



# ***PROCEEDING OF ETHIOPIA ONE WASH NATIONAL PROGRAM – CONSOLIDATED WASH ACCOUNT (OWNP- CWA-II)***



## ***SIX MONTHS REVIEW WORKSHOP***

February 2022, Adama Ethiopia



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## **1. Background**

Implementation of OWNP-CWA phase-II has been launched since November 2019. The CWA-II program is the continuation of the Phase I ONWP-CWA which was prepared based on the findings and recommendations forwarded from the phase I program review and focused on newly developed strategies, directives, and indicators of GTP-II /10-year sector development plan and looks beyond to establish sector reform and towards meeting SDGs by 2030. It is designed to increase harmonization, alignment, integration and partnership among and between development partners (DPs) and the GoE.

In the implementation period so far, CWA Phase-II program is facing problems of significant disparities in performance among the different regions owing to differences in capacity of regional implementing sectors emanating from the availability/lack of experienced staffs, resource limitations, readiness problems (lack of already made shelf projects and assessments that help enhanced implementation), limited capacity and involvement of the private sector etc. The fact that the abovementioned reported performance of the program in the period so far is reported from four to five regions illustrates the existing disparities. Though efforts were being made by federal sector ministries, development partners and concerned stakeholders to provide technical backstopping support that aim to improve implementation capacity of some of the emerging regions, the result was not as such crucial and the issue still needs huge concern and focus from the Government and all concerned

Some of the main reasons cited for the low performance of program activities as compared to the plan so far is long time taken in preparatory and start up activities, long times taken for study and design preparation processes, over estimated cost of submitted proposals compared with the fixed allocated fund (Cr-WaSH) which forced projects for elongated rebidding processes, Lack of interested qualified bidders to compete in CR-WaSH projects, the national security conditions in different parts the country and the case of COVID19 pandemic.

The fact that the programs midterm review is approaching, it is mandatory to expedite implementation and enhance achievement of set targets. To this effect, the National WASH Coordination Office (NWCO) together with Federal Sector Ministries organized this performance review workshop to assess the current performance of the program in the different regions, identify implementation bottlenecks that hampered the move forward and exhaustively iron out top most priority issues to be given due attention for expedited implementation in the period ahead. The overarching objectives of the Workshop thus are:

The objective of the review workshop is to assess implementation of the CWA Phase-II program activities progress towards achieving its intended targets and review of actions to be taken for effective and expedited implementation. The workshop will also discuss with relevant regional bureaus heads and PMU staffs on strategies to enhance program implementation so as to achieve program targets in the remaining periods of implementation. The review will focus on the following key areas:

- i. Review progress on the implementation of the CWA Phase II one and half year progress;

- ii. Major challenges encountered
- iii. Recommendations and ways forward

## **2. Introductory Notes and Remarks**

The Review workshop was opened by an opening remark made by the guest of honor His Excellency State Minister Ambassador Asfaw Dingamo of the Ministry of Water and Energy. In his remark, H.E noted that the One WASH National Program is the country’s flagship program that have been under



*His Excellency State Minister Ambassador Asfaw Dingamo delivering Opening Remarks*

implementation for years with the aim of achieving sector wide targets of providing improved water supply, sanitation and hygiene services to the unserved population of the country in rural and urban areas. He further noted that the program follows the WASH implementation principles stated in the WASH implementation Framework i.e., Integration, Harmonization, Alignment and Partnership with the

aim of achieving a consolidated One Plan, One Budget and One Report. He then underscored that the consolidated WASH account OWNP-CWA takes the major portion of the program that practically demonstrated the principles stated above in a bid to contribute for the achievement of sector wide targets.

H.E. further noted the low performance levels so far is associated with and the different challenges the program is facing including among others COVID19 Pandemic, security, significant cost escalations and other issues.

Elaborating on some of the change processes undergoing in the Federal Ministries and Regional bureaus, H.E. noted that, following the new structural formations and arrangements of the Government Ministries particularly the new restructuring of the Ministry of Water and Energy from the previous systems of Water Development Commission, Basin development Authority and Energy sectors which was being carried out in the past six months to some extent impacted implementation of ongoing projects. But these processes are currently under final stages and we need to adjust to the new system to help minimize the impact on slowing down of implementation pace of the program. H.E further acknowledged that there was a financial flow problem during the time of restructuring particularly auditing the financial systems under the previous structures has taken too much time and this has impacted the cash flow to regions and settlement of utilizations.

H.E. also noted that it seems there is weak link between federal ministries and implementing regional bureaus that may be due to the different reasons mentioned earlier and this need to be improved urgently and the coordination and integration among all need to be strengthened. The review meeting could help improve the situation. H.E. further underscored that this review meeting will also provide an important opportunity and input to strengthen and expedite implementation of the program as the poor performance recorded so far (only 23% of achievement levels in two and half years could critically affect the program, increased attention for an expedited implementation need to be given at all levels.

Speaking on damaged WaSH facilities in Afar and Amhara regions as a result of the war and extreme drought situations that is currently affecting the lives of people in Oromiya, Somali, Sidama and SNNP regions, H.E underscored that, a task force established at the ministry is currently preparing emergency plans using assessment reports on the extent of the damage, and the task force will monitor and support the impacted regions with an urgent emergency actions to help minimize the impact and restore service in the areas. H.E. further indicated that for this purpose, there will be a possibility that program resource in the affected regions may be redirected and utilized to respond to the emergency situation.

H.E. finally declared that the six-month review meeting is officially opened and invited and encouraged all the participants to make active and fruitful deliberations so that the program implementation would benefit utmost from the outcomes of the meeting.

### **3. Presentations**

#### **3.1. National Six Month and Cumulative Progress Report of OWNP-CWA-II**

The first presentation on the six month and cumulative program performance was delivered by Ato Abiy Girma, Coordinator of the National WASH Coordination Office (NWCO). The National Coordinator started his presentation by giving a brief background on the OWNP-CWA Phase-II program i.e., program overview and basic information provided to refresh participants and enable



*Ato Abiy Girma, NWCO Coordinator delivering his Presentation on Program Progress*



new regional participants understand the situation including targeted woredas and towns, detailed component design (program components and sub-components), planned activities and implementation arrangement, program budget and indicative sector wide budget allocation for the 2019-2024, and regional Vs federal budget distributions etc. Accordingly, it was indicated that CWA Phase-II program is a 5-year program (July 2019-June 2024). The program targets 355 Woredas (307 rural WaSH and 48 CR-WaSH woredas) and 64 towns (56 small and 8 medium). The program will benefit a total of 4.39 million people in the targeted areas with the provision of improved WaSH services. It was indicated that a total of 649.94 Million USD is allocated for the implementation of the program which is jointly financed by the World Bank, British Embassy, UNICEF, Government of The Netherlands, Government of Finland, AfDB, Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), South Korea International Cooperation for Development (KOICA), and the GoE.

The presentation has also included major planned activities, targets and approved budget for the 2014 EFY program implementation. Accordingly, it was indicated that the NWSC has approved a total of ETB 3.83 Billion for the 2014 EFY program implementation.

Following the brief background, the presentation from the NWCO coordinator highlighted the major plans and achievements recorded in the six months of 2014 EFY and cumulative achievement. Accordingly, in the Rural WaSH component, 39 different rural water supply schemes are constructed in the fiscal year and cumulatively, 853 new rural water supply schemes 56 rehabilitated schemes and 2 expansion got completed which makes 24%, 22% and 1% performance levels from the program life target respectively. In addition, 39 borehole drilling got completed.



*Mareko Woreda Goto-Mendifa RPS from BH source*

The completed projects benefited a total of 238,352 rural people. The report also indicated that, majority of beneficiaries from rural water supply schemes are reported from Amhara (65%), Oromiya (16%), SNNP (6%) and Benishangul Gumuz (4%) regions.

Under strengthening the sustainable services delivery, 345 WASHCOMs are established and strengthened for the management of water supply schemes and training given to 1,725 WASHCOM members in planning, O&M and management of schemes. Furthermore, study & design for the construction of two spare parts supply center is completed. 3 MSE crews established for O&M. It was also indicated in the report that though this subcomponent i.e., enhancing sustainable services delivery subcomponent has been introduced in the CWA-II program with a separate allocated budget to strengthen post construction management of WASH schemes and ensure sustainability of services, its implementation so far was not satisfactory and need to be given due attention as it is critical important subcomponent.

In the rural community sanitation, a total of 16,086 improved HH latrines are constructed in the six month and cumulatively, 384,023 HH sanitation facilities got completed that benefit 1,459,468 rural people. In addition, 697 Kebeles have achieved ODF status, and 76 MSE for sanitation marketing have been established.



***Improved HH Latrines constructed in Program Woredas***

In the urban water supply component, 8 medium town and 33 small towns’ water supply projects are found under different stages of feasibility study, detail design and bidding process. Civil work construction have been started in 4 medium towns-Dilla (26%), Sawla(18%), Tercha(32%) and Finchawa(6%), contract agreement signed and contractor mobilized and started construction for 2 medium town Woliso (6%) & Worabe(15%) and 2 medium town projects (Yabello and Legetafo project re-scoping is done. In small towns’ water supply projects implementation, 1 small town water



***Dilla Town 3000 M3 Reservoir & office under construction***

supply project (Shilabo in Somali Region) has been completed benefiting 10,111 urban residents. Moreover, 10 small towns are under different stages of construction (5 in Amhara region, 3 in Oromiya, 1 in SNNP 1 in Somali). The remaining regions are reported to be under different preparatory processes.

Under the institutional WaSH sub component in schools, cumulatively, 3 new water supply and 22 latrine facilities have been constructed in the six month. Cumulatively 221 water supply (137 new and 84 rehabilitations) and 451 latrine facilities (332 new and 119 rehabilitated) have been completed. In addition, 23 MHM facilities are constructed in the year making a cumulative of 81 and a total of 643 schools have benefited from the provision of WaSH package so far.

In health facilities, construction of 46 water supply (33 new and 13 rehabilitated) and 94 latrines facilities (91 new and 3 rehab), 86 incinerators and 35 placenta pits have been constructed in the six month. Cumulatively 172 water supply (119 new and 53 rehabilitated) and 432 latrines facilities (364

new and 68 rehab), 287 incinerators and 165 placenta pits have been constructed and 604 health posts/centers were benefited so far from the provision of improved WASH services in package.



*WASH Facilities constructed in Health institutions and Schools*

In the CR-WaSH component of the program in the period so far, identification and preparation of feasibility study for CR - WaSH Projects in priority one drought prone woredas is commenced in seven/7 regions. Out of the anticipated 41 CR - WaSH Project's, implementation is started in 26 projects. From these, 2 projects have started civil work construction -Sankura in SNNP and Ongogi in Gambella and currently reached 25% and 3% status respectively. In addition, contract agreement signed for Asaita Afambo project in Afar. 1 projects (Zehamusit in Amhara,) under re-planning (re-scoping) due to budget deficit and 1 project (Dalifagi in Afar) under detail design stages. Furthermore, Gura Damule in Somali is under procurement and for Ayun at No objection stages. 3 projects (Afdera in Afar, Hammer Bena & Tsemay in SNNP and Erer in Somali are currently under source development stages and additional 29 projects are found under study and design stages.

With regard to CR-WaSH projects implemented under the National Metrological Institute (NMA) the report indicated that two National climate outlook forum were organized and the seasonal climate outlook and its impact on water resource availability was presented and discussed by all stakeholders. In addition, the CLIDATA BID process was finalized and invitation sent for bidders and TOR prepared for consultancy and is waiting for endorsement. Regarding activities planned under the former Basin Development Authority (BDA), development of hydrological station master plan preparation is started, one operational and two consultancy TOR's was prepared and at bid process and procurement of Hydrological data Mart for historical observation data rescue at process.

The presentation from the national coordinator have also highlighted major activities implemented under the environment and social safeguard. Accordingly, environmental and social screening (ESS) is conducted for 466 sub projects up to the first quarter of 2014 EC.

With regard to fund transfer and utilization, the presented report indicated that, ETB 4.49 Bi have been approved by the NWSC for the 2014EFY plan implementation, and according to the information from MoF, up to the second quarter of 2014 EFY a total of ETB 2,742,696,697 (19% of program life budget) has been transferred to program implementers at regional and federal levels. It was reported that cumulatively, ETB 1,183,198,150 have been utilized and reported which is only about 43% from the transferred and 8% from the program life budget.

The report included some of outstanding challenges encountered in the course of implementation which includes among others:



- Need for a smooth closure of implementation of CWA Phase-I
  - Settlement of outstanding invoice and ineligible expenditures in SNNP and Amhara
  - Expedited finalization of pending/ongoing small and medium town water supply contracts in Oromia, SNNP, Amhara and Afar
- Slow implementation progress against expected Program result and regional variations under CWA II
  - Slow fund utilization: with 2.5 years of implementation only 8.2% (ETB 1,18 billion) is utilized and transferred only 19% (ETB 2,74 billion) of the total resource (ETB 14.4 billion)
  - *Low physical performance* (Rural, Small towns and CR-WASH)
- Price escalation on key Urban, Rural and CR contracts leading to shortage of resource
- Planning of water supply without the source secured
- Limitation of Program support budget
- Absence of interested contractors for school WASH facility projects due to price increment
- Low quality of ESIA, ESS, ESMP, ARAP documents coming from regions for review.
- Absence of uniform information/data/ exchange mechanism and poor documentation.
- Lack of awareness on safeguard related readiness criteria at all levels

Finally, the report highlighted on some of the prominent issues as recommendations that need due attention of all concerned in the period ahead which includes:

- Enhancing the Program management and governance
  - Strengthening the WaSH governance and coordination arrangements: Ensure establishment and functionality of NWSC, NWTT, NWCO RWSC, RWTT, RWCO, ZWCT, WWT
  - Strengthening Procurement and Contract Management
    - Adequate Procurement Staffing and continuous capacity building:
    - Adequate documentation and readiness for Procurement: realistic cost estimates, strong document appraisal team and etc.
    - Effective and efficient contract management
  - Strengthening regular reporting and M&E of Program results indicators
    - Annual review of signed Performance agreement:
    - Enforcing regular data collection, verification and reporting on key sustainability indicators
    - Operationalization/institutionalization of the WaSH MIS
- Enhanced focus towards sustainable service delivery
  - Strengthening O&M capacity at woreda and community level (WaSHCOMs, O&M crew, fast moving spare part shops and etc...)
  - Strengthening capacity for integrated WRM): Planning and implementation for water source protection and monitoring (quality and quantity) of water supply schemes,



- Need for enhanced focus towards Operational efficiency of town water service providers (water boards, utilities, business plan, affordable tariff)
- Engagement of beneficiary communities and the private sector for sustained service delivery
- Strategic and holistic response to sanitation service delivery and Institutional WaSH
- Early preparation for the Program’s MTR
- Strengthening the Coordination Vertical and Horizontal

### **3.2. Presentation on Joint Implementation Support Mission and Program Midterm Review**

Ato Abiy Girma the Coordinator for the NWCO have again delivered two brief presentations focusing on the upcoming Joint Implementation Support Mission (JISM) and Program Midterm Review. Highlights of the presentations are summarized as follows.

#### ***Joint Implementation Support and Review Mission:***

- A Virtual JISRM is organized to be carried out since 21 February 2022 involving all program implementers and development partners with the aim of:
  - ✓ *assessing implementation progress* of the One WaSH National Program – Consolidated WASH Account (OWNP-CWA) Phase II),
  - ✓ *review implementation progress of last mission and recent steering committee meeting agreed actions,*
  - ✓ *review compliance to fiduciary and safeguard requirements in line with the POM,*
  - ✓ *review preparation activities for the Program’s MTR in June 2022, and*
  - ✓ *Review the implication of the new structure at Federal Sectors (MoWE) on the Program.*
- The virtual mission will review federal and regional level Program implementation including Dire Dawa City Administration and will conduct a virtual visit to selected Program woredas and towns from each region.
- A joint Aide Memoire summarizing the mission findings and agreed actions will be shared at the end of the mission.

The JISRM was originally thought to be virtual due to movement restrictions as a result of the COVID19 Pandemic but finally it was disclosed that the mission will be face-to-face owing to relative improvements.

### **3.3. OWNP-CWA II Program Midterm Review (MTR):**

The Midterm Review is a prescheduled intervention already been set on the program implementation manual (POM). The program is facing different sorts of challenges and changes since start of implementation on December 2019 which include among others COVID19 Pandemic, security (war in the Northern regions), restructuring of key implementing institutions, creation of new regions, state of emergency etc. The main objective of the MTR is to:



- The main objective of the MTR will be to objectively assess the *Program’s design and implementation towards achieving its objectives and outcomes as specified in its Operational Manual.*
- The MTR will assess and *provide early signs of Program successes and challenges with the goal of identifying any changes required to strengthen implementation* and the likelihood of achieving the intended results.
- The MTR will review the *Program’s relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and risks of sustainability.*
- The MTR will assess the *Program Operational Manual for any gaps and new developments that need to be addressed.*
- The findings will *inform decisions on future orientation and emphasis of the Program during the remaining implementation period and recommendation for updating the POM.*

The MTR will involve all Program regions and federal implementers and will select representative woredas and towns to be part of the review process.

The MTR will be carried out by an independent consultants and will be facilitated by the NWCO & the World Bank. At the end, the final output of the review, will be the final MTR report that addresses all important evaluation dimensions as indicated in the TOR prepared.

Finally, all regional and federal level implementers are instructed to get ready for the MTR work closely for the success.

### ***3.4. Sector Ministries Presentation on Six Month and Cumulative Performance***

Following the consolidated national report by the NWCO, federal sector ministries i.e., MoWE, WRDF, MoH, MoE and MoF have also presented their respective sector based performance reports to re-iterate and look in further depth program performance levels, implementation bottlenecks and identify critical areas of urgent actions.

The fact that major parts of the sector presentations are already included in the consolidated program report of the NWCO it is not presented here for the sake of avoiding redundancy.

### ***3.5. Regional Bureaus Presentation on Six Month and Cumulative Performance***

Likewise, all program implementing regions and sector bureaus have prepared and presented their reports in the review meeting which was carried out in two rounds.

**Round 1:** Dire Dawa City Administration, Harari, Somali, Afar and SNNP regions all sector bureaus and coordination Offices.

**Round 2:** Oromiya, Amhara, Sidama, Benishangul Gumuz, and Gambella regions all sector bureaus and coordination Offices.



## 4. Plenary Session

Following are summarized points of supplementary comments, concerns, views and reflections forwarded by the participants of the two workshops based on the performance reports presented above and actual situations and implementation bottlenecks in the ground:

### 4.1. Summary of Discussion Points Forwarded by Round-1 Participants and Reflections

- **Afar Region:** raised concern about why the contract signing of Asayita- Afambo CR-WaSH project is delayed too much. Similarly, on Dalifagi project why is the contractor payment for the drilling of two boreholes (by Afar Water Works Construction Enterprise) delayed this much?
- Similarly, the regional representatives voiced their concern on Afdera CR-WaSH project i.e., source development work in 6 sites have not been started due to access road problem. And also noted the critical problems of the region to contribute the Matching fund contribution due to the existing crisis (the War with TPLF) and the region is expecting support of the Federal Government for this.
- Regarding problems in reporting the region commented on the complexity of reporting format and inability of woreda staffs to compile report using the formats and send to regions and noted as this is the reason for poor quality reporting.
- **Dire Dawa:** representatives of the city Administration different bureaus raised concern on delayed budget disbursement problems and the need to give due attention to the problem as it is impacting timely implementations.
- Asked on delayed procurement of motorcycles and vehicles and the problem it posed on implementation follow up.
- Commented on the need to re-initiate face-to face joint field implementation support missions by the Government and DPs which was being practiced before the COVID19 pandemic.
- **SNNP Region:** raised concern on the need to organize capacity building training on monitoring and reporting aiming to improve quality of reporting. This will also facilitate discussions (learning) and experience sharing among regions.
- Voiced concern on budget shortages due to significant market price escalations which is forcing the region to implement only parts of some projects i.e., planning to construct some RPS projects only up to reservoir excluding distribution systems which could not bring beneficiaries to the program.
- Commented on lengthy LC opening processes that need to be reduced. And significant offshore shipping cost increment (freight cost) should also be looked into.
- Remarked on the critical technical support needed from the Ministry for CR-WaSH projects that are being implemented in the region.
- Regional representatives have also raised concerns on delayed no objection responses on procurement plans uploaded on STEP.

- **MoE:** posed question on why school water supply systems construction is not being carried out in most regions currently and where the problem is and who is responsible for the failure? Furthermore, even the constructed few schemes in some of the regions are not well documented and reported.

Ato Tameru Gedefa, from the Ministry of Water and Energy, made clarifications and reflected on issues raised above. Speaking on issues related to CR-WaSH projects implementation, Ato Tameru noted that technical experts were hired who base and work with regional water bureaus with the support of UNICEF to strengthen implementation capacities and follow up of CR-WaSH projects.

Responding on issues of strengthening the M&E system, reporting and documentation practices, he underscored that federal sector ministries need sit together, make assessments on the existing problems and plan for capacity building programs including organizing trainings and experience sharing events to solve the challenges on reporting.



*Partial view of participants attending the Review Meeting*

Ato Nuredin Mohammed, also from the Ministry of Water and Energy reflected on some of the issues raised. He remarked that there are two types CR-WaSH projects based on funding source i.e., Projects financed by GoE and projects financed under the CWA-II program as the reports presented here is only for those projects under the CWA and those projects funded by the GoE were being handled on a separate stage.

Regarding the Asayitta-Afambo CR-WaSH project, it was commented that the contract agreement for the construction of the project has already been signed currently the Ministry is expecting the contractor to submit performance guarantee.

Responding on delays in procurement of vehicles and motorcycles, Ato Nuredin noted that the procurement process of vehicles and motorcycles has already been finalized and payment was made to the UNOPS. The problem was due to the UNOPS system not willing to accept LCs and instead asked for a direct payment in hard currencies which took much time in negotiating but finally the World Bank mediated and covered the requested payment in hard currency. Currently production of the vehicles and motorcycles is completed and the motorcycles are being transported and the vehicles are expected to be delivered up to mid of March 2022.

It was also noted that, it is well understood situation that since recently freight cost has been increased significantly with the potential of affecting projects and effort will be made to adjust to the problem discussing with concerned stakeholders so that to reduce the impact.

Related to repetitive problems/issues being raised still now, it was reflected that this is happening due to lack of consistent and strict follow ups.



Issues related to poor attention on implementation of activities under enhancing sustainability of services sub component was also strictly commented from the ministry as it is highly critical issue which needs stringent focus by all implementers otherwise it may lead to failure on achieving the program goal we set.

Concerning matching fund contribution, it was responded that MF contribution is not a willingness issue rather it is a binding agreement made between the GoE and program financers and that it is a mandatory requirement for regional bureaus to contribute the agreed proportion of MF for each projects in their respective jurisdictions.

Regarding unplanned interventions in some regions, it was forwarded that this should not be exercised all the times. The program has 5 years and annual plans prepared by each region and endorsed accordingly. And we need to stick to the plan we made as much as possible. Apart from some unforeseen emergencies which is properly communicated and agreed and major rehabilitation works which is planned, it is unacceptable to deviate from the plan we had and focus on unplanned ones.

Regarding joint implementation support mission, the NWCO coordinator reflected that the JISM have been carried out using virtual platforms for the last two years since the COVID19 pandemic owing to movement restrictions on staffs of the development partners. The DPs were now allowed and agreed to carry out face-to-face missions owing to relative improvements in the pandemic, and the upcoming mission (as of February 28, 2022) will be made face-to-face at field level.

#### **4.2. Summary of Discussion Points Forwarded by Round-2 Participants and Reflections**

- **Sidama Region:** raised concern on budget shortages due to price escalations and asked if there is the possibility to revise physical and financial plans to adjust to the problem being faced and/or if possible to pool resources from the periods ahead.
- Raised questions on when will exchange rate gains be shared to regions.
- As a new region, needs close support (logistic) and frequent follow up.
- **Oromiya Region:** representatives from the region remarked on the need for decision making officials of the regions to attend such review workshop and meetings for increased awareness and attention and providing immediate solutions.
- Problem of program budget in some sectors while others have a lot of idle budget at hand and its consequence on delayed budget releases to those bureaus who need it due to low utilization and settlement in some other bureaus. What will be the solution for this and how can the unused budget be shifted to those who need it.
- Remarkd on the need for framed agreed actions with time period and responsible body so that to easily evaluate their practicability.
- Regarding weak implementation status of activities planned under enhancing sustainable services delivery, regional representatives remarked on the need for guidelines or manuals and other supporting documents if any to guide implementation of planned activities as some of the problems may be related with awareness/capacity gaps.



- Voiced concern on problems related with regional bureau of construction involvement and demand to make approval by the same on each and every construction projects which is leading to lengthy processes wasting implementation time significantly.
- Raised concern on delayed completion and delivery of financial management manual of the program which is not yet finalized and delivered as it might help solve many of the problems related with finance.
- **Amhara Region:** need close support as most of the WASH facilities are destroyed or robbed due to the recent war with TPLF.
- Voiced concern on frequent turnover of leadership at all levels bureau heads and woreda leadership are changing frequently and this demands a close follow up and support in awareness creation to the new comers so that they can smoothly facilitate implementations.
- **Benishangul Gumuz Region:** commented on critical staff turnover problems due to very low salary and benefit packages which is not yet solved though the issue was raised several times in the past is affecting implementation.
- **MoWE:** Dr Alemayehu Mekonen, Technical Consultant for rural water supply at the Ministry of Water and Energy commented on site level design review practices in Oromiya region as good experience. He further raised his concern on the long delay in Oromiya region to hire procurement specialists. Asked how the region handled the issue and works related with procurement and commented on an urgent need to identify the problem and devise solutions.
- He also noted on the importance of strengthening post construction support such as capacity buildings, institutionalization and maintenance capacities.

Highlights of reflections from federal ministry of water representatives on issues raised by the participants are summarized as follows:

Regarding staff salary issues, Ato Abebe Tadesse, Director for International Finance and Cooperation Directorate at the Ministry of Finance, responded that MoF had been working on the issue in the past in a bid to harmonize salary levels of staffs working in different channels. The recently made salary adjustment is also part of this effort.

Ato Nuredin Mohammed, from the Ministry of Water and Energy and Ato Abiy Girma, Coordinator at the National WaSH Coordination Office, made clarifications and reflected on issues raised by workshop participants.

Ato Nuredin started his reflections by appreciating the meeting participants for their active participation in the meeting and thanked all regional and federal presenters. He then remarked that, good discussion was made and encouraging performances in some new regions like the Sidama region is appreciated. But challenges raised on regional reports are mostly focused on external issues and lacks inward looking which could have been more useful for improvement and this calls for a critical attention and inward looking as to identify problems within.



He then underscored that the CWA program do not have problem of money but in contrary the problem is underutilization. Budget transfers to federal and regional implementers will be made based on performances. Though budget utilization differs by sectors, transfers are made based on regional utilization reports not sectoral. The problems of budget shortages in some sectors while having plenty of it in the other sectors (like in Oromiya) should be discussed and solved at regional levels. RWSC have the mandate to review sector performances and decide which sectors to use the money the region have at hand. RWCOs and finance bureaus are also responsible to identify which sector is working as scheduled and which one is lagging and present to RWSC facilitate budget shifting from one sector to the other based on RWSC decision.

Regarding STEP and no objection related challenges, Ato Hussien Bolo from Engineering Procurement and Contract Administration Directorate at the Ministry of Water and Energy responded that any attempt for purchasing without completing the necessary procurement procedures, like preparing procurement plans and uploading on the STEP online platform and acquiring approval ahead of implementation, is a wrong act. This is a mandatory procedure and failure to comply with may lead to ineligible expenditure and rejection. There are cases of such an act observed in health and education sectors in some regions which need to be corrected. On the problem related to delays of no objection requests and approval, he noted that the problem was created due to bulkiness of the documents that demand huge time for evaluations and currently the problem is being solved as the World Bank assigned additional separate experts to work on rural and urban projects evaluations and approval. He finally underscored on the need to organize refresher trainings on procurement procedures on a regular basis to build up regional capacities to handle the issues well.

Comment was also given on the dire need to strengthening the governance and oversight systems and coordination platform as there seems to be weakening of regional coordination offices in some regions i.e., absence of RWCO in Sidama region and associated problems in communication and reporting and the urgent need to establish the RWCO in the region. Furthermore, delayed substitutions of RWCO coordinators and other staffs in place of resigned ones in regions like Benishangul Gumuz and Gambella need to be given due attention.

## 5. Ways Forward

Finally, after an in-depth deliberation, participants of the review meeting unanimously reached consensus and put the following summarized points as recommendations and ways forward.

1. Regional WASH Sector Bureaus/PMUs and Coordination offices to strengthen their joint effort to ***enhance/expedite the implementation of planned program activities for the 2014 EFY*** and the remaining program period. Preparing ***revised plan of Action*** for the annual plan (2014EFY) that can accelerate the implementation.
2. Regional WASH Sector Bureaus/PMUs and Coordination offices to ***work together for the preparation*** of the upcoming ***OWNP-CWA II Joint Implementation Support Mission***. The mission will be conducted jointly with the program financers DPs and Government Officials and experts at all levels. Regional WASH teams are expected to ***prepare detailed presentation on***



*regional program performance* on the mission and *attend all the meetings and discussions* with the team and provide any requested information on time.

3. Regional WASH Sector Bureaus/PMUs and Coordination offices are also expected to work closely together for the upcoming **Program Mid-Term Review (MTR)** to be held in June 2022. This MTR and its findings would be crucial for the program in:
  - ✓ Deciding the fate of the program continuation in subsequent phases
  - ✓ Strengthening implementation of the current phase II of the program in the remaining periods
  - ✓ Revise **targets (Beneficiary or Activity), unit costs** and **budget** in line with the actual situation happening on the ground and considering wider socio economic conditions as needed.
4. Strengthen and improve program performance Monitoring and Reporting Systems and documentation practices;
  - ✓ Adopting comprehensive reporting of performances and challenges, Financial disbursement and utilization reports as per the reporting format outlined in the POM;
  - ✓ Ensure timely reporting as per schedules indicated/agreed on the POM;
  - ✓ Ensure high level of **Report Quality (data consistency and accuracy)**;
  - ✓ Ensure proper communication protocols (official communication & reporting signed by RWSC);
  - ✓ Ensure advanced recording and documentation practices -updating Activity tracking Sheets every 15 days and communicating to any concerned body as needed.
  - ✓ Ensure documentation of best practices, learning and experience sharing supported with timely and explanatory pictures.
5. Federal WASH Coordination office (NWCO) and WASH Sector Ministries/PMUs are expected to carry out assessments on their respective sector bureaus M&E Systems and challenges of reporting and jointly plan/organize capacity building training on reporting and related issues accordingly in near future.
6. National WASH Coordination office (NWCO) and WASH Sector Ministries/PMUs are expected to organize and conduct joint field level supervision of performances and provide close technical and follow support to regional WASH teams.
7. MoF and the National WASH Coordination office (NWCO) to **review periodic budget utilization Vs Performance and provide feedback to regions on expenditures so far and available budgets** (for e.g. Harari & Afar).
8. MoF & the NWCO are also tasked to exert maximum effort possible to smoothen and enhanced budget transfer to regions.

## 6. Conclusive Remark from H.E. State Minister

His Excellency State Minister Ambassador Asfaw Dingamo has passed on his conclusive message to the review meeting participants, once again, focusing on strategic future actions that all program actors need to give due focus and urgent actions.

H.E. forwarded his first and foremost message that all sector actors to give due attention to the upcoming Joint implementation support mission and the Programs' Midterm-Review (MTR). He noted that the MTR is approaching and is expected to be held in the coming June 2022 which is a major milestone in the course of the program implementation. The MTR will provide an important opportunity in the search for potential solutions to most of the problems that the program is facing. It could be a good ground to



review and revise the program plan, unit costs and budget and readjust the targets if necessary in response to skyrocketing cost escalations and the consequent budget shortages that is currently affecting

*His Excellency State Minister Ambassador Asfaw Dingamo delivering Conclusion Remarks*

program implementation in all the components of the program. This needs to devise more practical plan and strategic approaches to change the situation in the period ahead.

H.E. further noted that problems related to reporting quality and reporting gap observed between regional and federal reports need to be avoided. The report need to be harmonized and should maintain appropriate quality standards all the times. Strengthening communication and linkages among actors at all levels would be crucial in improving the situation. Furthermore, necessary capacity building interventions need to be considered i.e., trainings, and experience sharing events need to be looked into to strengthen the capacity of staffs at all levels.

H.E. pointed out that the outcomes of the review meeting deliberation should capture the agreed actions as a way forward and need to be communicated to all actors at federal and regional levels and strict action plan need to be prepared for the follow up of implementations of the agreed undertakings

Finally appreciating the review organizers and thanking all the participants for their active participations H.E. concluded his remark.