

**Community Score Card on
NAWEC's Water Service
Delivery in Greater Banjul Area**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 1993, the “National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC)” has been the sole state distributor of Water and Electricity throughout The Gambia. However, the company has been struggling to adequately meet the demands of its subscribed customers while still unable to cover the whole country. Over the past couple of years, citizens have been complaining of either water shortage, unfixed busting pipes, smelly or colorful water supply from NAWEC. During this period of global pandemic caused by the Corona virus, frequent washing of hands is highly recommended by the World Health Organization to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Thus, the absence or shortage of water caused by NAWEC will leave families and individuals vulnerable to catching the virus.

Many households within the Greater Banjul Area (GBA) have been experiencing water shortage for more than a decade. In some cases, they have their taps open from 2am to 6am forcing them to be up at night to fetch and store as much water as possible for the day. While specific areas within the metropolitan area have not been receiving water supply for days, weeks and in worst cases for months. Even for those that are lucky to receive water supply, the water in some specific areas like Banjul turns out smelly which is unhealthy and unfit for drinking or for domestic use. NAWEC as an institution has been struggling with institutional weaknesses and lack of adequate capacity and materials to meet the demands of its users. NAWEC’s revenues comes from its users’ payment of services (electricity and water), government subsidies, grants and loans.

Gambia Participates considering the above identified problems launched a pilot project with support from the International Republican Institute (IRI) to conduct a rapid survey through Community Score Card (CSC) to determine the access to quality and quantity of water supply from citizens perspective.

MAIN FINDINGS

As a daily need for everyone, portable drinking water should be accessible and affordable to everyone, especially water services provided by a state company. While water is affordable in all the 5 communities assessed, Bakoteh pays higher water bill, which when compared to the average monthly income in the settlement is not affordable. The results of the survey reveals that while households in Bakoteh pay more for water services, they receive lesser water coverage than the remaining communities.

In Bakau, user satisfaction on NAWEC water service is very low while Bakoteh, London Corner and Faji Kunda also demonstrated lack of user satisfaction. Respondents from Bakau, prefer an alternative source of water supply (borehole) than NAWEC. Households also complained about the water bill not reflecting the coverage of water supplied by NAWEC for the billed month.

The report also shows that Bakau and Bakoteh receives an average of 9 hours water supply per day which does not meet their daily demand.

1 INTRODUCTION

Water is significantly important to keep us alive and moving but portable drinking water does not only keep us alive but sound and healthy. Thus, in order to improve quality and affordable water service delivery to citizens, it is crucial to record the experiences and satisfaction of users

which could inform service delivery institutions to be strategic in providing quality service delivery. It is in this background that Gambia Participates developed a Community Score Card to assess sets of identified problems in terms of water supply within the greater Banjul.

Community Score Cards (CSCs) are mechanisms that provide national/central and local government structures independent feedback from the perspective of public service users. CSCs could be used as credible tools to collect evidence needed to conduct strategic advocacy to improve service delivery. These score cards are conducted independently from government structures. CSCs are important in collecting data from citizens, the data collected could be used by Civil Society Organizations to activate strategic fact-based advocacy to push public service delivery institutions and the government at large to curb the menace that citizens are experiencing. It also helps local/ central government institutions and service providers to identify not only the symptom of the problem but the root cause of the problem and strategically allocate resources to solving the problem and putting mechanism to prevent its reoccurrence. Evidences from the CSC are crucial in convincing authorities that reforms are needed to improve service delivery within a specific area. Constructive conversations with authorities are integral to public sector reform and improved service delivery.

As this is a pilot project, considering the small sample size used in this survey, this report does not reflect the perspective of all users/beneficiaries of water services from NAWEC. Rather, this report could be used as a tool for advocacy to inform NAWEC, Public Utilities Regulation Authority (PURA), Ministry of Petroleum and the central government at large to ensure there is increased quality coverage but affordable of water service delivery in the areas assessed and as well use the report as a sample to gauge the common problems encountered by other communities in terms of access to quality water.

2 METHODOLOGY

To conduct an independent user perspective on the quality and quantity of water supply, an evidence-based approach has been used in this survey through the development of Community Score Card (CSC). The CSC collects independent user perspective on the provision of water supply from NAWEC through set of indicators that collect both qualitative and quantitative data on the identified problems. The CSC for this survey was developed by an independent expert in the field of Water and Sanitation Hygiene (WASH). The indicators in the score card ask the following questions:

- **Quality:** Does the water have an abnormal smell, colour, taste?
- **Quantity:** What is the average volume of water used per household (litres per capita per day)?
- **Coverage:** Number of beneficiaries per location
- **Continuity:** Number of hours of service per day
- **User satisfaction:** On a scale from 0 to 5, how satisfied are beneficiaries with water services?
- **Condition of service:**
 - How many inspections of the meter were made in the last 12 months?
 - Number of connections with water service
- **Affordability:**
 - How much do you pay monthly for water service? What is your monthly pay?

The above indicators make up the Community Score Card which is being assessed by trained Field Enumerators and Supervisors. Enumerators conduct face-to-face interviews with household heads or the breadwinner of the family to collect data on the above indicators and as well take photo evidences of the following:

- Color of the water
- Water leakages
- The readings of the water meter
- Water bill and an
- Opened Tap (to verify that there is no water supply from NAWEC)

Given this reality, the scope of the pilot CSC for Gambia Participates focused on urban water services in the Greater Banjul Area (GBA). Six communities were chosen based on the following categories:

- 1) wealthy, highly-transited, tourist areas;
- 2) middle class areas;
- 3) settlements.

Ten households/locations were assessed per category given a small sample size of 30 households. This allows Gambia Participates to conduct an expedited assessment under this pilot project in Bakau, Bakoteh, Banjul, Ebo Town, Fajikunda and London Corner.

3 FINDINGS

The data analysis in this section describes the analysis and finding from the data collected during the community scorecard, assessing NAWEC's water service provision in the Greater Banjul Area (GBA); Banjul, Bakau, Bakoteh, Ebo-Town, Faji-Kunda, and London Corner. The data shows the average water supply, affordability, its condition, user satisfaction, etc.

3.1 Affordability of Nawec's Water Service

Affordability of Nawec's water service is used as criteria to assess the monthly payment for water service against household head's monthly income. To help achieve the objective of the study, the study used two indicators (i.e. monthly water payment and monthly income). According to the respondents received, water services provided by NAWEC are not affordable. Respondents' complaint, water service bills are not the real reflection of the actual water usage.

Figure 1 below shows the average monthly income against average monthly water payment under the locations. The figure shows Bakau has an average monthly income of 19,000 GMD with an average month water payment bill of 602 GMD, and Bakoteh shows an average monthly income of 7,730 GMD, while Banjul, Ebo-Town, Faji-Kunda, and London Corner has 13,000, 8,000, 11,000, and 11,750 GMD respectively as an average monthly income household heads. In the same vein, the said households' (Banjul, Ebo-Town, Faji-Kunda, and London Corner) has 293.77, 932.4, 495.1, and 1,305.6 GMD of monthly water payment bills, respectively.

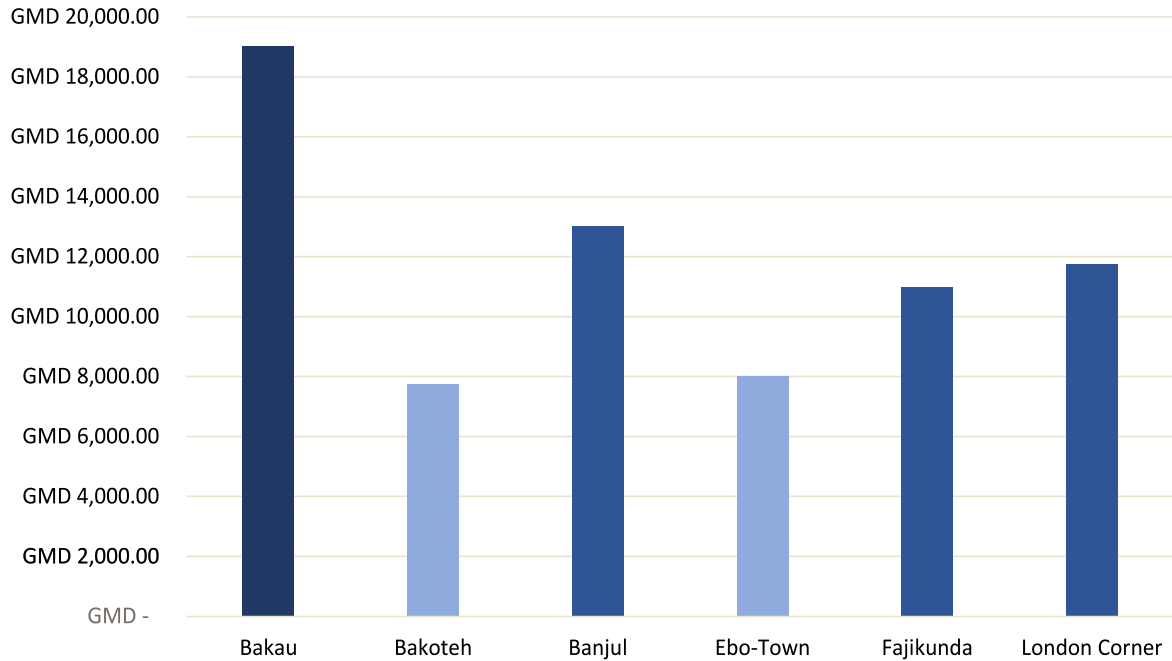


Figure 1 Affordability of Nawec's water services

3.2 Condition of Nawec's Water Services

Figure 2 shows the Conditions of NAWEC's water services indicating the number of times NAWEC inspected meters as well as, the number of water connections there is in the households under this survey. The table below shows the number of times NAWEC inspected meters in last 12 months and the number of water connections i.e. total number of functioning water connection in a household. All water connections in this study are considered functional and fully operational.

The results show an average of 10 times of number of NAWEC inspections for Banjul while Faji-kunda and Bakoteh indicated an average 5 times of inspection by NAWEC on their meters over the course of 12 months. London Corner, Bakoteh and Bakau reported an average of 9 and 3 times of inspections by NAWEC in 12 months respectively. On the order hand, the number of water connections in Banjul, Bakau, Bakoteh, Ebo-Town and Faji-kunda as shown in figure 2 depicts the average number of functioning water connections that receives water services by NAWEC. Bakau receives the highest number of connections at 4 while Bakoteh, Ebo-Town, Faji-kunda and London Corner all receives an average of 2 connections each with Banjul, second, receiving an average of 3 number of connections.

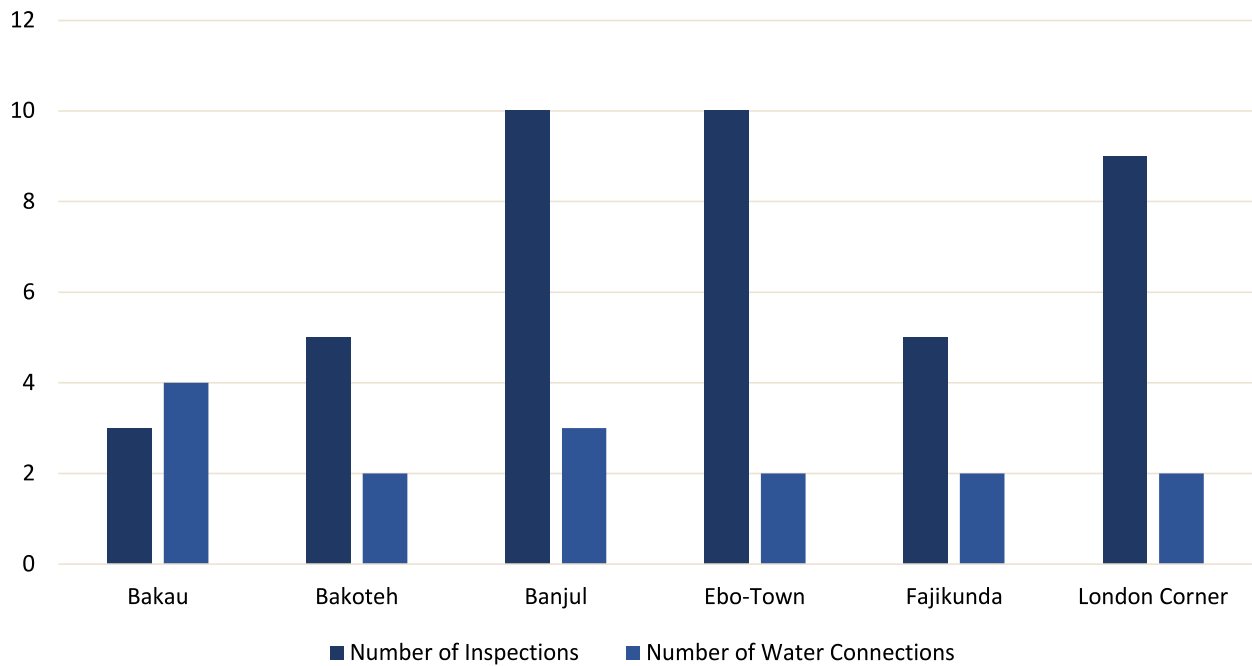


Figure 2 Condition of NAWEC's water services

3.3 User Satisfaction

Table 1 is an illustration of NAWEC service User's Satisfaction showing average customer satisfaction of the services provided by NAWEC. From a scale of 0 to 5 (0 is not satisfied at all to 5 is fully satisfied), respondents were asked to rate based on their experience with NAWEC, their level of satisfaction of services they receive from NAWEC.

Respondents from Banjul and Ebo-Town rated their satisfaction of NAWEC's water services at 4 while Bakoteh, Faji-kunda and London Corner rated them at 3 under User Satisfaction and Bakau which is the lowest rated NAWEC at 1 with majority of respondents indicating that, they no longer use NAWEC's water services as a result of shortages of water supply. Most of the Bakau residents use an extended borehole for their water needs, boycotting the services of NAWEC.

Table 1: User Satisfaction

User Satisfaction		
Location	How satisfied is customer with NAWEC (Average)	Total
Bakau	1	1
Bakoteh	3	3
Banjul	4	4
Ebo-Town	4	4
Fajikunda	3	3
London Corner	3	3

3.4 Water Service

Water service criteria was used to assess the continuity, coverage, quality, and quantity of water service provided by NAWEC from respondents from; Bakau, Bakoteh, Banjul, Ebo-Town, Fajikunda, and London Corner. The indicators used to measure quality are; Smell, color, taste, and zero signifying normal (good) water quality. Continuity and coverage are measure in hourly basis and quantity is measured in litres (1 bucket equals to 18 litres).

The table below shows that, water quality is normal in Bakau, Bakoteh, Ebo-Town, Fajikunda, and London Corner, and the water quality in Banjul is smelly mostly when there is an ongoing maintenance in Banjul. Water continuity in Bakau and Bakoteh shows 9 hours per day on average representing the lowest, Banjul shows an average water supply of 20 hours day per day, Fajikunda had 14 hours, London Corner had 17 hours per day, and Ebo-Town present the highest amount of water continuity of 24 hours per day. Water quantity in Bakoteh represents the lowest in terms of water supply in litres (average of 116 litres per day), and London Corner represents the highest quantity of water supply of 296 litres,

Therefore, the continuity and quantity of water supply are not very encouraging looking at the differences in the amount of litres and hours per day.

Table 2: Water Service

Locations	Continuity (hours)	Indicator		
		Coverage (hours)	Quality	Quantity (litres)
Bakau	9	13	Normal	210
Bakoteh	9	12	Normal	166
Banjul	20	11	Smell	116
Ebo-Town	24	20	Normal	296
Fajikunda	14	18	Normal	270
London Corner	17	19	Normal	245

RECOMMENDATIONS

Gambia Participates as per the findings of this pilot CSC project on water services in the 6 communities hereby recommend the following recommendations to NAWEC but as well as the Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources, the central government of The Gambia and its bilateral and multilateral partners, in order to improve water service delivery in the Greater Banjul Area.

- NAWEC should increase the number of inspection on meters and water connection in the GBA
- The cause for higher water bill with less coverage in Bakoteh should be investigated and address by the government through the Public Utilities Regulation Authority (PURA).

- Banjul receives smelly water, mostly during maintenance work by NAWEC without informing the users ahead. Thus, to prevent the occurrence of health effects by users in Banjul, NAWEC should establish a mechanism to ensure water supplied in and beyond Banjul are free from smell, taste or color.
- NAWEC should as well address the low coverage of water, especially in Bakoteh and Bakau.
- There should be an established office responsible for water service delivery at the Ministry of Petroleum or PURA to serve as an oversight office on NAWEC for water affairs.



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