and “free texts” were written in the applicable sections. Subsequently, a general discussion was held to debate the different scores, “status and progress”, “way forward” and “climate change considerations”. There were some dissenting views, especially on sections 3 and 4 but consensus was reached through dialogue.

Based on this process, it is established that the priority action areas for Liberia include:

- 1) Policy improvement – the policies and strategies that the IWRM sector relies on are outdated. The latest policy, the IWRM policy of 2007, references the MDGs while current realities are on the SDGs. The policy needs to be reviewed and updated to reflect the country's current challenges and aspirations. When that is done, the need for sector-specific legislation can be determined.
- 2) Institutional Capacity – there is a need for a national entity with the capacity and responsibility for IWRM implementation. Additionally, sectoral coordination is particularly important amongst the different entities with IWRM-related responsibilities. These measures are especially important to the progress of transboundary, national and basin-level cooperation. Current progress being made toward a dedicated Ministry of Water as well as transboundary arrangements within the Mano River Union (MRU) are steps in the right direction.
- 3) Financial – there is a need for significant budgetary support from traditional funding sources as well as tapping into new streams of financing for the sector (especially private sources in addition to funding from current development partners)

In conclusion, Liberia is not on course to reach the global targets for SDG 6.5.1. To do this, the country must have an average score of 91% or above for each of the four survey dimensions and these conditions are most likely unrealistic by the year 2030. As shown in the completed survey report (which has been submitted to the SDG 6.5.1 Help Desk), the country's current score is 22%. Nevertheless, the country can make significant progress and attain a mark of over 50% if recommended measures are put in place.

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## 1.0 Conclusions from facilitated discussions on Section 1: 'Enabling Environment'

For an "Enabling Environment" the main challenge to progress in Liberia is:

- **Outdated policies and strategies:** The latest policy, the IWRM policy of 2007, references the MDGs while current realities are on the SDGs. The policy needs to be reviewed and updated to reflect the country's current challenges and aspirations.

This main challenge to progress can be addressed by:

- **Reviewing and updating the IWRM policy of 2007:** The updated policy should reflect the country's current challenges and aspirations, and it should identify the need for sector-specific legislation or not.

The rate of progress has been slow. The country's current score for this section is 27%, which is well below the global target. It is unlikely that Liberia will reach High or Very high implementation by 2030 at its current rate of progress.

During the consultation process, there was a consensus on the score and that Liberia needs to dedicate resources to updating its policies and strategic approach to create an enabling environment for IWRM.

## 2.0 Conclusions from facilitated discussions on Section 2: 'Institutions and Participation'

For “Institutions and Participation”, the main challenges to progress in Liberia are:

- **Weak institutional capacity:** The institutions responsible for IWRM in Liberia have limited support to effectively implement the IWRM policy and strategy. This is due to several factors, including inadequate funding and training.
- **Lack of a dedicated national entity for IWRM implementation:** There is no single entity with the capacity and responsibility for IWRM implementation in Liberia. This lack of coordination makes it difficult to make progress on IWRM goals.
- **Gender inequality:** Women are underrepresented in the institutions responsible for IWRM and in stakeholder participation processes.

These main challenges to progress can be addressed by:

- **Strengthening institutional capacity:** This can be done by providing training to staff, increasing funding, and improving coordination between institutions.
- **Promoting stakeholder participation:** This can be done by raising awareness of IWRM, building capacity for stakeholder participation, and developing mechanisms for stakeholder engagement.
- **Addressing gender inequality:** This can be done by promoting gender equality in the workplace and in stakeholder participation processes.
- **Establishing a dedicated national entity for IWRM implementation:** This entity would be responsible for coordinating IWRM efforts across the country. It would also be responsible for developing and implementing the IWRM policy. This can be a department also under the proposed Ministry of Water.

The rate of progress on this section has also been slow. The country's current score for this section is 26%, which is well below the global target. It is unlikely that Liberia will reach High or Very high implementation by 2030 at its current rate of progress.

During the consultation process, there was a consensus that Liberia needs to dedicate resources to supporting a dedicated institution with the responsibility and capacity to spearhead IWRM activities.

### 3.0 Conclusions from facilitated discussions on Section 3: 'Management Instruments'

For “Management Instruments”, the main challenges to progress in Liberia are:

- **Limited monitoring instruments:** This impedes the ability of decision-makers and users to make rational and informed choices between alternative actions. For instance, national and comprehensive monitoring of water availability and quality is still a challenge.
- **Limited coordination between different stakeholders:** There is limited coordination between different stakeholders in the development and implementation of water monitoring instruments. Most often, these monitoring efforts are done at project levels rather than at the national level.

These challenges can be addressed by:

- **Developing and implementing additional monitoring instruments:** This should be done at the national level in consultation with local governments and their communities rather than through ad-hoc projects.
- **Strengthening enforcement of existing instruments:** This can be done by providing training to staff and increasing resources.
- **Improving coordination between different stakeholders:** This can be done by establishing a coordination mechanism for IWRM stakeholders.
- **Investing in capacity development:** This includes training of staff and stakeholders on IWRM principles and practices, as well as the use of monitoring instruments.
- **Promoting knowledge sharing and collaboration:** This can be done through workshops, and other platforms that bring together different stakeholders to share knowledge and experiences about what data they have and their implications.
- **Ensuring that management instruments are aligned with national and international water policies:** This will help to ensure that management instruments are effective and sustainable. Special focus must be placed on transboundary basins and aquifers.

As for the rate of progress on this section, it is also low. The country's current score for this section is 24%, which is well below the global target. It is unlikely that Liberia will reach High or Very high implementation by 2030 at its current rate of progress.

During the consultation process, there were dissenting views on Liberia's status for water monitoring. Nevertheless, it was agreed that the Liberia Hydrological Services (LHS) has made some progress on water quantity monitoring while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is making some progress on water quality monitoring.

## 4.0 Conclusions from facilitated discussions on Section 4: 'Financing'

For "Financing", the main challenges to progress in Liberia are:

- **Limited financial resources:** Liberia has limited financial resources available for IWRM. This is due to several factors, including a low GDP, a large national debt, and limited access to international finance.
- **Limited private sector investment:** The private sector is not investing enough in IWRM. This is due to many factors, including a high perceived risk and a lack of incentives.

These challenges can be addressed by:

- **Mobilizing additional financial resources:** This can be done by dedicating a budget line to IWRM activities in the national budget, attracting more international aid, and tapping into new sources of financing, such as climate finance and private sector investment.
- **Improving the efficiency of financial resource allocation:** This can be done by developing a national IWRM financing strategy that coordinates the allocation of funds from different sources and by improving transparency and accountability in financial management.
- **Creating a more favorable environment for private sector investment:** This can be done by reducing the perceived risk of investing in IWRM and by providing incentives for private sector investment.

As for the rate of progress in this section, it is the lowest of the four. The country's current score for this section is 10%. It is unlikely that Liberia will reach even "High" implementation by 2030 at its current rate of progress. To overcome this, the country must start by developing a national IWRM financing strategy that mobilizes and allocates financial resources efficiently and creates a more favorable environment for private sector investment in IWRM.

During the consultation process, there were dissenting views on Liberia's status of "Financing". Some participants proposed higher scores but it was argued and agreed upon that the lack of budgetary support from the government of Liberia justifies the low score for the section.

## 5.0 Next steps

The consultation process identified a number of key challenges and opportunities for IWRM implementation in Liberia. The challenges include limited financial resources, inadequate policy frameworks, and weak institutional support.

The challenges can be addressed by creating an enabling environment through updated policies; mobilization of additional financial resources from a variety of sources (including government, international donors, and the private sector) and strengthening institutional capacity through training, technical assistance, and improved coordination between stakeholders.

Overall, Liberia is making some progress in IWRM implementation, but the overall rate of progress is slow. At its current rate of progress, Liberia is unlikely to achieve the global targets for SDG 6.5.1 by 2030.

It is recommended that Liberia should:

- Develop and implement a national IWRM plan. This plan should provide a framework for addressing the cross-cutting challenges and for achieving the global targets for SDG 6.5.1.
- Invest in capacity development. This includes providing training to staff and stakeholders on IWRM principles and practices, as well as the use of management instruments.
- Promote knowledge sharing and collaboration. This can be done through workshops, conferences, and other platforms that bring together different stakeholders to share knowledge and experiences.
- Ensure that management instruments are aligned with national and international water policies. This will help to ensure that management instruments are effective and sustainable.
- Create a more favorable environment for private sector investment. This can be done by reducing the perceived risk of investing in IWRM and by providing incentives for private sector investment.

Lastly, there is a need for an official national (interim) target setting. This would help to track progress and identify areas where additional effort is needed. Interim targets could be developed in the context of Stage 2 of the SDG 6 IWRM Support Programme.

## 6.0 Annexes

### Annex 1: List of Workshop Participants

|    | <b>Attendee Name</b>   | <b>Organization/Affiliation</b>                  | <b>Contact Number</b> | <b>Email Address</b>   |
|----|------------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| 1  | Moiwah F. Karvah       | University of Liberia                            | 778769129             | <a href="mailto:moiwahfkarvah@gamil.com">moiwahfkarvah@gamil.com</a>         |
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| 3  | Edward S. Johnson      | Liberia Hydrological Services (LHS)              | 777601989             | <a href="mailto:ehohnson601989@gmail.com">ehohnson601989@gmail.com</a>       |
| 4  | Roberto G. Jalahoulu   | University of Liberia                            | 778343633             | <a href="mailto:robertoalahoulu95@gmail.com">robertoalahoulu95@gmail.com</a> |
| 5  | Alvin S. Bono          | Ministry of Internal Affairs                     | 775951567             | <a href="mailto:bonoalvin@gmail.com">bonoalvin@gmail.com</a>                 |
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| 10 | Gabriel S. Flaboe, Sr. | Ministry of Public Works (LURP)                  | 779111988             | <a href="mailto:wrp.midp@gmail.com">wrp.midp@gmail.com</a>                   |
| 11 | Oscar B. Otto          | Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC)       | 770163411             | <a href="mailto:oscarbotta@outlook.com">oscarbotta@outlook.com</a>           |
| 12 | Jeremiah S. Tamba      | Liberia Hydrological Services (LHS)              | 777766604             | <a href="mailto:jeremiahtamba72@gamil.com">jeremiahtamba72@gamil.com</a>     |
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| 14 | Patricia togbe         | Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Protection  | 777719577             | <a href="mailto:mgcspdmrpta@gmail.com">mgcspdmrpta@gmail.com</a>             |
| 15 | Halala W. Lokulo       | Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)                    | 776282026             | <a href="mailto:hkokulo@moa.gov.lr">hkokulo@moa.gov.lr</a>                   |
| 16 | Joseph Charles         | Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)            | 777932238             | <a href="mailto:josefacha2020@gmail.com">josefacha2020@gmail.com</a>         |
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|    |                            |  |           |  |
|----|----------------------------|--|-----------|--|
| 27 | Fakpana S. Sonjor          | National Water Sanitation and Hygiene Commission | 886947215 | <a href="mailto:f.sonjor@gmail.com">f.sonjor@gmail.com</a>               |
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| 29 | Wynitta K. Gwaikolo Mayson | Liberia Hydrological Services (LHS)              | 776351863 | <a href="mailto:gwynitak@gmail.com">gwynitak@gmail.com</a>               |
| 30 | Sekouba Kamara             | Liberia Hydrological Services (LHS)              | 776640522 | <a href="mailto:kamarasekouba13@gmail.com">kamarasekouba13@gmail.com</a> |

| Stakeholder groups           | Level of engagement (mark with 'X')   |                     |                               | Additional information<br>(e.g. which stakeholder organisations were involved, how they contributed or were engaged, or any challenges faced)   |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|---|
|                              | Low (given opportunity to contribute) | Medium (some input) | High (discussion/negotiation) |   |
| National water agencies      |                                       |                     | X                             | National water agencies contributed. They included the National Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Commission (NWASHC); Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC); the Liberia Hydrological Services (LHS); the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the Forestry Development Authority (FDA); Ministry of Agriculture (MoA); Ministry of Public Works (MPW) and Ministry of Mines and Energy; etc. |
| Other public sector agencies |                                       |                     | X                             | Several other public sector agencies contributed including the Ministry of Transport (MoT); the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection; the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP); the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL); the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA); etc   |
| Sub-national water agencies  |                                       |                     | X                             | National agencies contributed as they have staff responsible for sub-national   |
| Basin/Aquifer agencies       |                                       |                     | X                             | Experts on basin/aquifer contributed because an agency does not exist   |
| Water User Associations      | X                                     |                     |                               | It was a challenge getting water user associations' participation   |
| Civil society                |                                       |                     | X                             | CSO representatives contributed   |
| Private sector               |                                       | X                   |                               | Private for-profit institutions contributed   |
| Vulnerable groups            |                                       |                     | X                             | Vulnerable groups (youth and women) contributed   |
| Gender expertise             |                                       |                     | X                             | A gender expert from the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection  |
| Research/academia            |                                       |                     | X                             | University lecturers, researchers, and students contributed   |
| Transboundary expertise      |                                       |                     | X                             | Focal Point for SDG 6.5.2 and other national transboundary experts contributed  |
| Other SDG focal points       |                                       |                     | X                             | Focal Points from other indicators such as SDG 6.3.2 contributed  |

## Annex 2: Agenda

| <b>National Consultation and Stakeholders' Validation Workshop for SDG 6.5.1</b>   |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Agenda Item</b>   | <b>Responsible Party</b>            |
| <b>Registration &amp; Breakfast - 9:00 - 9:45</b>  | All                                 |
| <b>Welcome and Introduction (10:00 - 10:15)</b>  |                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome Remarks</li> </ul>  | Eugene Caine (NWASHC)               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introductory Remarks</li> </ul>   | Guah Kennedy (LHS)                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Official opening</li> </ul>   | Immanuel Freeman (LHS - Consultant) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self Introduction (Name &amp; Institution)</li> </ul>   | All                                 |
| <b>SDG 6.5.1 - Background and overview (10:15 - 10:20)</b>   |                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background to SDG 6.5.1 and the 2017 and 2020 results</li> </ul>  | Wynitta Gwaikolo-Mayson (LHS)       |
| <b>SDG 6.3.2 - Background and Relevance (10:25 - 10:35)</b>  |                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Background, relevance and action plan for reporting on SDG 6.3.2</li> </ul>   | Eugene Caine (NWASHC)               |
| <b>SDG 6.5.1 - Presentation (10:35 - 11:00)</b>  |                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding SDG 6.5.1 Report - 2023</li> </ul>  | Immanuel Freeman (LHS - Consultant) |
| <b>Breakout (Facilitated discussions) - 11:00 - 12:00</b>  |                                     |
| <b>Questions under sections 1,2,3,4 (12:00 - 13:00)</b>  |                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reading and review to understand the sections and questions</li> </ul>  | ALL                                 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Filling status and way forward</li> </ul>   |                                     |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting back and discussion - including agreeing on scores for questions in sections in the survey and capture 3-5 key points from the discussion for the narrative sections to each question, to support the rationale or capture divergences</li> </ul> |                                     |
|  |                                     |
| <b>LUNCH BREAK (13:00 - 14:00)</b>   |                                     |

|   |                                     |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Group Presentation from breakout session @ 5mins per group (14:00 - 14:40)</b> |                                     |
| <b>Report Findings Presentation (14:40 - 15:00)</b>                               | Immanuel Freeman (LHS - Consultant) |
| <b>Discuss Annex B (15:00 - 15:20)</b>  | All                                 |
| <b>Wrap up and closing of the meeting (15:00 - 15:30)</b>                         | Immanuel Freeman (LHS - Consultant) |

### **Annex 3: Facilitator's Comments**

The consultation process was successful. The survey form was well-structured and comprehensive. Utilizing an MS Word version while having the option to use an online version was very intuitive and this significantly improved the data collection process.

However, the volume of information on the form required major commitments from participants. Participants had to spend time reading long paragraphs of text to understand what was to be done before proceeding to score. Additionally, they had to write down their thoughts on the "status and Progress", "Way Forward" and "Climate Change Considerations" for multiple sections. Due to the time commitment to complete the survey, stakeholders had to be contacted multiple times before a favorable response was obtained. This was a burdensome process for the technical committee.

Nevertheless, all the information on the form was useful. However, measures to streamline the process need to be explored. The online version of the form is a step in the right direction but more needs to be done to limit the amount of time that stakeholders have to commit to one sitting. Perhaps the survey can be broken up into sections and answered separately to enable partial completion.

As for the workshop, it was attended by a diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives from the government, the private sector, civil society, and academia. The discussions were engaging and insightful.

Lastly, the validation workshop was also used as an opportunity for the national focal point for SDG 6.3.2 to engage stakeholders about the reporting process for that indicator. This was placed on the agenda to give an overview to the stakeholders present and give an indication that they will also be contacted for relevant information relating to Liberia's report on SDG 6.3.2.

## Annex 4: Photos



Validation Workshop Photos



## PRESENTATIONS



**BREAKOUT SESSION:**



## Annex 5: SDG 6.5.1. Survey Scores

| Question No. 1<br>(Enabling Environment) | Score<br>(0-100) | Question No. 2<br>(Institutions & Participation) | Score<br>(0-100) | Question No. 3<br>(Management Instruments) | Score<br>(0-100) | Question No. 4<br>(Financing) | Score<br>(0-100) |
|--|------------------|--|------------------|--|------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| 1.1a                                     | 50               | 2.1a   | 30               | 3.1a                                       | 30               | 4.1a                          | 10               |
| 1.1b                                     | 10               | 2.1b   | 40               | 3.1b                                       | 10               | 4.1b                          | 10               |
| 1.1c                                     | 40               | 2.1c   | 30               | 3.1c                                       | 20               | 4.2a                          | 10               |
| 1.2a                                     | 20               | 2.1d   | 30               | 3.1d                                       | 20               | 4.2b                          | 10               |
| 1.2b                                     | 20               | 2.2e   | 20               | 3.1e                                       | 40               | 4.2c                          | 10               |
| 1.2c                                     | 30               | 2.2a   | 10               | 3.2a                                       | 20               | 4.2d                          | 10               |
| 1.2d                                     | 20               | 2.2b   | 10               | 3.2b                                       | 20               |                               |                  |
|  |                  | 2.2c   | 10               | 3.2c                                       | 30               |                               |                  |
|  |                  | 2.2d   | 40               | 3.2d                                       | 30               |                               |                  |
|  |                  | 2.2e   | 50               |  |                  |                               |                  |
|  |                  | 2.2f   | 20               |  |                  |                               |                  |
| <b>Section 1 Average</b>                 | <b>27</b>        | <b>Section 2 Average</b>                         | <b>26</b>        | <b>Section 3 Average</b>                   | <b>24</b>        | <b>Section 4 Average</b>      | <b>10</b>        |
| <b>Indicator 6.5.1 Score</b>             |                  | <b>22</b>  |                  |  |                  |                               |                  |