

When we animate people and their communities into action, it enables them to take ownership, mobilize, monitor and engage at their own level

## W We Can Deliver for Rights

Without access to clean water, improved sanitation and hygiene the poorest people will stay poor. More and more communities around the world are forced to survive with limited or no access to clean water, and the burden of collecting water usually falls on the shoulders of women and girls. It's estimated that globally they spend 200 million hours every single day simply collecting water for themselves and their families - time that could be spent in education, working and earning, with their family, or contributing to the community.

The **right to sanitation** entitles everyone to have physical and affordable access to sanitation, in all spheres of life, that is safe, hygienic, secure, socially and culturally acceptable and that provides privacy and ensures dignity.

Whereas, the **right to water** entitles everyone to have access to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use.

WASH-Net, is just one of many organizations collaborating with local citizens and communities to design programs that meet their specific needs while at the same time enabling them to act, engage and demand accountability from their duty bearers. This way we can remove barriers from participation as well as access in so many ways that mostly limits people from being part of what affects them.

In the case of 30-year-old Sonnie Tucker, from Kenema, access to safe drinking water means a dream come true reducing the health burden of drinking from unprotected sources.

*“Some years back before of WaterAid's support to HELP Sierra Leone, we had nothing as a community to call safe water – not even a place for us as women to call toilet. Our children go to school regularly but often sent home due to illnesses like diarrhea and sometimes malaria which takes the most part of the household limited savings. The lingering dangers of walking distances in the midst of uncertainties in the bushes have been a routine for me and my children in the course of bringing water home for the family. What I see now is hope for my kids, myself and many others like me who have braved it all in the dark moment of non-accessibility to services that we are now meant to understand is our right”*



Sonnie Tucker, Youth Leader from Semabu Village in Pujehun District.

## Social Action Groups

Part of what WASH-Net mostly push for after every HRBA session is to encourage communities to identify and overcome some of the main barriers to their water supply, sanitation and hygiene needs through facilitated discussion and community-led creation that facilitates the implementation of social action plans. Community-led social action to improve health is different from many WASH and health sector interventions in which communities are told what to do, provided with new resources, or given incentives to change their behavior. The idea of community-led social action is that it is developed and undertaken by the community. The uniqueness of this approach is that irrespective of how similar the challenges are in different communities, no social action plans and results are ever the same. This basically

## HRBA Spotlight



## SPOTLIGHTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS ENABLING ACCESS

These are stories from the field using HRBA and WaterAid through funding from UKAid. The UnTapped Project is also succeeding in to bring

### INTRODUCTION

In this edition of the WASH Voice, you will notice that it is exclusively focused on our joint Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) interventions with the UnTapped Project; improving access to water, sanitation and hygiene for rural communities with funds WaterAid Sierra Leone and UKAid.

It is implemented mainly in Kenema and Pujehun districts – with a national advocacy and sector strengthening component. Therefore, the myriad issues you will find in our regular newsletters are not in this edition because we are spotlighting more specifically on our HRBA work in the field for this period.

Special thanks to our dynamic partners from Kenema and Pujehun, MoPADA and HELP as well as our District and Regional Coordinators, Emmanuel Fawundu, Milton K. Dassama and Edward kai.

### Spotlight Dates

#### The Problem

Guaranteeing sanitation and national challenge for peri-urban communities who lack water and basic

“WASH services neither about just about rights of status and where

it is not a matter of social justice universal access

Patrick Cher WaterAid's Director in S

Existing water regulatory framework aren't making progress the underlying rapidly growing Without breakthrough make progress challenges face cities, town malnutrition, malnutrition stressors and exacerbated in

“Will we get water is it for drinking and girls have

# Giving Voices to Rural Communities in Pujehun and Kenema Districts - South and Eastern Provinces of Sierra Leone.



Across ten chiefdoms in Kenema and Pujehun Districts, the Untapped project which is jointly delivered by WASH-Net and WaterAid through funding from UKAid continues to embolden community voices and actions using the Human Rights Based Approaches to enhancing services delivery accountability for water supply, sanitation and hygiene. Service delivery partners like HELP Sierra Leone and MoPADA are strategically worked with in this drive; exploring collaborative location drivers for results and actions aiming at bringing together the right mixture of participants across the two project districts which interventions are mainly focused.

As a matter of fact, WASH sector governance is about the political, social, economic and administrative systems that determine who gets water when and how. A human rights-based approach (HRBA) emphasizes both development outcomes and the process by which rights are realized. It

to work with improving water governance.

## HRBA Training Targets

Since 2018, four training sessions have been conducted across ten chiefdoms in Pujehun and Kenema districts; targeting diverse array of stakeholder groups including but not limited to women leaders, youth, natural and traditional leaders, community-based organizations, and Community Health Volunteers among others. In all ten communities reached, four hundred participants have been directly trained and empowered with the right tools to rollout skills gained to their constituencies and communities.

## Training Methodology

The training sessions have been facilitated using host of participatory schemes and approaches designed to make learning simulations interactive. The facilitation team further deployed vital elements of the experimental learning cycle which requires direct experience, generalization, reflections and applying those experiences for real-time learning. These training methods therefore are aiming at bringing transformative change and knowledge building of citizens and their institutions in taking ownership of their rights to demand for WASH across a wide range of stakeholder groups at the central and district levels for effective WASH

## WASH As Human Rights

Recognizing that it is everyone's human rights to access basic and improved WASH services by the United Nations member states is a opportunity to not miss. Access to water and sanitation are recognized by the United Nations as human rights, reflecting the fundamental nature of these basics in every person's life. Lack of access to safe, sufficient and affordable water supply, sanitation and hygiene facilities has a devastating effect on the health, dignity and prosperity of billions of people around the world and has significant consequences for the realization of other human rights.

People are rights-holders and States are duty-bearers of providing water and sanitation services. Rights-holders can claim their rights and duty-bearers must guarantee the rights to water and sanitation equally and without discrimination.

*In our work as civil society in the country's WASH sector, engaging in routine policy and regulatory reform processes alone are not enough without providing the requisite skills and empowerment for people and their communities to hold accountable their stakeholders. This way, we are providing more reasons and evidences for action in a manner that justifies the urgency of what needs to be done to accelerate and expand access to water supply and*

## Delivering WASH Services as Rights.



MoPADA facilitating participatory community engagements

The competition for water resources due to scarcity and pressing water demands is real and has developed challenges in water allocation mechanisms and compromised the collective water and sanitation rights. Such persistent water despairs and their possible irreversible consequences are alarming and perilous until there is a big consideration of human rights in the delivery of essential services.

*The response to the water crisis from experiences, is as much political as it is technical or financial. WASH-Net through its HRBA and social accountability work supports communities to call for their rights to safe water, sanitation and hygiene – and to help service providers meet their demands affordably and sustainably.*

With so many still lacking access to basic needs like safe water and