

Cities Alliance Management Response and Action Plan

Evaluation Title: Delivering Climate-Resilient Solid Waste Management Services in Greater Monrovia, Liberia through CBEs, Mid-Term Evaluation.

Overall Response to Evaluation Report

Cities Alliance welcomes the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the independent Mid-term Evaluation of the European Union funded 4-year programme ‘Delivering Climate-Resilient Solid Waste Management Services in Greater Monrovia, Liberia through CBEs’. The evaluation was implemented by the independent evaluation firm Divalon Enterprises between January and May 2020. The results and learning generated by the evaluation will be fully utilised by Cities Alliance and guide the strengthening of programme delivery and results.

The mid-term evaluation was conducted across the 12 Local Government Authorities of Greater Monrovia Metropolitan area in reaching out to key stakeholders including household heads in informal settlements, Community Based Enterprises, National Association of Community Based Enterprises, Small and Medium Enterprises, community leadership groups and institutions including Monrovia and Paynesville City Corporations, WASH commission, Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Cities Alliance. The considerable efforts made by the evaluation team during the covid-19 outbreak in Liberia to engage programme stakeholders in both quantitative and qualitative data collection and feedback, as well as that willingness of all stakeholders to participate are greatly appreciated and have provided the programme with valuable information and independent insight for the next period of implementation.

Cities Alliance also notes that the evaluation was affected by the outbreak of Covid-19 in Liberia. This resulted in a fast-tracked period of data collection in early March 2020, and consequently negatively affected the representativeness of the data collected (with over and under sampling of some LGAs), and some potential bias in the measurement of key indicators. We acknowledge that the household-level data collected require interpretation with a degree of caution.

Overall, Cities Alliance is pleased to note that the evaluation confirmed that the programme is still on track to achieve its objectives. The evaluation concluded that the project is enhancing access to sanitation through more efficient and sustainable solid waste collection in Greater Monrovia. It found that all stakeholders consider that the project is providing a significant contribution to the waste sector. The evaluation highlighted specific results relating to the increased capacities of CBEs (particularly in record management systems), and the increased number of households with a planned form of garbage disposal. This result was linked by the evaluation to the substantial results emerging from awareness raising activities around Climate-Smart solid waste management through radio talk shows, community clean-up and education campaigns targeting schools.

Cities Alliance acknowledges the identified areas for improvement and the need to fast track Components 1 and 2 and has already fast tracked the implementation of several activities since the evaluation. Recommendations which are critical to achieving programme impact touch on several components and are fully documented in the management response below. The evaluation further situated the performance analysis of the programme within the complex context of the waste sector in Greater Monrovia, the impact of the economic crisis, and the unanticipated challenges to CBEs introduced by the Zogo scheme of private individual waste collectors in MCC. The evaluation identified key waste sector challenges that are beyond the direct control of the programme and that require a multi-agency approach. Recommendations to address these challenges are included in the table below and are addressed by the evaluators to the National Government, Municipal Authorities, NACOB and the CBEs.

Cities Alliance values this pause for reflection and invites stakeholders to undertake a similar process. Cities Alliance will organise a series of events with stakeholders to discuss the evaluation findings and recommendations, and their response.

Response to Recommendations and Action Plan

| Recommendations to Cities Alliance | Accepted or Rejected | Comments | Actions (Date to be completed) |
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| <p>Expedite implementation of all activities that lag behind schedule, particularly activities in Components 1 and 2. Functionalizing the loan Facility, Grant Facility and the construction of sorting, composting and recycling facilities should be given high priority.</p> | Accepted | <p>Cities Alliance acknowledges the noted implementation delays and has initiated processes to fast track implementation of all relevant programme activities. Completed actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of micro-finance concept notes; - Transfer of resources to ECO-Bank account; - Completion of the recruitment process of a Solid Waste Management Specialist and a Grants officer; - Engagement meetings with MCC and PCC to identify possible sites for construction sorting or transfer stations. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Completion of the micro finance scheme set-up including; concept note development, business plan templates development, Grant and loan award documentation guidelines among others. (Due July 2020) 2. Work with MCC and PCC to finalise site selection for sorting/transfer stations. (Due September 2020) 3. Award loans and grants to CBEs to enhance vertical and horizontal expansion. (Due August 2020). 4. Launch to the public the financial products and enable the mechanisms to receive proposals from potential grantees and loaners. (Due July 2020) |
| <p>Enhance efforts to reduce the per capita Solid Waste dumped in landfill. Diversion from landfills has become a major driver for many SWM projects. These interventions not only reduce per capita waste to landfills, but also generate life affirming livelihoods for the urban poor. The project should design incentives and awareness systems to motivate waste reduction, source-separation and reuse.</p> | Accept | <p>Cities Alliance fully accepts this recommendation and has increased efforts to set-up a fully functional grant facility to support CBEs, SMEs and other NGOs interested in composting and recycling initiatives.</p> <p>The completion and signing of an MoU with Eco Bank, recruitment of a grants officer and the CBE capacity building training on the 4Rs are significant steps that have been undertaken by Cities Alliance to reduce per capita solid waste dumped in the landfill.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Operationalization of the grant facility to support CBEs and SMEs engaged in recycling and composting. (Due August 2020) 6. Training to CBEs on Solid Waste Management accompanied by a set of several activities ((Due September and October 2020) 7. Integrate separation and reuse into awareness raising activities. (Due August 2020) |
| <p>Monitoring and supervision of Community Based Enterprises by NACOB is weak, needs to be strengthened. The evaluation found that</p> | Partially Rejected | <p>At the time of evaluation, Cities Alliance did not have any mandate to monitor or supervise the work of the CBEs. The mandate is entrusted to the City Authorities and the Community Management Team. However, the issues</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Engage with NACOB, Community Management Teams and the City Authorities to support their effective monitoring and supervision of the work of CBEs. This is an |

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| some CBE staff practice unhealthy waste disposal practices. | | raised on dumping of waste by CBEs will be addressed in the upcoming training sessions for CBEs, relating to the grants and loans. | ongoing process that will continue through the 4th year of implementation. (Ongoing to 2021) 9. Incorporate specific training on how to dispose of waste and the risks of improper disposal into the Cities Alliance upcoming training sessions planned for CBEs. This will be implemented through a set of capacity building activities (Due August, September and October 2020) |
| The need to separate the Theories of Change of the country programme. | Rejected | The Country programme initiatives and activities are inter-twinned in nature and all these contribute towards attained of the country programme objectives. For example, both the City Development Strategy and National Urban Policy initiatives of the Country Programme link to the programme. Separation of Theories of Change per project may disintegrate the functionality of the different components of the country programme hence making it difficult to align the contribution of each component to the overall achievement of the country programme results. | 10. Develop respective project Theories of Change but maintaining the overall Country Programme ToC. (Due August 2020) |
| Proposed Indicator Changes | | | |
| Incorporate a new indicator <i>“Percentage of Households receiving PSW collection services from CBEs in Greater Monrovia”</i> | Accept | Cities Alliance acknowledges introduction of this new indicator that can be used to estimate the CBE coverage in Greater Monrovia Metropolitan area. | 11. Since this is an additional indicator to the logframe, in the next year report the Cities Alliance will request the European Union to have this indicator introduced in the log-frame as an intermediate outcome. (Due November 2020) |
| Revise indicator: Number of CBEs that report improved revenue to <i>“Percentage of CBEs that report improved revenue”</i> | Accept | Cities Alliance proposes to have both indicators incorporated in the log-frame. | 12. Since this is an addition to the logframe, Cities Alliance will request the European Union to have this new indicator introduced in the log-frame as an intermediate outcome. This will be reported in the next year report submitted to the EU (Due November 2020) |
| At outcome level % of recycled waste going to landfill (organic & inorganic) is beyond project scope. This should be | Accept | This indicator as noted by the evaluation is beyond programme scope. Cities Alliance is proposing to revise the indicator as suggested. | 13. Request European Union to have this indicator revised in the log-frame as |

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| revised to “% of recycled waste going to skip buckets (organic & inorganic)” | | | indicated by the evaluation. (Due November 2020) |
| Targets for the following indicators to be reviewed to ensure all CBEs are supported <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of loans provided to CBEs by the Project ○ Number of grants provided to CBEs by the Project | Partially Accepted | Cities Alliance is prepared to award loans and grants to all CBEs but may be limited by the willingness of CBEs to take the loans or failure of CBEs to submit compelling business plans/proposals for funding. | 14. Engagement with CBEs on the criteria and selection eligibility for both loans and grants. (Due November 2020) 15. To reduce the risk of having a limited number of CBEs applying for loans and grants, The Cities Alliance will provide technical advisory services to all CBEs during the process of formulating business plans and proposals for composting and recycling activities. (Due July 2020) |

| Recommendations to programme Stakeholders | Actions by Cities Alliance |
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| National Government | |
| The need for improved SWM budget for city corporations | 1. Discussion of evaluation findings and specific recommendations to Government during the programme steering committee meeting (Due September 2020) |
| Fast tracking the formulation of the Waste Management Policy and Strategy | |
| The need to establish a policy to enforce mandatory requirement of households to subscribe to CBEs | |
| City Authorities | |
| Regular emptying of skip buckets | 1. Engage with City Authorities during Technical Committee Meetings to discuss evaluation recommendations to City Authorities. (Due August 2020) 2. Capacity Building training by Cities Alliance to City officials (ToT) on SWM. The ToTs will then train Zogos on proper solid waste management practices. (Due August 2020) |
| The need to gather accurate data on the quantities, type and characteristics of waste being generated | |
| Strengthening Public-Private-Partnerships in delivery of SWM Services | |
| Training of Zogos on basic SWM practices, supervise and monitor their operations, and have them integrated into the CBE Sector, by having CBEs employ them. | |
| NACOBES and Community Based Enterprises | |
| NACOBES should explore the possibility of adapting zoning laws to enhance competition, efficiency and effectiveness among CBEs by re-dividing Greater Monrovia in well-defined zones (LGAs) and allocating specific zones (LGAs) to specific CBEs for operation | 1. Capacity building training for CBEs and NACOBES on Solid Waste Management. (Due August 2020) 2. Facilitation of engagement meetings between NACOBES and City Authorities. (Due August 2020) |
| Better engagement and representation of CBE interests by NACOBES at National and City Government level, particularly in terms of recognition of CBEs as vital private players within the Waste Sector. | |
| The need for NACOBES to work along with Municipal Authorities to come up with a uniform collection fee to be charged to households. | |

NACOBE strengthens Monitoring and Supervision of CBE activities at Community level to ensure that CBEs and their staff are compliant with waste disposal standards and protocols set by the Environmental Protection Agency.