

27 May 2022

National WASH financing Core Working group- Virtual meeting

Meeting minute

Time: 11:30 - 12:30

Participants: Tedla (MWA), Arto (COWASH), Lemessa (IRC WASH) and Kabuka (UNICEF)

Background information/briefing by Lemessa: how the National WASH financing Working group has been initiated; and the objectives of the platform:

- Initiated during Stockholm World Water Week August 2019 at a side meeting convened by the then Minister Dr. Negash Wagesho and the then Commissioner Dr. Besha Mogesse from the Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy. UNICEF, Water Org, IRC, COWASH presented in that meeting
- After coming from the World Water Week, a meeting was convened hosted by Water Org involving different donors, NGOs, multilateral, and government
- Water Org and IRC WASH were nominated to chair and co-chair the working group
- Core Group with seven members for close follow up of the wider working group was established
- After Water Org had been liquidated/closed in Ethiopia, UNICEF took the role of chairing the working group

Updates:

1. Arto: FCDO funded project called SCRS WASH has a Task on supporting the development of National WASH financing strategy
 - Now team leader has been recruited- Tesfaye Melesse-Health economist who had been working in World Bank; will join the project team as of June 1, 2022
 - Agreement with IRC WASH to provide international technical assistance for the Task (Development of WASH financing strategy) via an expert called **Caterina Fonesca**
 - Now the project team has begun conducting finance trend analysis for the last five years, which is part of the WASH financing strategy
 - The target is to have the strategy and action plan documents in the coming year (2023)
 - The National WASH financing Core Working group needs to communicate the SCRS project team as well
 - **Arto** is leaving by June 29, 2022 but will continue to support some WASH projects in Ethiopia virtually including the management of CMP website and the Core group membership. This is also a challenge on how SCRS is sharing the learnings
 - Can we pull-in more members for Core Group?
 - **Reflection: Open to have more members but it was suggested to limit to 5-7 members when we established. Out of those seven, only Water Org is out since they closed their office in Ethiopia; others like Danish red cross, Aqua for all, and all of us who are today are available**
2. Tedla Mulatu:
 - National WRM and strategy policy is not endorsed yet; ideally, such policy needs to reflect on WASH financing and such coordination platforms; how can this core group look for room to include some aspects of WASH financing and coordination platforms if any in the draft policy document before it will be endorsed

- Most NGOs and Donors are now channelling funding to emergency responses; how can we promote/use the opportunity in linking emergency resources to long term development to enhance WASH finance
 - **Reflection: The framework on WASH financing and coordination are already in the draft WRM policy and strategy**
 - There are lots of materials in CMP website; can we put the National WASH financing core group/wider group meeting minutes in that website?
 - The working group begun with the then Minister; it is vital to update the new state Minister
3. Kabuka:
- There is always a thinking of long-term development during the emergency response; and this should be reflected in planning and implementing emergency responses
 - WASH is very fragmented to coordinate in different countries as it is dispersed under different institutions: water, sanitation, and hygiene under different ministries. We need to find a way on how best to coordinate and advocate the WASH financing
 - Where do we convene the meeting of the wider group and the Core group? What were the practices?
 - **Reflection: Before the pandemic we had multiple in-person meetings hosted by Water.Org, UNICEF. Since the pandemic the meetings have been virtual**
4. Lemessa
- Different WASH financing related initiatives including Sanitation and hygiene focused activities led by the MoH with the support of USAID Transform WASH. Three thematic areas have been worked on: a) Sanitation subsidy, b) Sanitation and hygiene imported products tax exemption, and c) Sanitation loan. As part of sanitation subsidy, a protocol has been prepared and now waiting for approval by the MoH. With the lead of IRC WASH action research is now going on in-line with Sanitation subsidy; the research output is expected by September- October 2022. The Tax exemption and the sanitation loan initiatives are being in process
 - This Working group helps to bring those different initiatives together, especially when it is led by government

Action points:

- Lemessa to share the draft minute of the meeting; to contact the Danish Red cross and Aqua for all for next core group meeting
- Kabuaka and/or Lemessa to communicate Salfiso to check if he is with Aqua for all
- Next meeting of the Core group: **Tuesday 21 June at 10:30am; Lemessa to share the calendar invite**