

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA



NATIONAL REDD+ R-PP IMPLEMENTATION MID-TERM PROGRESS REPORT AND REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING

SUBMITTED TO THE FOREST CARBON PARTNERSHIP FACILITY (FCPF)

By

REDD+ IMPLEMENTATION UNIT (RIU):

**Forestry Development Authority (FDA) and
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

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ACRONYMS

CA	Community Assembly
CFDCs	Community Forest Development Committees
CFFs	County Forest Forums
CFMB	Community Forest Management Body
CFMP	Community Forestry Management Plan
CHC	Carbon Harvesting Corporation
CI	Conservation International
C&P	Consultation & Participation
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Accord
CRL	Community Rights Law with respect to Forest Lands
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EC	Executive Committee
ELI	Environmental Law Institute
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
FCPF	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
FCRC	Forest Concession Review Committee
FDA	Forestry Development Authority
FFI	Fauna and Flora International
FLEGT	Forest Legality, Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FMC	Forest Management Contracts: 25 year, more than 50,000 ha
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FRA	FAO's Global Forest Resources Assessment
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GoL	Government of Liberia
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
JIC	VPA's Joint Implementation Committee
LAS	VPA's Legality Assurance System
LC	Land Commission
LEITI	Liberian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
LFI	Liberia Forest Initiative
LISGIS	Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-information Services
LMC	Liberia Media Center
m ha	million hectares
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting, & Verification

NCCSC	National Climate Change Steering Committee
NFF	National Forest Forum
NFMS	National Forest Management Strategy
nfp-NMSC	national forest programme - National Multi-stakeholder Steering Committee
NFPIS	National Forestry Policy and Implementation Strategy
NFRL	National Forestry Reform Law of 2006
NTGL	National Transitional Government of Liberia
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PUPs	Private Use Permits
REDD+	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation plus enhancements
RTWG	REDD+ Technical Working Group
SA	Social Agreements
SDI	Sustainable Development Institute
SADS	Skill & Agricultural Development Services
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SIIB	Special Independent Investigating Body
TSC	Timber Sales Contracts—3 year, 5,000 ha in size
UN	United Nations
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's
USFS	US Forest Service
USG	United States of America Government
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement (part of EU's FLEGT)
WB	World Bank



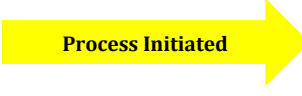
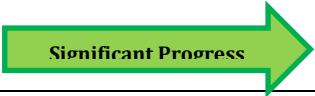

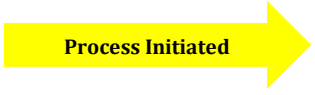
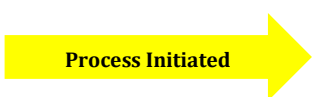
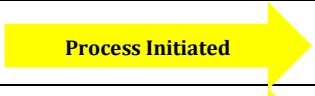
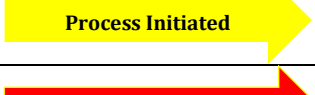

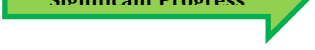
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A large number of developing countries including Liberia consider REDD+ as a potential opportunity and viable source of sustainable finance for investment in forest management, forest conservation, and forest restoration to enhance multiple benefits of REDD+, including but not limited to biodiversity conservation, watershed management, enhanced resilient capacity and poverty reduction. The Government of Liberia (GoL) has considered REDD+ as one of the highest priority programs and its progress is monitored by multiple agencies including the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MOPEA), Forestry Development Authority (FDA), the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Climate Change Steering Committee (an inter-ministerial group). Furthermore, GoL has included in its three Years (2013 -2015) working policy to take the necessary action to develop institutional infrastructure to capture potential benefits of REDD+ implementation. For the last two years, Liberia has been carrying out various initiatives with financial support from the World Bank/FCPF grant of US\$ 3.6 million to become ready for implementing REDD+. In this effort GoL has also contributed by providing office space, staff delegation and other aspects. The Government of Liberia's financial contribution to the overall REDD+ Preparation process is nominal in financial context but very significant as it regards taking ownership of the process.

The Mid-Term Report (MTR) aims to take stock of progress made, identify needs and possibilities for changes in implementation, and make recommendations, as part of the R-Package, for technical or financial alterations or additions, prior to implementation (which is the final stage of the readiness preparation process). Preparation of the MTR includes inventory of REDD+ activities, collection of stakeholder opinions, and senior management and policy review.

The review of the midterm progress in the RPP implementation reveals that there has been acceptable progress achieved in the national REDD+ arrangement and management, Assessment of Land Use, Land Use Change Drivers, Forest Law, Policy and Governance, and National Forest Monitoring Systems. The achievements made in Consultation, Participation, Outreach, REDD+ Strategy Options, Social and Environmental Impacts, information System for Multiple Benefits, Other Impacts, Governance, and Safeguards related activities are progressing gradually and are flagged as behind the schedule.

Table I: Overview of R-PP components and progress to date

Components		Progress Status
	Sub Components	
1. Organize and Consult		
	1a. National Readiness Management Arrangement	
	1b. Stakeholder Consultation, Participation & Information Sharing	
2. Preparation of the REDD+ Strategy		
	2a. Assessment of Land Use, Forest Policy and Governance	
	2b. REDD+ Strategy Options	
	2c. REDD+ Implementation Framework	
	2d. Social and Environmental Impacts	
3. Develop Reference Emission /Level/Reference Level		
4. Monitoring Systems For Forests And Safeguards Design Measurement, Reporting and Verification		
	4a. Emissions and Removals	
	4b. Other Benefits and Impacts	

Inadequate financial support for capacity building by bi-lateral donors (mainly from Multi-Stakeholder Forestry Programs) and understaffing are some of the constraints behind the weak progress in those sub components. Gap between the amounts pledged by the donor partners in R-

PP implementation and actual funding available for identified activities in consultation and outreach component of the R-PP remain overarching issues. However, it has been widely acknowledged by REDD+ stakeholders that input into capacity building at grass root level has limited the scope of meaningful participation of local stakeholders in REDD+ readiness process. Capacity building must be seen as part of both the consultation process and at the core of all technical components and their associated frameworks, mechanisms or processes. Capacity building has, to date, been largely focused at the national level, and/or undertaken not under the auspices of the FCPF, but by complimentary donor/civil society projects; see following sections.

An estimated USD 5.85 million would have been required in addition to the USD \$3.6 million that was made available by the FCPF Readiness Fund for implementation of the R-PP identified activities. Unfortunately, various activities identified in the R-PP are yet to be implemented to achieve the desired progress in the REDD+ readiness process due to inadequate funding made available by donor partners.

1. INTRODUCTION

Liberia is endowed with abundant natural resources; but governance issues and social inequality have engendered poverty, conflicts, and low human development. Due to fourteen (14) years of civil unrest, much of Liberia's economy, physical infrastructure, and institutional capacity; social, political, economic, and governance systems were destroyed.

Democratic elections were held in 2006, and the Government of Liberia (GoL) embarked on an ambitious social and economic recovery program. Liberia's second democratic elections since the end of the conflict were held in October/November 2011 and the re-elected Government of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf took office in January 2012. A good track record of prudent macroeconomic management coupled with social stability helped Liberia weather the 2008-09 global crises and posts a strong recovery since. The economy is projected to grow at an average annual rate of seven percent during 2013-15, reflecting continued favorable external environment and increased foreign direct investment in the natural resource-based sectors. Liberia's medium-term economic prospects are good but the country remains vulnerable to external shocks. The volatility of food and fuel prices and global economic uncertainties pose risks to the medium-term prospects as the economy remains undiversified and dependent on imported foods and fuel. Climate change and other external threats are expected to exacerbate under development and poverty.

In recent years, forests have been recognized for their role in mitigating climate change through carbon sequestration. Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, and enhancing forest carbon stock in developing countries has been emerging as a new performance based instrument under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiations. The instrument aims to mitigate climate change effects by cutting carbon dioxide emissions originating from the destruction of forests. A large number of developing countries including Liberia consider REDD+ as a potential opportunity and a viable source of sustainable finance for investment in forest management, forest conservation, and forest restoration to enhance multiple benefits of REDD+, including but not limited to biodiversity conservation, watershed management, enhanced resilient capacity and poverty reduction.

Liberia contains approximately 4.3 million hectares (Mha)¹ of lowland tropical forest that comprises 43 percent of the remaining Upper Guinea forests of West Africa, which extend from Guinea to Togo (Map 1, Annex 3). While the overall extent of these forests has dwindled to an estimated 14.3 percent of its original extent, Liberia still hosts two massifs of forest including evergreen lowland forests in the southeast and the semi-deciduous mountain forests in the northwest. The forests' biological diversity encompasses the last long-term viable populations of several endemic species, ecosystem service provisioning, and potential to contribute to the

¹The figure of 4.3Mha is contained in the FAO GFRA tables for 2010 and is consistent with the estimate of 4.5Mha in 2004 (Bayol et al, 2004), adjusted by an annual deforestation rate of 0.7 percent. However, it is acknowledged that different estimates have arisen owing to the treatment of areas obscured by cloud, assessment of the forest element in shifting cultivation, and discrepancy in estimates of Liberia's surface area.

country's development goals. Liberia is listed as one of 34 global biodiversity hotspots. Most of Liberia's rural population is dependent on forests and their various products and ecosystem services. Forests play an important role as safety net for vulnerable and marginalized people, especially those living around forest areas, and for the broader community during times of stress.

The country's forests are under threat due to the continued clearance and degradation of its remaining blocks for the expansion of agriculture and mining activities (both at industrial and subsistence levels). Deforestation and forest degradation remained low during the civil conflict, but as peace was restored, pressure on the forest and its natural resources is escalating. Pressures increase by illegal and uncontrolled logging and overall poor management and weak oversight over the forest sector. Between 1990 and 2010, Liberia lost 12.2% of its forest cover.

Liberia received a grant of USD \$3.6 million for readiness activities in preparation for REDD+ implementation. The Grant was based on the Readiness Preparation Idea Note (R-PIN) and the REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP). The Work Bank grant is to support readiness work by the REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU) that is scheduled to be completed by May 2015. The RIU is the governmental institution, under a mandate from the Forestry Development Authority, under the Ministry of Agriculture, that is responsible for facilitating the implementation of REDD+ readiness in Liberia, as guided by the R-PP and its sub-components.

The Grant Agreement between the World Bank and the Government of Liberia commits the REDD+ Implementation Unit to prepare a progress report around the time that half of the planned project life is over or when around half of the grant has been spent or committed. The Mid – Term Report (MTR) aims to take stock of progress made, identify needs and possibilities for changes in the implementation, and make recommendations. The report mainly answers “**How the REDD+ readiness in Liberia is progressing?**” Preparation of the MTR includes inventory of REDD+ activities in Liberia, collection of REDD+ related documents, documentation of the REDD+ Implementation Unit activities, collections of stakeholder opinions, and senior management policymaker review. A draft of the Mid – Term Report was provided to an independent consultant for review and cross-check of implementation assessment. This report reflects the culmination of both those processes; the internal RIU review and the independent review. It was anticipated that before the presentation of the Mid Term Report in October 2014 to the PC, an assessment would have been conducted by an independent assessor. Due to the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) epidemic in the Mano River Union Basin, this activity could not be executed.

1.1 RECENT KEY DEVELOPMENTS IN LIBERIA

Since the inception of REDD+ and the implementation of the R-PP in Liberia, various political, economic and social changes have emerged. These changes are in and outside the forestry sector, and they could have an influence on Liberia's ability to perform on REDD+. The following sections describe some of the developments and their possible effect on REDD+ implementation in Liberia.

I. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Liberia is in the phase of political transformation, and the country is in the process of revising the country's 1986 constitution. Therefore, while there are many uncertainties, in terms of future governance and institutional structure for forestry sector, there is also room for optimism. The REDD+ readiness process, together with the FLEGT VPA, the second Poverty Reduction Strategy, Vision 2030 and host of other domestic policy and ODA driven initiatives have led many positive changes, within the forest sector and beyond, and it seems likely the trend will continue. What follows are some of the key political developments that have taken place since the inception of the REDD+ Readiness Fund.

- **An Act Creating the Revenue Authority**

In September 2013 the Government of Liberia (GoL) through an Act of the National Legislature established the Liberia Revenue Authority. The Act now detaches the Revenue Department from the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs merged with the Finance Ministry to create the Ministry of Finance for Economic Development. While the transition to a single ministry is not, has not been, without its challenges, it is regarded a vital step towards more integrated and sustainable development for Liberia. In general, the single ministry is expected to reduce costs, promote efficiency and facilitate more holistic planning. For REDD+ in particular, having a single entity will bring down transaction costs, and likely simplify future REDD+ operations, including land use planning, through the promotion of inter-ministerial coordination, and commodity and financial management, taxation and benefit distribution.

- **Chain of Custody**

The objective of the National Chain of Custody (CoC) System is to capture the economic potential of Liberia forest sector and its associated benefits for rural livelihoods and National growth through a comprehensive monitoring system ensuring that wood products and associated revenue are tracked and accounted for². This system is currently being run on a contractual basis by a subsidiary of Societe Generale de Surveillance (SGS), SGS LiberFor. This arrangement is until the FDA is fully capacitated to absolve the function but for now the FDA itself has a chain of custody department that works closely with SGS LiberFor³.

- **Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives (LEITI)**

The LEITI was established by an act of the national legislature in 2009 to assist in ensuring that all benefits due the Government and people of Liberia on account of the exploitation and/ or extraction of the country's mineral and other resources are verifiably paid or provided; duly accounted for; and prudently utilized for the benefits of all Liberians and on the basis of equity and sustainability⁴. Revenue transparency in commercial forestry has been embedded in the public domain by the inclusion of forestry in the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives. Currently, this applies to commercial logging but could be expanded to forest carbon revenue.

² www.profor.info.org

³ Liberia NAMAs Gaps Analysis Studies (2013)

⁴ LEITI Act (2009)

- **Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA)**

The VPA, a bilateral trade agreement between the Government of Liberia and the European Union (EU), was signed in 2011 and ratified in 2014. This agreement is a central element of the EU's strategy in the fight against illegal logging. Under the VPA, the timber producing country develops systems to verify that its timber exports are legal, and the EU agrees to accept only licensed imports from that country.

- **Chainsaw Regulation, 2013**

The National Forestry Reform Law (NFRL) of 2006 provides for the development of a regulation on chainsaw activities in Liberia. The purpose of this regulation is to recognize and regulate chainsaw milling in order to optimize its positive benefits and also mitigate its negative effects on the forest and climate change.

- **Land Commission and Land Rights Policy**

Liberia has never had a clearly defined land rights policy; as a result, government officials and common citizens are unable to secure land for programs (construction of government and individual structures). Customary communities fear for the loss of their land without just compensation from multi- national corporations/ companies operating in their community.

In an effort to resolve issues relative to land, the government established a Land Commission (LC) in 2009. Since its creation, the LC has undertaken projects reviewing and analyzing: Liberia's land laws; Liberian legal history; comparative best practices; customary tenure; women's land rights; public land sale deeds; aboriginal land grant deeds, public land grant deeds, and tribal certificates; land use rights, including commercial use rights⁵. In addition, the LC is working on the development of a new land policy, and eventual law (now under review by the legislature) which will be critical in clarifying forest ownership and providing an equitable basis for benefits from carbon revenue. Crucially, the (draft) land policy is explicit in redefining customary ownership of forests so that it carries equal weight deeded (land title) ownership. This had very significant ramifications for the national roll-out of REDD+, with local people and communities likely to be the direct beneficiary of REDD+ benefits in many areas currently considered state forest. It is noted here that this change has the potential to increase the equity and poverty reduction capacity of REDD+ funds, but may also require additional layers of monitoring and administration, with associated costs, as there will be, in effect, a far higher number of land owners in addition to whatever remains as state forest/assets.

- **Climate Change Gender Action Plan (ccGAP)**

The Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Gender and Development, with technical support from the international Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), developed the ccGAP in 2012. This plan was developed through a multi- stakeholder process. The overall objective of the plan is to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed into Liberia's climate change policies, program and interventions so that both men and women have equal

⁵ Land Rights policy (2013)

opportunities to implement and benefit from mitigation and adaptation activities in combating climate change and positively impact the outcome of “Liberia Rising 2013”.

II. OVERVIEW: LIBERIA'S REDD+ PROGRAM

As an initiative to implement REDD+ in Liberia, Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) was developed after consultation with stakeholders at different levels. The R-PP provides Liberia's roadmap for developing and implementing the REDD+ Strategy. The R-PP encompasses all the readiness preparation activities planned from 2013-2015. It envisages the readiness program into five components and corresponding nine sub components, which include Organize and Consult, Development of a National REDD+ Strategy, Development of Reference Scenario, Design a Monitoring System, and Design a Program Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

The total, final estimate for the R-PP implementation was estimated at \$7,730,000 USD, which was supposed to be covered by the GoL, various donors' agencies and a grant of \$3,400,000 USD from FCPF (eventually \$3.6m). \$1,316 million would have been sought from FFI, CI, IUCN, WCS and the GoL.

The \$7.73 million USD was considered to be the optimum budget and required several million in co-finance to the FCPF grant. This budget was considered sufficient to implement all the components of the R-PP, and thus leave Liberia ready, in terms of tools, strategy, policy and capacity, to operationalize REDD+. With hindsight there were two issues here, which are now apparent. Firstly, at the time of R-PP submission and approval, there was no guarantee of over \$4 million USD in co-funding, and since the launch of the readiness activities, very little co-funding has been secured. Secondly, even the \$7.73 million USD estimate was unrealistically small, given the true challenges facing REDD+ readiness.

For Liberia to be absolutely ready for REDD+ finance and national operationalization, it requires more than the development of REDD+ strategy options, reference scenarios, draft MRV, REDD+ communications and a SESA plan (as outlined in the R-PP); it requires new laws and amendments to existing laws, an enormous increase in capacity within FDA and EPA, across a range of topics, transformative change to forest governance, including transparency, coordination and a review of salaries (terms and conditions), the complete rethinking of tenure and associated forest/carbon rights, and above all, a paradigm shift in land use planning. Indeed, Liberia needs, for REDD+ implementation, a coordinated, holistic, cross-sectoral, inter-ministerial system for land use planning and management, that is based around low carbon, green growth and balanced development, which takes into account ecosystems services, multiple landscape –scale trade-offs and income streams and the development of social and biodiversity safeguards.

Table 1. Commitment pledged or anticipated by different donor agencies during the R-PP formulation for its implementation

	Agency	Amount (US \$)
1	FCPF (via World Bank)	\$3.4 million
2	World Bank (non-FCPF)	\$1,290,000

3	GEF Biodiversity Fund	\$205,000
4	UNCCD	\$520,000

Source: R-PP Presentation (2011/2012)

Even though GoL did not receive any of this direct co-funding for the R-PP implementation however, beyond the FCPF grant, activities implemented by in-country actors on REDD+ activities complement the Readiness Process. See text and table below⁶.

III. NON-FCPF REDD+ PROJECTS THAT SUPPORT REDD+ READINESS IMPLEMENTATION / COMPONENTS

In addition to the FCPF grant and the associated co-funding (pledged), as outlined in the section above, Liberia has also received significant funding from other development partners, in support of REDD+ readiness, in the form of raising awareness and capacity around climate change and specifically REDD+, improving forest governance, tackling legality and traceability within the forestry sector, and exposing of critical transparency issues within the forestry sector.

The primary non-FCPF REDD+ readiness project is entitled Bridging the Divide: Grassroots REDD+ Readiness & demonstration sites. As detailed below and in Annex 3, the Norad funded, FFI/FDA implemented project was initiated prior to the approval of the FCPF PIN. As such, the project aimed to begin the REDD+ readiness process in Liberia, by addressing key capacity gaps, reviewing current legislation and suggesting revisions, and piloting grassroots REDD+ projects; with which to test the various mechanisms of REDD+ and generate a raft of ‘lessons learned’, in support of national REDD+ policy and eventual implementation.

Table 2: Overview of activities implemented by in country actors on REDD+ activities

#	Executing Agency	Donor	Project title	Approximate cost	Implementation period
1	Fauna & Flora International	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation	Developing a pro-poor REDD+ structure in Liberia: Creating real world pilot projects to guide national policy development	Combined with below	2009- 2010
2	Fauna & Flora International	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation/ International Tropical Timber Organization	Bridging the divide; empowering the grassroots REDD+ institutions to inform national REDD+ strategy development through REDD+	\$3,500,000 USD (6,666,567 NOK)	2010- 2014

⁶ Liberia REDD+X 2009- 2012 report

			demonstration project		
3	Centre for International Development and Training	European Union	To strengthen forest governance in Liberia	\$ 150,000 USD	2012- 2014
4	Fauna & Flora International	United States Fisheries and Wildlife Service	Reducing pressure of the forest through the construction of improved eco-stoves	\$50,000 USD	2011
5	IUCN	Danish International Development Aids	Towards pro-poor REDD+ - Building synergies between forest governance, equitable benefit sharing and reduced emissions through sustainable forest management	\$324,980 USD	2009- 2013
7	CARE INTERNATIONAL (Implemented via local counterpart)	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation	The Liberia REDD+ SES initiatives Program	\$30,000 USD	2012- 2013
8	Forest Trends	Germany's International Climate Initiative	REDD+ Financial Expenditure tracking	\$23,817 USD	2013- 2014
9	Conservation International, Forest Trends and Nature Conservation Research Centre	McCall MacBain Foundation	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) in Liberia: Developing a Comprehensive Framework for REDD+ Incentives Targeted at Communities and Conservation	\$650,000 USD	2009- 2012
10	IUCN (Implemented via local counterpart)	Government of Finland	To ensure that Liberia's climate change processes mainstream gender considerations to guarantee that women and men can have	\$24,982 USD	2012

			access to, participate in and benefit equally from climate change initiatives.		
Total supporting funds available				\$4,753,779 USD	2009-2014

For each of the aforementioned projects, the following (table 3) is brief summary explaining how and which REDD+ component (R-PP) does the above support or complement:

Table 3. Role of key non-FCPF projects in supporting R-PP implementation

Project / Implementer	Donor	R-PP Component Support*	Nature / Scope of Support Provided
Bridging the Divide: Grassroots REDD+ Readiness & demonstration sites / FFI	Norad	All (see annex 1)	Unique among all non-FCPF projects, as designed to begin and support national readiness (all aspects):
		Comp 1	Significant consultation held at national, county (x3) and site level on REDD+ awareness raising and the trialing of FPIC
		Comp 2	Legal and policy review around carbon rights and drafting of legal amendments; site level implementation designed and social/environmental impacts identified through baselines surveys and SIA/theory of change
		Comp 3	Reference scenario developed for one site; methodology is appropriate for national scale and designed with jurisdictional nesting (JNR) in mind
		Comp 4	Site level MRV developed – lessons learnt are useful for national scale and implementation, which will be at county/local scales
		Comp 5	Site level M&E framework design - lessons learnt are useful for national scale and implementation, which will be at county/local scales
Strengthening Forest Governance / CIDT	EU	Comp 2	Primarily Comp. 2 but cross-cutting, the CIDT work has been designed to support generic improvements to forest governance by improving skills/capacity, the promotion of better coordination and transparency and sharing of information; specially for the VPA, but linking to REDD+ (etc.).
Towards Pro-Poor REDD+: Building synergies / IUCN	DANIDA	Comp 2	Primarily support to the design of REDD+ strategy options, though exploring of REDD+ / forest protection and pro-poor development modalities; primarily concerned with raising awareness of the key issue and capacity of government staff to address it
SES Programme / CARE	Norad	Comp 2 and Comp 5	A parallel tool to the FCPF SESA, the SES is linked to the CCB Standard but intended to

			ensure best practice at the national level with regard to safeguard monitoring. A useful project in raising awareness and capacity around safeguards and helping to strengthen the SESA and eventual ESMF / M&E design(s)
REDD+ Financial tracking / Forest Trends	BMU / ICI	Comp 1	Not overtly linked to any component but in support of REDD+ organization, mainly under Comp 1.
Framework for REDD+ Incentives / CI (lead)	McCall MacBain Foundation	Comp 2 and Comp 4	While the FFI/Norad project focused on site-level design and testing of incentive frameworks, the CI project provides a broader, theoretical examination of incentives, to also highlights needs, gaps and potential challenges in the design of incentives schemes, benefit sharing and, non-compliance, and above all, monitoring and iteration (management)
Mainstreaming Gender / IUCN (lead)	Finnida	Comp 2	While not the only project to explore this issue (e.g. the Norad projects had a suite of activities around ensuring inclusion and gender-based equity) this was the only project to focus exclusively on the gender in climate change and REDD+. Aims: Highlighting the issue, developing new awareness and pathways to better gender balance and empowerment of women

*See table I and tables below for each R-PP component

IV. NON-REDD+ PROJECTS THAT SUPPORT REDD+ READINESS

Finally, Liberia also benefits from a number of initiative that are themselves not linked to REDD+ readiness or piloting, and yet through their activities provide major ‘in-kind’ co-finance to the readiness process by supporting key needs and unfunded but overlapping requirements, as follows.

- 1. Children and Youth in Africa (CHYAO): Support to development of small forest enterprises – income generation for Youth in Liberia.** The project contributes to the implementation of the new regulations of the Liberian government regarding Community forestry, with the primary aim that the youth and vulnerable individuals in communities who are heavily dependent on forest resources, within protected areas (e.g., for bush meat, pit sawing or other uses) be provided with skills and assistance to develop alternative income generating activities to reduce their reliance on forest products, or ensure that they use forest products in a more sustainable manner; which are themselves essential in reducing rates of deforestation and degradation at the heart of (achieving) REDD+ implementation.

The project works assist young people in developing income-generating enterprises while sustainably managing forest resources which they utilize. The project supported the reintegration of youth affected by violence and conflict by empowering them with

vocational-skills training and opportunities to develop productive lives. Beneficiaries are the youth, affected by the war, in rural communities adjacent to proposed protected areas (Wonegizi, Gola and Lake Piso). These will include male and female victims, as well as ex-combatants. This objective was achieved through the facilitation of existing and creation of new small-scale and community-based natural resource based (including forest and non-forest products) enterprises that have a production or processing element that gainfully employs youth and reduces their reliance on unsustainable forest resource use. The project has received \$8,000 from FCPF REDD+ funding for M&E purposes of local enterprises, set up under the project and this is directly linked to REDD+ as SFM/climate-smart agriculture through capacity building and piloting of such mechanisms, and the associated need for monitoring.

2. **People, Rules and Organizations Supporting the Protection of Ecosystem Resources (PROSPER)** The goal of USAID Liberia's PROSPER activity is to introduce, operationalize, and refine appropriate models for community management of forest resources for local self-governance and enterprise development in targeted areas of the country. At the national level PROSPER builds institutional capacity to support community forestry through close coordination and technical support to the Forestry Development Authority (FDA), which is directly linked to (and required for) REDD+ implementation, which will happen at sub-national and local scales. It also builds the capacity of government and civil society organizations to design and conduct effective public outreach campaigns, around environmental issues, which also supports and underpins wider effort to raise awareness of climate change, SFM and REDD+. At the wider landscape level PROSPER works with local government, forestry stakeholders and communities, to introduce and facilitate a landscape approach to land use planning, which will be essential for REDD+ implementation, that extends beyond the community forests and supports the capacity of local government and communities to work together toward more sustainable use of land resources,.

Finally, at the community level PROSPER works with communities, local government and other stakeholders to develop forest governance institutions, adopt more sustainable management practices, and diversify livelihood options; all three of which are essential for addressing drivers of deforestation / reducing emissions, under REDD+, and for the development of the necessary institutional frameworks with which to manage and monitor REDD+ activities. PROSPER is working to achieve these aims through the creation of agricultural and forest-based enterprises and more productive and environmentally-sound agricultural practices, in three pilot sites in northern Nimba (Sanniquellie), four sites in southern Nimba (Tappita) and two sites in Grand Bassa (Buchanan). This work echoes and adds additional value to the FFI/Norad REDD+ piloting in Wonegizi (Lofa) and Wakolor (Lake Piso, Grand Cape Mount), where similar efforts have been made to improve local forest governance, develop capacity and local institutions to manage forest resources and to diversify livelihood options as a means to reduce dependency on shifting cultivation, improve yields (land use intensification) and increase adaptive capacity, e.g. to climate change

3. **Climate Change Adaptation Agriculture Project (CCAAP).** The CCAAP, a Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) project, seeks to increase resilience and enhance adaptive capacity to address the additional risks posed by climate change in the agriculture sector. It is vehicle for implementing one of three priorities which came out of Liberia's National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) which was developed in 2007. Recent changes in rainfall and temperatures patterns have increased the vulnerability of farmers as it is becoming increasingly difficult to identify the optimal time to plant crops, thus reducing yields. Most agricultural production in Liberia is rain-fed. The project was rolled out in 2012 and will last for four years.

The CCAP has two main components: Component One is development capacity for climate change management in the agriculture sector including awareness and knowledge management; Component Two is testing innovative, adaptive measures through Farmers Field Schools in the two pilot counties of Bong and Grand Gedeh Counties. Both these components provide vital capacity building, lessons learnt and potentially models for replication, relating to agricultural diversification and climate proofing. For REDD+ to be successful, it will be essential that land use is intensified, resulting in higher yield and thus less pressure on forest land. Moreover, to maintain these yields, and thus protect forests and avoid emissions, land use needs to be sustainable and above all, resilient to climate changes. Local communities will always 'fall back' on forest resources and forest clearing (slash and burn) should they face food security issues, meaning that agricultural productivity, sustainability and resilience provide one of the cornerstones of REDD+ implementation; and lessons learned from the CCAP should be applied not only to the (development of) the REDD+ strategy options, but also to national policy and eventual implementation of REDD+.

4. **Liberia Land Sector Reforms Project (LRRP).** The LRRP development objective (PDO) is to facilitate progress towards the improvement of land tenure security in Liberia by: supporting the Government's institutional capacity to prepare and implement specific reforms to land law; and putting in place policies and pilots to assist in restoring the land administration system. Tenure, land and carbon rights are keys issues within REDD+. Indeed, clarity over tenure and rights is not only needed to maintain equity, protect the rights of rural communities and ensure the ethical share of benefits, but also facilitates land use planning, improved governance and effective land management, without which REDD+ cannot function. To this end, the LRRP has performed three tasks which support, and are required for, REDD+ readiness: (1) The collection and clarification of all land titles/deeds, nationally; (2) the development of a new land policy and draft law which clarifies tenure and gives equal, legal status to un-deeded, but customary 'owned' land; and (3) has developed a land dispute resolution system. This may be able to inform, or act as a proto-grievance mechanism, for the Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM) to be developed under the FCPF readiness implementation activities in the coming 12 months
5. **Food and Enterprise Development (FED).** The FED uses an all-inclusive strategy incorporating MSME farmers, processors, suppliers, women and youth while partnering with

the government of Liberia and local civil societies to achieve food security. The aim of USAID FED is to increase food production, availability, utilization and accessibility through MSME development and education, so essential to national low carbon / green development, with approaches that are built upon:

- Improved agriculture technology for productivity and profitability
- Expanded and modernized input supply and extension systems
- Commercial production, marketing, and processing
- Enterprise services
- Workforce development and vocational training in agriculture

In line with these goals, FED aims to significantly boost the production, processing, marketing and nutritional utilization of rice, cassava and vegetables, and to enhance the productivity of goat farming in the counties covered by the program, which are all essential to attaining the goals of REDD+ on the ground, especially where the current cause of forest loss is conversion to farmland driven by low yield and food insecurity. The lifespan of the project is 09/2011 to 09/2016 (5 Years). The target beneficiaries are individuals and farming groups with emphasis on youth and women who are interested in adopting new agricultural techniques and developing small to medium sized businesses. The FED is active in Bong, Nimba, Lofa, Montserrado, Grand Bassa, and Margibi. The implementing partner is DAI.

2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REDD+ READINESS PREPARATION PROPOSAL

Overall, the final R-PP budget was \$7.73m USD, with a grant from FCPF of only \$3.6m (as planned), but the vast majority of expected co-finance was not forthcoming for R-PP implementation, despite significant support from Norad and the non-REDD+ specific support outlined above. As such, there has been and remains a clear and significant funding gap, of approximately \$4m USD. Accordingly, each of the current components is under budgeted and the current proposals (bids) submitted for implementation of the components are significantly beyond what is available, due to this funding gap and inflation since 2011. As an example, recent analysis of funds shows that there is not enough budget(s) available for national validation/ground truthing of all the required forest cover and land use change maps and not enough budget(s) to design and implement redress/grievance mechanisms across all counties. What follows is a summary, component by component, of progress and remaining gaps with regard to implementation. It is noted that significant ‘gaps’ pose a great risk, at this stage, to the successful, equitable and sustainable design and implementation of REDD+ strategies and mechanisms.

2.1 COMPONENT 1: READINESS ORGANISATION AND CONSULTATION

SUB-COMPONENT 1A: NATIONAL REDD+ MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The Forestry Development Authority (FDA) is the national executing and regulatory governmental institution responsible for the overall implementation of REDD+ and its enabling activities in Liberia. To ensure that REDD+ implementation is holistic, the Government of Liberia established three levels for the management of REDD+, which consist of National Climate Change Steering Committee (NCCSC), REDD+ Technical Working Group (RTWG) and REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU).

REDD+ in Liberia is being developed in an open and participatory fashion, with transparency and accountability as key principles. At every level of REDD+ preparation and the implementation of the readiness activities, civil society organizations sit alongside government ministries, other agencies, donors, and private sectors in the various institutions described above (and illustrated below). Moreover, the NCCSC, which combines high level government institutions with civil society organizations, is directly linked to the Office of the President, ensuring that accountability and transparency reach the highest levels. In addition to having complete transparency at every level of readiness management, in parallel to the RIU (the government agency that coordinates implementation), there is CSO REDD+ Forum which provides a further opportunity for civil society oversight and review.

The RIU has a legal mandate to coordinate and oversee the implementation of REDD+ in Liberia, including the disbursement of FCPF and other government funds for readiness activities. Above the RIU, RTWG and NCCSC (and its operational arm, the NCCS) are the approved hierarchy facilitating technical and policy advice to the RIU on readiness activities.

At each level of the REDD+ implementation management structure, the institutions are not only open and accountable, but they also represent sophisticated multi-sector coordination. While the NCCSC is comprised relevant key ministries, agencies, private sector, development partner, and CSOs (see section below). The RTWG is also built upon joint participation and cross-sectoral collaboration of forestry, agriculture, and mining/energy sectors. The RIU contains key decision makers within the forestry, climate change and environment arms of government, and acts upon the guidance of the RTWG, and NCCSC above, which are platforms of broad collaboration from all sectors.

There is a clear two-way flow of information and guidance within the management structure that ensures transparency and coordination. This also facilitates (more) integrated, holistic planning, including a growing openness around land use and the need for cross-sectoral land use planning. Moreover, these platforms and coordination, which exist nowhere else in Liberia to this degree,

also facilitate the inclusion of carbon, and specific national REDD+ requirements, into emerging national and sectoral policy frameworks.

The RTWG is a knowledge hub of REDD+ in Liberia, providing a platform where all REDD+ actors' (i.e. the associated affected parties, practitioners and specialists, government, private sectors, development partners and CSOs) activities are coordinated. The RTWG provides the technical supervision for all REDD+ implementation and ensures that lessons learned are shared effectively, overlaps are avoided, and activities are mutually reinforcing and in-line with national needs and priorities. The RIU which sits directly under the RTWG, is leading the implementation of the FCPF readiness process, and the two are coordinated and in continual communication. The RTWG and the RIU also provide the platform for the coordination of both FCPF and other partner-funded activities, through sharing of information on budgets, timelines and activities, and ensuring that all actions fit with the emerging national needs and policies for REDD+.

One of the key national management arrangements is the Feedback and Grievance Redress Mechanism (FFGRM). Several efforts have been made with regards to FFGRM in Liberia. The FCPF supported FFGRM will complement current ongoing efforts by other stakeholders. Some of the ongoing efforts include Norad/FFI readiness and pilot work which contain specific activities around the scoping and design of conflict or grievance mechanisms, albeit at the local scale. The Norwegian Refugee Council has done some work on exploring the needs and challenges of these systems through several studies/nascent mechanisms from which to learn and potentially upscale to sub-national and national levels. Land Commission has developed Land Rights Policy, and is currently developing the Land Rights Act, Land Administration Policy, and Land Grievance Policy, which will address historical, current and future land related conflicts.

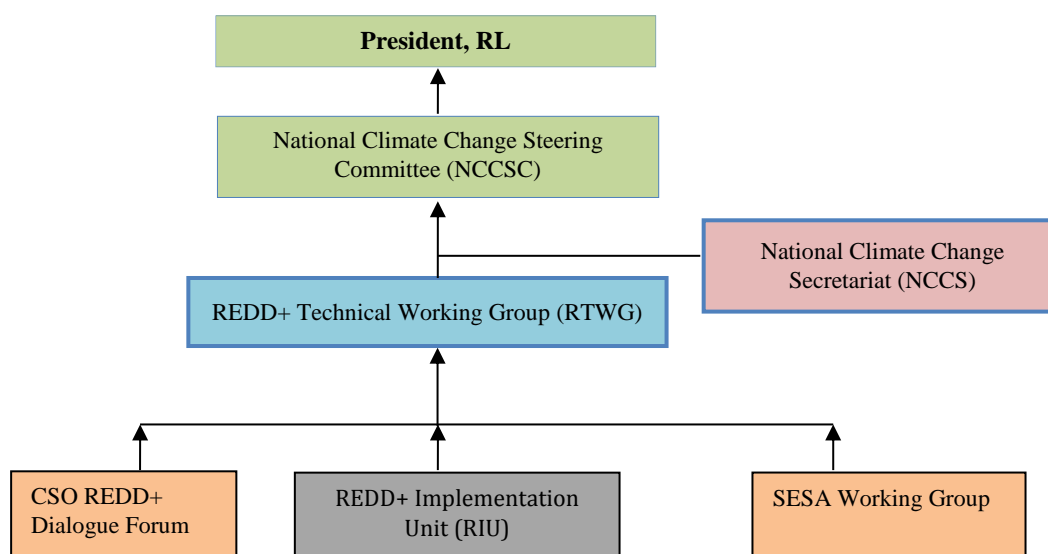
The FGRM sits under the SESA (component/unit) and is a starting point for readiness activities. Work on this critical component began at the onset of the readiness process. The FGRM will provide the framework by which all stakeholders, including the most remote and/or marginal are able to directly participate with the iteration and management of REDD+, through the sharing of their experiences, concerns and suggestions. Moreover, the FGRM provides the platform for impacted people, including all those who would usefully struggle to have their voices heard by policy/decision makers, to raise any grievances they may have, in a safe and confidential manor, and see those grievances redressed. While initial work on the FFGRM is theoretical and design-based, under the readiness phase, the FFGRM will be elevated into national and sub-national structures, to ensure wide, open access. To date, the Terms of Reference (TOR) for FFGRM is developed to initiate the selection process. The contract for SESA component/consultancy (of the R-PP) awarded to the firm Tetra Tech ARD, was signed on May 30, 2014. A national workshop to validate SESA work plan and C&P master plan was held on July 21-22, 2014 at Corina Hotel in Monrovia, Liberia. A total of seventy-one (71) participants attended; among them were FDA MD, EPA ED, private sectors, CSOs, local authorities, superintendents, traditional council, youth groups, development partners, rural women structure forest dependent communities, and press.

At the end of the two day workshop, feedbacks from participants were incorporated in SESA work plan and C&P master plan, and the summary and minutes were shared with the participants through SESA Working Group.

The SESA Working Group is providing oversight to the entire SESA process. The Working Group is comprised government, CSOs, development partners, private sectors, youth groups, traditional council, and academia.

Figure 1 shows the National REDD+ implementation management structure followed by descriptions of five key institutions, therein:

Figure 1: National REDD+ Implementation Management Arrangement Levels



I. The National Climate Change Steering Committee (NCCSC)

This committee is a high-level inter-ministerial policy coordination body responsible for the overall climate change policy formulation in Liberia. The NCCSC was endorsed by the cabinet in September 2010, and subsequently launched in October 2010 by the Vice President, at a ceremony attended by all members of the NCCSC including CSOs, media, forest dependent people and members of the international community.

The NCCSC is chaired by the Minister of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), formerly the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA). The NCCSC consists of fifteen (15) members, which includes the President of the Republic of Liberia (ex officio), Minister of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), Minister of Land, Mines and Energy (MLME), Minister of Agriculture (MoA), Minister of Gender and Development, Managing Director of the FDA, Executive Director of the EPA, Chairman of the National Investment Commission (NIC), Commissioner of Liberia Maritime Authority, Minister of Internal Affairs, World Bank, University Of Liberia, Civil society (Skills and Agricultural Development Services),

Conservation International and Fauna & Flora International. Efforts are being made to have consistent representation of the private sector; the Government has recognized the significant role the private sector could play in combating climate change.

The NCCSC is, however, currently not operational (not met since the inaugural meeting) due to a number of functionality issues and barriers. The primary problem here, as with any such body, is the complex nature of cross-cutting issues. The responsibility for addressing climate change sits with each ministry and department, but inter-sectoral coordination is complicated. In reality, climate change presents ministers with a new and daunting task, in which they are requested to cooperate and coordinate, across strategies, land use plans, budgets and targets, in a totally unprecedented way. All members of the NCCSC also have full-time jobs, heavy workloads and little time to take on difficult, additional tasks. There are also capacity constraints, both in terms of operational budgets for the NCCSC and technical capacity which provides further barriers.

The NCCSC has an operational arm known as the National Climate Change Secretariat (NCCS) and is housed in the office of the President. The NCCS provides coordination, monitoring of programs and ensures the implementation of policies as well as carrying out the administrative supervisory functions on relevant climate change matters.

Table 4: CURRENT MEMBERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE STEERING COMMITTEE (NCCSC)

#	NAMES	POSITION
1	President of the Republic of Liberia-ex-officio	Ex- officio
2	Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs(MPEA)	Chairman
3	Energy, Environment and Climate Change Advisor to the President of Liberia	Member
4	Minister of Land, Mines and Energy (MLME)	Member
5	Minister of Agriculture(MoA)	Member
6	Minister of Finance (MOF)	Member
7	Minister of Gender and Development	Member
8	Managing Director of the FDA	Member
9	Executive Director of the EPA	Member
10	Chairman, National Investment Commission	Member
11	Commissioner of Liberia Maritime Authority	Member
12	Ministry of Internal Affairs	Member
13	World Bank	Member
14	University Of Liberia	Member
15	Program Manager, SADS	Civil Society Rep.
16	International NGO, Fauna & Flora International	Member
17	National Climate Change Focal Point (EPA)	Head of Secretariat

II. The REDD+ Technical Working Group (RTWG)

The RTWG is an advisory body that serves as a multi- stakeholder platform for REDD+ activities and decision making. The RTWG provides technical advice to inform and guide decisions about the program development in Liberia, and it is co- chaired by the FDA and EPA.

The day- to- day operations of the RTWG is performed by the RTWG National Coordinator with direct supervision from the co-chairs.

The current membership of the RTWG consists of thirty-four (34) members, which includes representatives of government ministries and agencies, civil society organizations, development partners, international non-governmental organizations, youth groups, academia and the private sector. See Annex 4 for membership listing

A minimum of four formal meetings are scheduled to occur annually, but emergency meetings can be called through written communication by the co- chairs through the RTWG Coordinator to deliberate on urgent matters. The decision to hold meetings is authorized by the co- chairs, and members are informed at least seven (7) working days in advance.

Consistent with Component One (1) of the Readiness Preparation Activities which includes capacity building the RTWG Coordinator is benefiting from a one-year sponsorship to attend the University for Peace in Costa Rica to specialize in Climate Change Policy (Master's Degree). It will enable the Coordinator along with the REDD+ Team to address the complex nature of climate change governance through mitigation and adaption measures and security.

III. REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU)

REDD+ in Liberia is coordinated and implemented through the RIU, which is hosted at the Forestry Development Authority. The RIU is headed by the National REDD+ project Coordinator handles the day- to- day affairs of the unit. Currently, the RIU comprises three (3) technical/managerial staff. The RIU is comprised the National REDD+ Project Coordinator, Procurement Specialist, and the Project Accountant. The RIU is responsible for procuring Goods and Services, and administrating resulting contracts.

The RIU staff have participated in a number of trainings that include World Bank Procurement and Selection Guidelines at GIMPA, Ghana and, a South – South capacity building on Environmental Professional and Regulatory Framework in fragile and conflict situation. The Coordinators of the RIU and the RTWG participated in two capacity building workshops on Mangrove (Blue Carbon) and REDD+, and Forest Monitoring and Inventory System.

As a result of the capability building in World Bank Procurement and Selection Guidelines at the Ghana Institute for Management and Public Administration (GIMPA), Ghana, the RIU has procured consultancy firms to undertake Liberia's Land Cover and Forest Mapping , Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) Consultation, REDD+ Strategy Consultation, REDD+ Communication Strategy and Information Sharing, etc.

IV. Civil Society REDD+ Forum⁷

This forum is a Multi-stakeholder Forum of civil society, media practitioners and interest groups from across Liberia that meets to discuss and share experiences on REDD+ and its enabling activities. This forum was established in 2010 during the formulation phase of Liberia Readiness

⁷ The Civil Society REDD+ Forum, formerly the Civil Society REDD+ Dialogue, was established during the formulation phase of the R-PP to engage and solicit Civil Society views on REDD+ and its enabling activities.

proposal, since then, it has been use as a multi- stakeholder's platform for REDD+ discussion amongst civil society group. The forum meeting is held quarterly, and is facilitated by the Coordinator of the REDD+ Technical Working Group. (See Table 5- showing meeting schedules and topics covered)

Table 5: Meeting schedules and topics covered by Civil Society REDD+ Forum

#	Convener	Title	Location	Date
1	Fauna & Flora International / Center for International Development and Training (CIDT) of the University of Wolverhampton, UK	Forest Governance and REDD+ Training course	Grand Bassa County	February 20th- 2nd March 2012
2	Fauna & Flora International	REDD+ to inform them about REDD+ as alternative forest use option	Bomi County	April 12, 2012
3	REDD+ Technical Working Group	National Civil Society Dialogue Workshops	Montserrado County	November 17, 2011
4	Skills and Agricultural Development Services	The role of community in forest management and REDD+	Lofa County	August 2, 2013

V. Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) Working Group

This working group was established to provide clear oversight on the ongoing SESA process, supervision and the revision of technical reports from the SESA Consultant. This group was formerly known as the Consultation and Participation (C&P) Task Force during the R-PP formulation phase, but had to change its nomenclature and membership composition due to its new mandate. The first meeting of the working group was held on 14th February 2014, and its membership was reconstituted based on nomination from selected institutions (Government ministries and agencies, CSOs, private sector, universities, etc.).

The SESA Working Group is chaired by the EPA, and its day- to- day activities are performed by the SESA National Coordinator. This group reports to the REDD+ Technical Working Group for validation and the RIU for implementation.

Table 6: Summary of progresses achieved under component 1a

Sub- component	Key activities plan	Achievements
1a. National Readiness Management Arrangement	NCCSC Meeting (Bi- yearly)	An inaugural meeting in which the REDD+ management structure was agreed, including mandates
	RTWG meeting (Three minimum meetings a years)	A total of 6 meetings have been held since the implementation of the Readiness Preparation Activities - four in 2013 (20th February, 7 th May, 28 th August and 9 th December) and two in - 2014 (21 st March & 11 th June)

	CSO REDD+ Forum (Quarterly)	4 meetings were held in 2013 and 1 meeting CSO REDD+ Forum convened so far in 2014
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To date, the operationalization of the national management arrangements for REDD+ has been achieved, as per the R-PP, with the exception of the NCCSC (which is not functional at the highest level – see above). In order to fully operationalize the NCCSC, it is suggested that additional capacity building (around climate change and REDD+, in particular, as well as coordination skills like landscape level land use planning) and operational budget be made available to its members, through the readiness process. Furthermore, the Office of the President, with support from the RIU and World Bank/FCPF, needs to support the active reinvigoration of the NCCSC by organizing a meeting, for 2014, and requesting that regular meetings are held thereafter.

The RTWG has been operational since 2011, and the RIU is now, as of 2013, operational, although somewhat behind schedule. The SESA Unit within the EPA is also fully functional, and in April 2014 moved into its new premises. However, some of the structures are not yet functional as there is more work required, as discussed below.

SUB-COMPONENT 1B: CONSULTATION, PARTICIPATION, AND OUTREACH


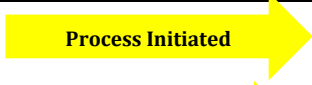
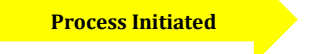
During the preparation phase of the R-PP, and subsequently refined, the Government of Liberia undertook two key activities: Generalized outreach and awareness, and the development and adoption of a comprehensive Consultation and Participation Plan (C&P Plan). The objectives of this plan are to conduct nation-wide consultation on issues of REDD+; establish a channel through which impacted communities can access information and participate in the design and implementation of REDD+ activities; improve the quality of decision-making about REDD+ processes by giving voice to and capturing the experiences of civil society organizations, forest-dependent peoples and local communities and other relevant stakeholders; encourage the development of regulatory policy frameworks that are socially inclusive, transparent and reportable; strive towards equitable outcomes of REDD+ policies and activities, and increase the chances that forest-dependent peoples benefit from the revenues from REDD+ as well as improving forest governance.

On July 21 & 22, 2014 the SESA Consultant in collaboration with the EPA, FDA and the forestry sector stakeholders held a two day workshop that validated the SESA work plan and the C&P Master Plan. The RIU has recruited a Communication Strategy consultant (firm) responsible for the design and implementation of the REDD+ Communication Strategy whilst enhancing the websites of the FDA and EPA. Information sharing services includes information sharing at all levels such as schools, colleges, universities, market women, youth movements etc.

With regard to increased awareness, significant outreach undertaken during the R-PP preparation phase, which included targeted stakeholder engagements (including government/decision makers, press/media, academia, CSOs, CBOs and forest dependent communities), has continued in the face of limited resources resulting from only partial funding for the component (i.e. only from FCPF with no available co-finance). For the most part, other development partners have

contributed to awareness raising, but undertaken in close communication and coordination with the RTWG and RIU (see tables 2, 3 and 6).

Table 7: Summary of progress on activities and proposed schedule leading to execution of the C&P

Sub- component	Key activities plan	Achievements
1b.Consultation, Participation and Information sharing	Increased awareness	
	Participatory Decision Making	
	Integration with safeguard measures (SESA and ESMF)	

In addition to awareness raising and outreach regarding REDD+ and the R-PP process a further area, within sub-component 1b, where progress has been made is with consultation on the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA). There has been considerable governmental and non-governmental consultation facilitated by the RTWG, regarding the development of the SESA Roadmap and the Consultation & Participation Plan. This consultation has included discussion on timeframes, indicators, stakeholders and monitoring protocols, as well as linkages to the SES/SIS and project-level REDD+ safeguard monitoring.

More discussion on general funding gaps / needs for readiness implementation is provided in Section 5, but there are specific issues worth noting in relation to consultation, participation and information sharing. Much like the MRV component, this sub-component is a case study of what finance has been achieved and set aside versus what is actually required (the identification of the subsequent implementation gaps). What follows is brief summary of lessons learned regarding what has led to the gap, and the corresponding needs yet to be addressed:

- Using the Wonegizi pilot (FFI / Norad) as an example of expense, FPIC, together with all forms of social research and community outreach and participation, is clearly of the most costly activities, due to the intensity (in terms of time/person days and logistical support) of field work. Per village/community estimates are not easy to establish, but the project suggests that cost per visit/per community is \$2-3,000 USD. For the Wonegizi pilot, which is extremely small when compared to the national scale, had eight communities and required on average four visits per year (e.g. \$3,000 x 8 x 4 = approximately \$100,000/year (on average) for consultation – for just 8 villages. This would be far higher in year one with FPIC at its most intense. Note that national FPIC would almost certainly need to be more centralised and potentially less intensive, although still ensuring meaningful consent is sought (and received) from statistically significant proportions of all communities, tribes, genders, stakeholder and user groups, etc.
- Greater understating of REDD+ and community engagement and consultation has demonstrated that this work goes far further than just awareness raising and one-off community engagement, to includes an on-going FPIC process, extensive awareness raising

on a range of topics, that too needs to be reinforced and maintained, social impact assessment (SIA), including a thorough ‘theory of change’ process and culminating in participatory project design process and local land use planning, (and which includes discussions around and co-design of the grievance redress mechanism, benefit sharing mechanisms, land use changes and project interventions, and participatory monitoring, and so forth)

- With regard to FPIC in particular, it has become clear that not only does it need to be wide, intensive and on-going, but also institutionalised. This requires that FPIC is not only designed with and by the local community, prior to its implementation, but also that local institutions are sufficiently capacitated to play a leading role in the process and ultimately take on and internalise the FPIC ethos and function. In Wonegizi this has cost between \$150,000-\$200,000 USD and that is for only eight, remote rural communities

2.2 COMPONENT 2: NATIONAL REDD+ STRATEGY PREPARATION

SUB-COMPONENT 2A: ASSESSMENT OF LAND USE, LAND-USE CHANGE DRIVERS, FOREST LAW, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

Assessment of deforestation (DD) and forest degradation (FD) leads to development of strategic options. Also, the assessment reveals the weaknesses in current land use planning, forest policy and governance and contributes to addressing the factors of deforestation and FD. Considering past efforts and experiences in addressing the weaknesses of the policies and governance, an assessment is necessary to help design the National REDD+ Strategy to address DD and FD. The assessment of land use, forest policy and governance also enables us to explore the need for further study to develop strategic options and thereby develop a National REDD+ Strategy. A preliminary assessment of land use, forest policy and governance was done without including detailed evidence based analysis during the R-PP preparation (RPP – 2011). A detailed study on these topics is therefore essential.

The R-PP identified seven principal driving forces (see table 8) of deforestation and forest degradation but also noted that little is known about their relative weights (scale) and interactions. More details about the relative degree of the different deforestation drivers and their respective impacts will be provided in the finalization of the National REDD+ Strategy.

Table 8: Direct Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation (D&FD) (R-PP)

Sector	Direct Drivers of (D & FD)
Forest Sector	<p>1) Commercial Logging, categorized as:</p> <p>a. Extensive logging – without area regulation (i.e., allocated commercial sector too large and failure to abide by periodic felling cycle), resulting in eventual timber shortages, reduced felling intervals, progressive canopy degradation, unsustainable logging and industry. (This practice facilitates chainsaw logging and ingress of shifting cultivation)</p>

	<p>b. Over-logging – without selection control of species or diameter limits; and, resulting in creaming of species (genetic impoverishment), removal of undersize trees (future shortage of canopy trees), harvesting of all species (degraded canopy cover)</p> <p>c. Hi-impact logging – the opposite of Reduced Impact Logging, arising from a failure of site planning of extraction, loading and landing areas for minimal impact and cost; and, resulting in degraded canopy cover and collateral tree damage</p>
	<p>2) Chainsaw logging – unregulated forest logging with similar results as for over logging, characterized by low recovery rate by mitigated by lower extracted damage. Studies show that chainsaw logging can reach into forest over 5 km from access roads</p>
Agriculture	<p>3) Shifting cultivation – unregulated clearance and farming on forest land for a temporary period (2-3 yrs.) followed by a fallow period (5-12 yrs.) by the same or another farmer. Opportunistic on forest road accessibility and chainsaw logging operations. May be intensive involving larger forest clearing assisted by chainsaw operatives and resulting in deforestation.</p>
Agriculture (Large scale commercial)	<p>4) Plantations and Permanent Agriculture – higher economic value land use than forest, resulting in complete forest conversion with deforestation liability on the REDD+ balance sheet, even if actual clearance and planting may be delayed for several years. Replacement crops may comprise trees, especially oil palm as a biofuel, but do not provide a full range of forest services nor sequester comparable to carbon stock.</p> <p>The emergence of palm oil as a bio-fuel has contributed to a rise in global prices for commodity and so driven further expansion of plantation. As such, while palm oil produced from plantations on barren or highly degraded (forest) land, may provide for a “green” fuel and potentially generate REDD+ credits, there is also a risk that this increase in value may drive further D&FD in Liberia – resulting in a potential and significant risk for REDD+.</p>
Forestry/agriculture	<p>5) Charcoal Production – most charcoal production is a bi – product of agricultural clearance for shifting cultivation or small holder farms. It may have a significant impact on worsening deforestation rates of degraded areas.</p>
Oil and gas (mining and energy)	<p>6) Oil – Oil companies have moved into Liberia relatively recently and while current activities appear to be focused off-shore, there needs to be communication between relevant ministries, FDA and RTWG on any plans to develop on – shore wells and pipelines.</p>
Mining (mining and energy)	<p>7) Mineral extraction and mining – Although not regarded as a significant driver of D&FD at present, it is possible that artisanal mining might be more damaging than currently recorded and that large scale mining (e.g., open cast</p>

	gold mines currently under pre-scoping) will become a major driver. Where mining could have serious impact is if the granting of concessions prevents large areas of forest from being protected, e.g. as a PA, and thus open to multiple or cumulative threats, like rubber or oil palm, beyond the mine (clearance) itself.
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In general, provisional analysis of land use trends (for the R-PP) and supported by other studies (undertaken as part of project-level REDD+, VPA/FLEGT and various project relating to protected area expansion, sustainable forest management and Community Forestry) points to two key themes. Firstly, post-conflict (peace-time) Liberia has experience a re-population trend, and population growth, in rural areas⁸. This growth, coupled with traditional, extensive and low-yield farming methods that rely on annual forest clearance and burning, and long fallows (6/7+ years), is a major driver of degradation, and in some cases, mosaic deforestation. These areas of forest loss occur nationally in or near mature forest. To understand this first trend, or driver, one must see it as a factor of insecure forest/land tenure, low capacity within the agricultural sector (low skills, low availability of training or loans) and extreme poverty⁹.

The second key trend, and another major source of forest-born GHG emissions, is from commercial activities. Both legal logging and agri-business, primarily oil palm plantations, are posing significant issues for reducing emission from the forest sector, as well as specific issues relating to forest governance and monitoring.

In terms of prioritizing direct and indirect drivers of D&FD, it is clear that, as above, demand for timber and even more so land, within the forestry and agriculture sectors are the main direct drivers. However, addressing this demand is more than just an issue of finance or financial alternatives. Indeed, the indirect drivers are arguably the more critical here, and these can be summarized as: Weak Governance in the forestry sector, with low transparency and accountable with regard to granting logging and plantation concessions; a lack of cross-sectoral coordination (almost non-existent expect for what has be facilitated by the readiness process and management structure); very high unemployment, high poverty rates and a weak, national economy that is utterly dependent on foreign direct investment and, as such, dependent upon private, commercial investment from agri-business and mining sectors; and a weak rule of law. It is important to note here that these indirect drivers not only help facilitate forest loss, but are also significant barriers to establishing meaningful (GHG emissions) carbon stock enhancement activities. Afforestation, reforestation and sustainable forest management all require clarity around land tenure and confidence in forest governance and the rule of law. Where there remains insecurity regarding tenure, food, employment and even conflict, it is extremely difficult to convince people (especially poor, rural people) to invest in long terms crops like trees, over short-term income generating activities like logging and planting fast growing cash-crops (usually via shifting

⁸ LISGIS 2008 Population Census Report

⁹ National Food and Security Report 2010

cultivation into prime forest land, where the soil is fertile, albeit for a short time, and the risk of conflict over tenure is minimized).

REDD+, to be successful in Liberia, will need to help facilitate a unified, national, inter-ministerial, process, supported by development partners from across the global stage, that aims to address all of these direct and indirect drivers, and to help build new policy and legal frameworks that are required (and no currently exist) to implement REDD+.

REDD+ activities (and associated ToRs for R-PP implementation) have been designed around linking the aforementioned driver/barriers to REDD+ activities. Specifically, this coming phase of REDD+ readiness activities will seek to address these issues and linkages, as follows:

Table 9: Key D&FD drivers/barriers and example REDD+ activities in-preparation

Key driver or barrier	R-PP Component & Vision	REDD+ activity
Lack of quality forest cover/change data; no national forestry inventory	Comp 3: Develop nested sub-national (scaling up from project level piloting) and national forest REL(s), using a hybrid IPCC / VCS approved methods; develop a national forest database (inventory) and national forest cover/ change map (min 5m resolution); develop the transparent GHG inventory (emissions and removals) system, also based on IPCC/SBSTA guidelines	National forest cover maps being produced, with the European Space Agency; and national forestry inventory under development, with significant capacity building for national personnel
Lack of sub-national and national sustainable land use planning	Comp 1(a): Ensure that all national REDD+ institutions (the NCCSC, NCCS and RIU) and all fully capacitated (technically and financially) and operational (with clear mission statements / ToRs, regular meetings as pre-agreed, coordinated activities, etc.); develop a national, cross-sectoral, sustainable land use plan for Liberia; and ensure that effective transparent fund management (capacity and framework) is in place	On-going efforts to improve coordination, through workshops and the development of new coordination platforms (e.g. with the REDD+ management structure) and a specific commitment, under the FCPF readiness grant, to produce a national land use map, showing all concessions and land management categories
Weak forest governance	Comp 1(a) & (b); See above (REDD+ institutions requires technical and financial capacity); in addition: Demonstrate accountability and transparency of REDD+ institutions, via the regular meetings (minutes), public forums, website updates and printed media (reports) on progress and expenditure, and the FFGRM. Also open communication (publicly available reports etc.) with LEITI and the VPA	On-going efforts to improve capacity, both within government and civil society, to play an improved 'watchdog' to ensure better transparency; the development of a more professional, higher skilled and better paid government workforce; and better accountability via more open, multi-stakeholder



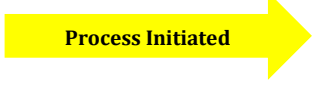
		decision making
Weak rule of law	Comp 1(a)/(b) & 2(a): Although somewhat beyond the scope of the readiness process alone, weakness in the rule of law will need to be addressed. The vision is for a significant improvement in public accountability, at the highest levels, and improved law enforcement (both policing and the justice system) in relation to forestry (protection and management)	Both with the forest sector itself, and with relevant law enforcement agencies and the judiciary, activities are being designed to improve capacity, accountability and legality, in close coordination with the VPA (FLEGT)
Weak economy; dependence of foreign companies	Comp 2(b): As above, also related to Comp 1 and beyond the scope of the readiness process alone, the vision is for an improved domestic economic, based on low carbon growth and the sustainable use on natural resources, as express in the REDD+ Strategy Options. This must be selected in transparent and participatory manor, and for each, the economic and emissions (reductions) potential must be estimated, and the strategies feasibility assessed and prioritized by social, environmental and economic/political criteria	Foreign investment is vital for Liberia, but sustainable land use will be dependent upon improving the transparency of the concession granting process, imposing strict rules and safeguards, developing new monitoring and reporting systems, and building capacity within a range of government and civil sociality institutions

ASSESSMENT OF LAND USE, FOREST POLICY AND GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES

A number of studies on the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Liberia have taken place, both under the umbrella of the R-PP and subsequently, through project –level and REDD+ pilot activities. These studies have supported the formulation of nascent strategic options for addressing drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in Liberia. What is already clear is that there is a chronic need to clarify state and private land titles, including providing tenure rights to those with traditional, tribal land and users’ rights, and as such, the new land law (in-prep.) is an essential component of addressing land tenure issues, at the heart of many D&FD drivers. Wider governance issues, as discussed above, are being built into all REDD+ programmes, though various activities (including capacity building, improved monitoring across a range of themes and indicators, performance-based benefits, etc.).

Furthermore, activities to be undertaken under sub-component 1b have highlighted the clear and present need for a clear-cut definition of carbon tenure rights. This is an essential element for the successful implementation of REDD+ in Liberia. The tenure rights to carbon and other ecosystem services are not clearly defined yet in almost all forest regimes including Community Forest., Work has begun to raise these barriers/needs/issues with law makers (initially with those responsible for drafting the new Wildlife Law and pending Land Law) . In additional, project-level activities working closely with the RTWG and the RIU have highlighted specific gaps in current legislation regarding carbon rights, the rights to sell and/or benefit from sales, taxes, benefit sharing (with link to existing modalities and forest regulations) and carbon as an asset class, with commercial, trade and contract law.

Table 10: Progress of Assessment

Activities	Progress assessment
Factors of Weak Governance, policy implementation and law enforcement	
Drivers of Deforestation	
Develop a coordination mechanism among the Government Departments and between the government departments and other stakeholders.	

SUB-COMPONENT 2B: REDD+ STRATEGY OPTIONS

The REDD+ strategy forms the basis for developing policy and program that will help to reduce carbon emission from the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and enhance carbon stock through other REDD+ activities. The strategy not only addresses DD and FD related to the forestry sector but also addresses drivers associated with other sectors competing for the same land resources. Strategic options provide guidance to develop a national REDD+ strategy.

Based on the Direct Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation, the R-PP included preliminary REDD+ Strategy Options for each of the key sectors (see table 11).

Since the initial design of the R-PP, significant learning has been generated with regard to the strategy and it links to the national forest policy more broadly. Defining the REDD+ Strategy Options is the core work of the FCPF grant, making this component arguably the most critical, at this stage. At present it is clear that forests are a key resource for economic development and yet no valuation of the forests exists in this context except that timber sale is seen as source of revenue. There is a need to realize potential revenue from conservation and community forests, i.e. beyond timber, for national development, livelihoods and emission reduction. Within this context, the design of the R-PP and specifically the REDD+ strategy preparation, aims to achieve sustainable implementation of the national '3Cs' policy, on balancing commercial, conservation and community forestry. Central to this dialogue is the fact that while it is a laudable aim, to combine these three in pursuit of sustainable development, there are enormous challenges, which can - in part - be met by REDD+ (this may eventually lead to the 4th C, i.e. Carbon).

Community forestry, for example, is in its infancy, hampered by financial and capacity constraints, and above all, unclear tenure and a legal framework that does not (yet) address customary land title or carbon rights. For conservation forests, available government funds are currently wholly inadequate for the management of existing protection forests, parks and reserves, and there exists no budget to support gazettement of the remaining proposed PAs (in pursuit of the country's own target of 30% of land under protection for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem service provision). Moreover, a lack of any integrated land use planning means that forest areas (and the associated carbon) face a myriad of threats, most of which exist beyond the forest sector and thus, the reach of the FDA.

REDD+, as defined in the R-PP is seen as critical part of resolving these issues; proving not only the rationale to improve inter-ministerial coordination and land use planning, but also to finance the protection and management of community and conservation forests which hitherto have relied on piecemeal development finance. Climate finance may also be used to reduce rate or gross amount of commercial forestry, resulting in low(er) emissions from logging and the more efficient use of timber concessions, plus a greater motivation for SFM and replanting.

As identified in the R-PP, and highlighted thereafter, recent historical land-use trends have been dominated by increasing international pressure from extractive industries (mining and logging) and agri-business, especially oil palm, coupled with increasing rates of local shifting cultivation (including traditional slash and burn agriculture). Land tenure and titling, and associated natural resource rights, remains a key to this issue. Not only do local communities remain disempowered and, for the most part, unaware of the law and their exact rights, but attempts to empower communities, through Community Forestry (CF) and/or the use of Private Use Permits (PUP) has resulted in largely unsustainable and inequitable activities ‘hijacked’ by the aforementioned companies and defined by corruption and elite capture. These issues are ultimately related to forest law, policy and governance issues, which the REDD+ strategy seeks to support or address, where possible. For example, the REDD+ readiness process will now need to engage fully in the final drafting of the Wildlife Law and Land Law, which contain key reference to protected forests, financing, tenure and carbon rights (and so forth).

Furthermore, the strategy (options) will specifically address the need for carbon legislation, harmonized with the aforementioned (new) laws and the existing Forest reform Law and Community Rights Law (among others), including the definition of carbon as an asset class and apportioning of carbon rights.

Systematic links between key drivers, and/or barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement activities and REDD+ activities have also been identified as part of the R-PP/strategic design process. It is clear that the current, interlinked changes of weak governance, policy gaps and a development agenda dominated by natural resource utilization (and associated dependence on infrastructure development and job creation upon foreign companies), presents both huge challenges, but also opportunities. REDD+ can be the catalyst to realize the “3C” policy on the national scale, by incentivizing the protection of HVC/HCS forests, and seeding payments thereof, and the efficient and sustainable use of other forests – i.e. under forms of SFM, commercial or community. To this end, while the barriers to carbon stock enhancement, which have been financial, capacity and regulatory, can be lifted, resulting in more integration and landscape level planning, in which land owners, local, private or state, can potentially benefit from a range of income streams, derived from ecosystem services payments, to help address opportunity costs, which will include carbon, both from avoided deforestation/degradation, but also afforestation/reforestation, SFM an enrichment of carbon stocks.

From the perspective of livelihoods (including traditional / customary structures), the strategy is set up to address localized drivers of forest loss (low yields and food insecurity – as described above), though the exploration of high yield varieties, agro-ecology, soil improvements, SME support and micro finance.

As mentioned previously, much the REDD+ strategy and some of these key issues highlighted here will depend on the provision of new policy, harmonization with laws currently under development and possible amendment to existing laws. Above all, as per the new Land Law, the clarification of tenure is highlighted as key issue for intervention in the strategy options, which (as before) requires not only support to the final wording of the current law, but also a whole (new) legal frameworks around carbon rights and transactions. It is clear, therefore, that R-PP / REDD+ strategy process have implications for forest or other relevant law and policy in the long-term.

Table 11: REDD+ Strategy Options

FORESTRY SECTOR	AGRICULTURE SECTOR	ENERGY SECTOR
Raising commercial logging standards	Transforming shifting cultivation into permanent or semi-permanent to reduce land use and forest degradation	Regulating and managing wood fuel energy
Reducing commercial logging footprint	Ensuring that plantations and permanent agriculture development are located on degraded forest lands	Introducing more efficient kilns and cooking stoves
Regulating and managing chainsaw logging		
Integrating Conservation and Protected areas into REDD+ and acceleration of the timeline		
Enhancing carbon loading on degraded land		

Source: Liberia R-PP (2012)

The firm to develop the national REDD+ strategy was recruited on July 18, 2014 following the Bank's No Objection to the draft contract.

The Land Policy is highly relevance to the successful development of Liberia National REDD+ Strategy. It is indicative that the REDD+ Strategy t coordinates with new laws while in preparation to avoid conflicts that may arise later, requiring significant amendment and delays to the implementation phase. The fact that a new land law is being developed should be seen as a tremendous effort for the REDD+ readiness process and the opportunity to ensure its provisions are REDD+/carbon compatible should not be missed. To this end, communication needs to be initiated, especially around the link between land rights and forest / carbon rights, and what these are and whom they will be prescribed. The role of the "3Cs" needs to be enshrined in the law, and how it will interact with various land categories (including quasi-legal entities like proposed protected areas) as does the REDD+ readiness process, and the REDD+ Strategy (options) in particular.

SUB-COMPONENT 2C: IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Considerable effort has been made to begin the design of various implementation frameworks required for REDD+. This has primarily consisted of the following activities: firstly, legislative reviews, and specific investigation of policy/law gaps relating to carbon rights and the transfer of ownership relating to carbon as a commodity.

Secondly, guidelines for implementation have already been examined within the R-PP, which highlights the need to address legal barriers and assigning carbon rights (as above), design the MRV Systems, and to include provisions for nesting (JNR) therein, enshrine FPIC into the national process, improve law enforcement, design a system of transparent financial management and taxation, and create a stems performance-based payments, with associated monitoring and mechanisms for non-compliance. The design of benefit sharing mechanism(s) has also taken place, both theoretically, through participatory multi-stakeholder discussion hosted by the RTWG, and in practice, at the project / pilot scale. These pilot scale BSMs provide crucial leaning based on the real world barriers and requirements of such a system, including:

- How to decide upon and match the proportion (share) of benefits, among stakeholders, to actual needs, before the cost of implementation, or the amount of revenue, are known?
- How to agree upon a share of benefits that is legal based upon existing laws, when gaps in the law remain?
- How to police the sharing of benefits, in a way that is prohibitively expensive in terms of (adding to) transaction costs?

Finally, work has also begun on developing national feedback and grievance redress mechanisms. This started at the sub-national level, both to ease the design process and it is envisaged that this/these mechanism(s) will need to be implemented at the sub-national level (down or up-scaled) regardless, due to the administrative barriers suggested by a single, national system – as discuss in more detail, below.

STRENGTHENING NATIONAL FEEDBACK AND GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISMS (FFGRM)

The complexity of issues and diversity of actors involved in REDD+ preparation phase may lead to inquiries, complaints and grievances around the REDD+ process. Besides, the REDD+ is a new mechanism and its introduction in participating countries will have significant impacts on the dynamics of conflicts over forest resources, and on land, gas, oil, minerals and other valuable resources in forested areas¹⁰. These reinforce the need for a national feedback and grievance redress mechanism to effectively respond to contentious issues, complaints, and disputes. Such a mechanism needs to be strengthened as part of Liberia's REDD+ institutional arrangements and freely available to REDD+ stakeholders from the earliest stages of R-PP implementation in order to facilitate handling of request for feedback or complaints by all stakeholders, wherever and

¹⁰ Joint UNDP- World Bank FCPF Guidance Note for REDD+ countries

whenever they originate, with particular attention to providing access to geographically, culturally or economically isolated or excluded groups.

During the R-PP formulation, some progress was made in the identification of potential risks related to land and forest management which include:

- Overlapping and contested land claims;
- Data availability and verification;
- Ongoing land policy reforms;
- Issuance of Private Use Permits (PUPs);

Table 12: Existing mechanisms for conflict or dispute resolution in Liberia

Level	Mechanisms for Conflict or Dispute Resolution
Local (community)	Palava hut discussions (Chiefs, Landlords, Zoes and Elders)
	Poros and Sande Societies (Zoes and Chiefs)
	Family to family (Heads of family)
	Religious institutions (Churches and Mosques)
	Youth groups, community leaders and social organizations
	Community Police
	Civil society and advocacy groups
County	Magisterial courts
	Religious Institutions (Churches and Mosques)
	Civil society and advocacy groups
	Palava hut discussions (County officials, chiefs, landlords, Zoes and Elders)
National	Legal (Court) system
	Traditional and Religious Mediation
	Councils/Groupings
	Lands and Governance Commissions
	NCCS
	SESA/REDD+ Team
	REDD+ Technical Working Group (RTWG)

Source: Liberia R-PP Assessment Note

In accordance with the action plan that was developed during the R-PP formulation, the REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU) has embedded grievance redress into the existing FCPF system by incorporating grievance redress responsibilities into the TORs for SESA and REDD+ Coordinators. The RTWG is charged with handling more serious grievances. Notwithstanding, there is a need to further explore and assess the existent mechanisms and determine specific processes to resolve grievances related to REDD+ in particular. A portion of the FCPF Readiness Grant is being used for a consultancy contract to commission a study to explore, together with national stakeholders, the development of a sustainable, sector-based grievance redress mechanism. Also the sector-based grievance redress mechanism that will be drawn up during this Readiness Phase will be the key to dispute resolution during the implementation of REDD+ in Liberia (i.e. the transaction phase).

SUB-COMPONENT 2D: SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) is an appropriate tool to ensure a proper consideration of environmental and social dimensions into the REDD+ strategy and to develop associated safeguard monitoring systems. The SESA is designed to evaluate the inter-linkages with economic and institutional considerations so that REDD+ policies, plans, and programs do not have adverse environmental and social impacts, while striving to enhance positive benefits in terms of livelihood enhancement, rights of forest dependent people, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem service maintenance, good governance, gender equity, preservation of cultural/traditional heritage and capacity building. The SESA process requires that residual impacts of the final REDD+ strategy feed into the preparation of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF); a framework that seeks to manage and mitigate potential environmental and social risks related to future investments and carbon finance transactions in the context of the future implementation of REDD+.

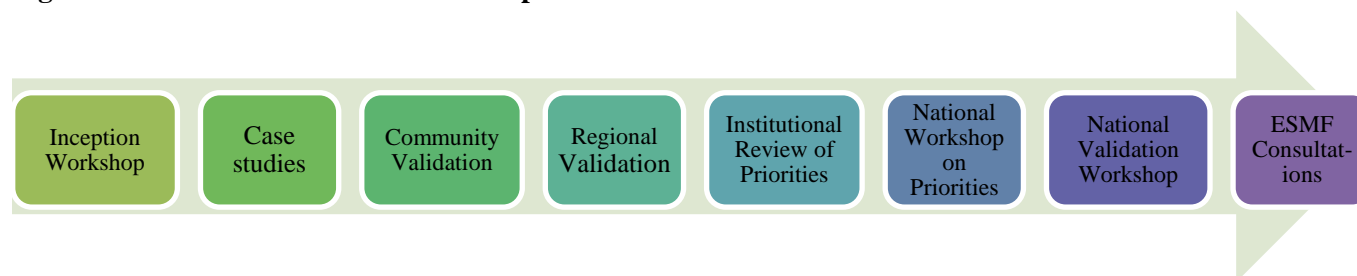
Liberia has the legal and institutional frameworks that provide directives, mandates and guidelines for conducting Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for various policies, projects and programs¹¹. The legal frameworks are provided under the Environmental Protection Agency Act of 2003, Environmental Protection and Management Law (EPML) of 2003 and the National Forestry Reform Law of 2006. Section 37 of the EPA's Act provides that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires that an EIA be undertaken on all projects, policies, programs and activities specified by the Agency. The National Environmental Policy also calls for the integration of environmental considerations into sectoral, structural, regional and socio-economic planning at all levels. In accordance with these regulations, an EIA guideline was developed. All of these legal instruments along with the National Forestry Reform Law of 2006 specify projects and programs that are mandatory for EIA. The SESA process not only adheres to these national legal instruments but also to the requirements of the World Bank safeguard policies which have provisions for providing the basis for integrating environmental and social considerations into forestry programs and other land use change policies, projects and programs.

¹¹ Environmental Protection Agency Act (2003)

The EPA is responsible for integrating environmental and social issues into the REDD+ process and overall national planning¹². The EPA has an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Internal Review Committee charged with the responsibility of evaluating all ESIA reports of various sectors including the forestry sector and the Department of Compliance and Enforcement which is responsible for monitoring all ESIA permits or licenses issued by the EPA. Overall, the EPA has the mandate to approve all EIA submissions and other related reports. The FDA also has an EIA Division which is housed in the Commercial Forestry Department¹³. The EIA Division of the FDA is responsible to seek the involvement of various public, private, academic and community entities as well as concerned and informed individuals in the planning and execution of EIA programmes for FDA. The EIA Division also serves as direct liaison between FDA and EPA in the implementation of the provisions of the environmental laws of Liberia relative to the forestry sector; collaborate with other technical divisions within the FDA to promulgate regulations to safeguard the forest and the environment.

The SESA activities are being implemented through a consultancy contract awarded to Tetra Tech ARD after a rigorous recruitment exercise consistent with the World Bank Selection Guidelines. The contract was signed on May 30, 2014. As part of the Inception Phase, Tetra Tech ARD hosted a two-day SESA National Validation Workshop on July 21-22, 2014. This included the launching of the SESA Process, validation of the work plan and consultation and participation plan. The Workshop which was attended by seventy-one (71) participants met its stated objectives of introducing the SESA concept to relevant stakeholders and to obtain their inputs/feedback to and validation of the SESA development process. Tetra Tech ARD submitted an Inception Report¹⁴. The process for the stakeholder engagement and consultation activities is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2. SESA Consultation and Participation Process



The stakeholder engagement and consultation process commenced with the Inception or National Validation Workshop. The workshop brought together an array of stakeholders drawn from broad stakeholder groups including government, private sector, civil society, county and community level groups. The two-day workshop provided a space for stakeholders to be introduced to the SESA, discuss

¹² R-PP (2012)

¹³ Housing the EIA division within the commercial department at the FDA has the propensity to create a conflict of interest situation. The commercial department mandated to issue concession contracts, should not be the same one monitoring compliance of EIA.

¹⁴ The Inception Report was useful in this section. Prior to its finalization, the draft was reviewed by the SESA Working Group and comments were incorporated in the final version. The figures, tables and literature detailing the consultation and participation process, case studies and validation workshops were extracted from the final Report.

the proposed work plan, and participate in the initial stakeholder analysis that form the basis for the stakeholder identification and selection outlined in this report.

CASE STUDIES AND COMMUNITY VALIDATION WORKSHOPS

Tetra Tech ARD presented seven prospective case studies based on various themes selected to highlight the social and environmental impacts of the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation listed in the R-PP. Stakeholders at the National Validation Workshop were asked to review and agree on six case studies to be conducted in six different counties with a focus on the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. These case studies (Table 13) will serve as the first level of engagement with local communities.

Table 13: Issues and justification for site selection

Case Study Issues	County	Justification
Logging Concessions	Rivercess	The county hosts three active Forest Management Contracts. The two CFDCs that have received the highest income from logging also in the county. <u>Specific issues:</u> impacts of logging, community participation in forest governance and benefit.
Oil Palm and Agricultural Concession Policy and Practice	Sinoe	Oil palm plantation expansion in Butaw, Numopoh and Juarzon Districts. <u>Specific issues:</u> impacts of plantation expansion and concession policy and clash between community conservation initiative and oil palm plantations in Numopoh.
Community Forest Management Agreements	Nimba	Two non-extractive community forestry pilots in Zor and Gbar. <u>Specific issues:</u> impacts of mining and related infrastructure on community conservation, community and private sector conservation initiatives and trade-offs
Protected Areas	Lofa	Lessons from ongoing REDD+ interventions. Wonigizi REDD+ pilot. <u>Specific issues:</u> level of community involvement and factors influencing same, and community benefits distribution.
Shifting Cultivation	Bong	Smallholder plantations, tree crops and shifting cultivation as drivers of deforestation evident in the county. <u>Specific issues:</u> traditional agriculture and livelihoods
Fuelwood/ charcoal	Margibi	Biomass base energy sources. <u>Specific issues:</u> economic benefits, environmental impacts, and potential impacts of REDD+ interventions

The case studies provide an opportunity for Tetra Tech ARD to begin the process of identifying environmental and social issues linked to drivers of deforestation as well as how measures to tackle these drivers might also affect communities. During the case studies the situation of marginalized groups including women, youths and people with disabilities will receive special consideration.

Exact dates and sequence for case study field work remain to be determined depending upon initial key informant and written information gathering, accessibility and availability of local stakeholders. Nevertheless, to remain on track with later phases, this field work will need to begin in mid-September and finish before the end of October. The key environmental and social issues generated during the case studies will be presented at six Community Validation Workshops (Table 14). To broaden participation of communities in identification of the environmental and social issues, these workshops will be convened in six different communities with similar profiles to those where the case studies were conducted. The

validation workshops will therefore provide opportunities for community feedback on findings of the case studies, and for the SESA Team to triangulate the findings of the case studies. This process will bring the total number of community-level consultations to twelve.

Selection of participants for the six validation workshops will be based on the stakeholder groups identified earlier, but women, youths, the elderly and people with disabilities will be given special consideration. The Stakeholder Engagement Specialist will engage with FDA and EPA offices in the target regions to coordinate preparation for the workshops including identifying venues and distributing invitations and workshop materials in advance of the workshop. FDA and EPA staff in the field will be involved in the delivery of the workshop.

Table 14: Community Validation Workshops

Workshop Themes	Community Validation Workshops	Provisional Dates
Logging Concessions	Rivercess	15 – 30 November 2014
Oil Palm and Agricultural Concession Policy	Sinoe	
Community Forest Management Agreements	Nimba	
Protected Areas	Lofa	
Shifting Cultivation	Bong	
Fuelwood/ charcoal	Margibi	

Fifty participants will be invited to each Community Validation Workshop. At least 20 will come from communities where the case study focusing on a similar theme was conducted as noted above. This process will ensure that people from the case study sites are also involved in validation of the findings. In total, 300 persons will participate in the Community Validation Workshops.

REGIONAL VALIDATION WORKSHOPS

During the SESA Inception Workshop, participants indicated their preference that SESA consultations cover as many counties as possible. They proposed that counties be clustered for the six county-level validation workshops proposed in the draft SESA work plan. The proposed six county-level validation workshops are therefore characterized as Regional Validation Workshops to accurately reflect the plan to bring participants from two or three counties together at each workshop. The clusters, workshop locations and proposed dates are presented in Table 15.

Table 15: Regional Validation Workshops

Counties/ Regions	Venue	Provisional Dates
Maryland, Grand Kru and River Gee	Harper City, Maryland County	7-19 January 2015
Grand Gedeh and Sinoe	Zwedru City, Grand Gedeh County	
Bong, Nimba and Lofa	Gbarnga City, Bong County	
Margibi and Montserrado	Kakata City, Margibi County	
Bomi, Gbarpolu and Cape Mount	Tubmanburg City, Bomi County	
Grand Bassa and Rivercess	Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County	

Forty participants will be invited to each regional validation workshop. In line with recommendations from participants at the Inception Workshop, participants at the Regional Validation Workshops will be selected from different counties including those where the case studies were conducted. Participants reflect the diversity of stakeholder groups in each region, including government, civil society and private sector representatives at county level, and forest dependent peoples. Of the 40 participants expected for each Regional Validation Workshop, 10-20 will be selected during the community validation workshops.

If possible, regional workshops will be designed in concert with the REDD+ strategy team to provide information about the concept of REDD+, and to stimulate discussion on proposed policies and actions that may be implemented under a REDD+ scheme. The workshops will then provide opportunities for stakeholders to engage in active dialogue, drawing on their experiences with key drivers of deforestation, and on potential social and environmental impacts that may result from proposed measures.

From the Case Studies to the Regional Validation Workshops, more than 640 community and county-level stakeholders will be reached across the fifteen counties. Overall attendance is expected to comprise 300 participants at the six Community Validation Workshops, 240 at the six Regional Validation Workshops, and at least 90 persons engaged in a combination of informal meetings, key informant interviews and focus group discussions during the Case Studies.

NATIONAL WORKSHOPS

There are four national level workshops, including the Inception Workshop held in July 2014, during the SESA. The next national workshop will engage institutional stakeholders in review of environmental and social priorities generated during the SESA, a second, involving broad stakeholder participation, will review the critical priorities identified, and a third will validate the SESA overall. The outcomes of these two workshops will feed into finalization of the ESMF.

About 200 participants in total, drawn from the various stakeholder groups will attend these workshops. The institutional review workshop will be limited to mainly technicians and key government institutions. A limited number of participants from private sector, civil society and academia will be invited to this institutional review workshop. The other two workshops, to validate the SESA and presentation of the ESMF, will be opened to the broad range of stakeholders identified and engaged during the SESA.

Proposed dates for the remaining three national level workshops are presented in Table 16 below.

Table 16: National Workshops

National Workshops in Monrovia	Provisional Dates
Institutional Stakeholder Review	21 January 2015
National Workshop on SESA Priorities	27 January 2015
National Validation Workshop of SESA and REDD+ Strategy Options	24 March 2015

ESMF CONSULTATIONS

ESMF consultations provide opportunities to build consensus on the processes for assessing and reporting on social and environmental impacts of the proposed REDD+ strategy. These consultations will provide opportunities to raise awareness on subject-specific elements of the ESMF. It is envisaged that upcoming ESMF consultations will be similar to the preceding regional workshops in terms of regional representation and selection of stakeholders.

At the time of the ESMF consultations, at least one SESA consultation activity would have taken place in each of the 15 counties. Therefore the ESMF consultations are second and third opportunities for stakeholders to contribute to the overall SESA process. Proposed locations of these ESMF consultations have been agreed with EPA, FDA and key stakeholder groups.

Table 17: ESMF Consultations

Counties/ Regions	Venue	Provisional Dates
Grand Bassa and Rivercess	Buchanan, Grand Bassa County	7-23 April 2015
Grand Gedeh and Sinoe	Greenville, Sinoe County	
Maryland, Grand Kru and River Gee	Fishtown, River Gee County	
Bong, Nimba and Lofa	Gbarnga, Bong County	
Bomi, Gbarpolu and Cape Mount	Bopolu, Gbarpolu County	
Margibi and Montserrado	Monrovia, Margibi County	

The SESA and REDD+ Strategy Teams are coordinating their activities to ensure consistency of timing and deliverables of the REDD+ Strategy.

Meanwhile, the SESA Roadmap, which was prepared more than a year and half ago, has been updated. Annex 1 includes the revised SESA Road map.

The SESA Working Group, the body responsible to provide oversight and guidance on the preparation of SESA and the ESMF, has been reconstituted and its TOR prepared. The working group had its first meeting on February 14, 2014 and came up with a number of action points. (See Annex 2 for the minutes of the meeting).

The SESA will build on a number of strategic studies already conducted for Liberia. For example, the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) prepared for Liberia in 2010 (“Mainstreaming Social and Environmental Considerations into the Liberian National Forestry Reform Process – A Strategic Environmental Assessment for Implementation of the 3Cs of the Forest Reform Law of 2006”) and the Rapid Social Assessment (RSA) undertaken in communities around four (4) Forest Management Concessions (FMCs) in 2011. Table 18 below shows a summary of activities for the different phases of the SESA process.

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	Organize national workshop to validate the refined REDD+ strategy options		
4. ESMF Draft Formulation	Feeding of the residual impacts of the final REDD+ strategy into the preparation of the draft ESMF Consultation of the initial draft ESMF	To be initiated	Will end May 2015
5. Consultations and Disclosure	Consultation of the final draft ESMF Disclosure of final draft ESMF	To be initiated	Will end May 2015

Table 19: Workplan for the phases of the SESA process

		June 2014	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	January 2015	Feb	March	April	May
	Contract Signature												
	Commencement of Services												
D-1	Inception Report												
	1) Initial data collection and literature review												
	2) Gap assessment of R-PP Stakeholder Analysis												
	3) Prepare consultation and participation activities												
	4) Draft SESA Work Plan												
	5) Share with REDD+ Coordinator and refine to avoid duplication												
	6) Organize National Validation Workshop												
	7) National Validation Workshop and Report												
	8) Finalization of SESA Work Plan												
	9) Disclosure of SESA Work Plan												
	10) Draft and submit Inception Report												
	11) Inception Report comments provided by Client (if necessary)												
	12) Final Inception Report approved by Client												
D-2	Scoping Report												
	1) Gathering/validation of baseline spatial, social and environmental data												
	2) Construct Base Map (1 st layer)												

	June 2014	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	January 2015	Feb	March	April	May
3) Map economic activities (2 nd layer)												
4) Map Infrastructure Layer (3 rd layer)												
5) Map income levels and other vulnerability indicators												
6) Map land tenure and property rights types												
7a) Organize logistics of case studies and PRA												
7b) Conduct selected case studies												
8) Conduct PRAs in selected communities to identify key issues												
9) Superimpose map layers to define key areas of stress												
10) Identify priority environmental and social issues from mapping, PRA, and case studies												
11) Analyze opportunity costs and tradeoffs												
12) Analyze institutional legal regulatory capacity and policy gaps												
13) Submit Scoping Report												
14) Scoping Report comments provided by Client (if necessary)												
15) Final Scoping Report approved by Client												
D-3 SESA Prioritization Report												
1) Plan and organize consultations with key communities												
2) Community consultations to identify social and environmental priorities												
3) Validation of priorities by regional-level representatives												
4) Review and prioritization by institutional stakeholders												
5) Draft Priorities Report shared prior to national workshop												

		June 2014	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	January 2015	Feb	March	April	May
6)	National Stakeholder Workshop on SESA priorities												
7)	Deliver Prioritization Report												
8)	Comments provided by Client on Prioritization Report (if needed)												
9)	Final Prioritization Report Approved												
D-4	Draft SESA Report												
1)	Gap Analysis of REDD+ options and environmental and social priorities												
2)	Further refine REDD+ options to address identified environmental and social risks												
3)	Develop initial draft of the ESMF												
4)	Prepare/organize National Validation Workshop												
5)	Draft version of SESA Report shared in advance of national workshop												
6)	National Validation Workshop of SESA and refined REDD+ strategy options												
7)	Organize ESMF consultations												
8)	Hold public consultations around Draft ESMF												
9)	Submit Draft SESA Report												
10)	Comments provided by client on Final SESA Report												
D-5	Final SESA Report												
1)	Respond to final comments and feedback by Client and submit Final SESA Report												

2.3 COMPONENT 3: REFERENCE EMISSION LEVEL/ REFERENCE LEVEL

REFERENCE SCENARIO DEVELOPMENT

For a successful REDD+ implementation, a mechanism for monitoring/measuring forest change and carbon emissions and removals is essential. Current land cover and forest maps must be produced, and reference emissions level/reference level scenarios established to facilitate a measurement, reporting and verification system (MRV). Projecting changes in forest cover and carbon stock over time and the corresponding emissions and removals from the atmosphere are used to account for performance of REDD+ policy interventions relative to forest reference emissions level/reference levels (REL/RL). The UNFCCC has requested participating countries to develop REL/RL at the national level, with subnational approaches as an interim arrangement¹⁵.

The R-PP further elaborates REDD+ reference scenario as a combination of recent historical data on emissions from deforestation and/or forest degradation and other relevant land uses, and estimation of future emissions and removals, to produce a national scenario of GHG emissions over time and without additional REDD+ incentives. The reference scenario will be developed by combining emission factors with activity data in order to model quantity/location of forest change as well as future emissions/removals over different time periods and under various socio-economic scenarios.

In order to monitor forest change, the need for current base maps is eminent. The Forestry Development Authority of Liberia has successfully entered a contract with Metria AB and GeoVille GmbH (JV Metria/GeoVille) to conduct Liberia's land cover and forest mapping for the production of base maps. The table below shows the summary work schedule of activities to be implemented by JV Metria/GeoVille.

Table 20: Summary work schedule of activities

Tasks	March 2014	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January 2015	February
5000 – Project management												
1000 – Inception report												
2000 - Technical specifications												

¹⁵ Decision1/CP16 paragraph 7(d) and Appendix I

3000 – Forest and land cover mapping												
4000 – Training												
Validation performed by FDA												
Workshops in Monrovia												
Deliverables		D1 draft	D1, D2, Q1 report			Q2 report			D3, Q3 report	D4		D5

The first workshop by JV Metria/GeoVille took place on April 30 & May 1, 2014 in Liberia at Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS). The participants included representatives of Metria, GeoVille, FDA, REDD+ Team, LISGIS, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Lines Mines and Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, Land Commission, Civil Society Organizations, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs USAID, VPA Support and the World Bank.

STATUS OF THE REFERENCE EMISSIONS LEVELS (REL)/REFERENCE SCENARIO

The FCPF is funding a consultancy contract to develop a national reference scenario and conduct capacity building activities to ensure decreases and increases in forest carbon stocks are identified and future trends projected. The REDD+ Implementation Unit is awaiting the Bank's No Objection in order to request Financial and Technical proposals from the shortlisted firms. A Consultant (firm) will be selected in accordance with the Quality – and Cost – Based Selection method (QCBS) consistent with the Bank's Selection Guidelines.

2.4 COMPONENT 4: DEVELOPMENT OF MONITORING SYSTEMS FOR FORESTS AND SAFEGUARDS

SUB-COMPONENT 4A: NATIONAL FOREST MONITORING SYSTEM

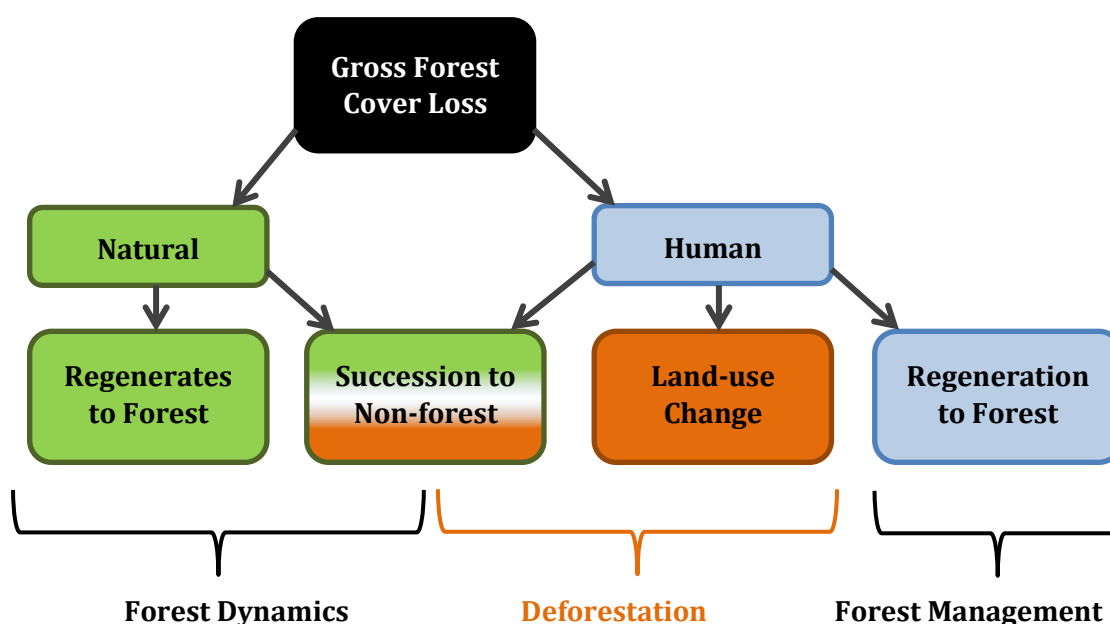
The national forest monitoring, or MRV systems will generate information that allows comparison of changes in forest area and carbon content, relative to baseline estimates. As with most of the readiness activities designed within the R-PP, implementation is about to begin (under a consultancy contract). However, through the R-PP process, and subsequently, under the auspices of the RTWG/RIU key component of the MRV have been provisionally agreed upon – as described in the following sub-sections. It is also useful to understand that the MRV

component is one of those most impacted by the lack of co-funding, and is thus (currently/still) significantly under budgeted (i.e. under the FCPF grant), both for implementation and capacity building; and the recognised funding gaps are explored further in the final section.

MRV in Liberia will need to be designed in parallel with a safeguard information system (SIS), most likely as part of the ESMF, within the SESA (see figure 4).

The vision for Liberia is that capacity needs will be addressed significantly increasing its technical and institutional expertise for MRV. The key ‘skill areas’ identified Forest Dynamics, Deforestation and Forest Management, as illustrated in the following diagram of forest dynamics, which underpin MRV:

Figure 3. Understanding forest dynamics; MRV and key skills



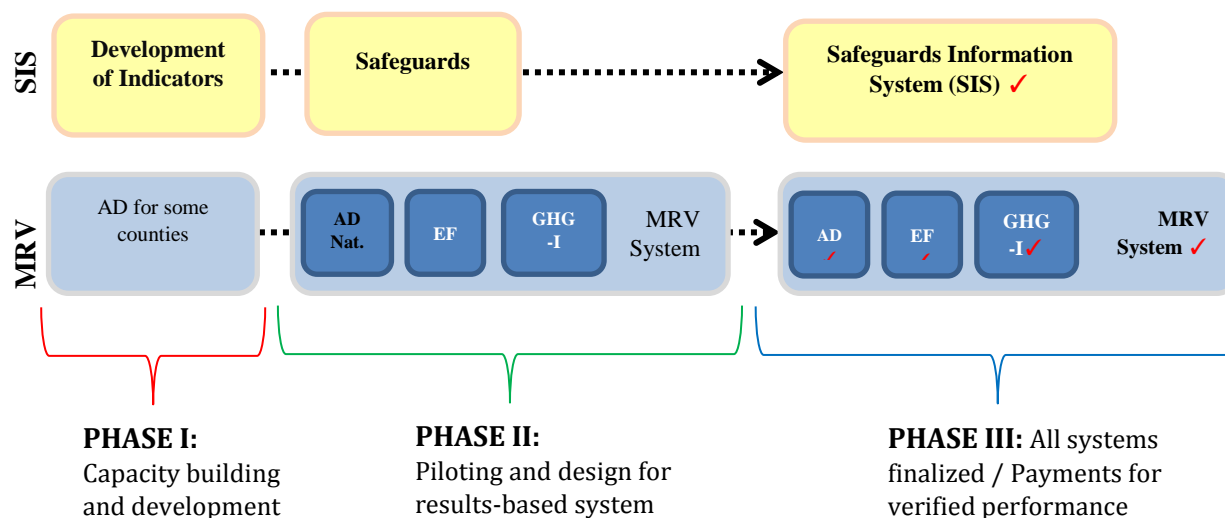
Structurally, the MRV system will follow the standard GHG-Inventory, made of Activity Data and Emissions Factors, with the inclusion of non-carbon monitoring - see diagrams below:

Figure 4. MRV: (AD x EM = GHG-I)

<i>Collect:</i>		<i>Calculate:</i>		<i>Produce:</i>
Activity data	X	Emission Factors	=	GHG inventory (GHG-I)
Land and Satellite monitoring systems		Carbon inventory Allometric equations / factors to be developed from NFI		GHG Emission and Removals

Figure 5. Components of MRV (summary)

Measure:		Report on:	Verify:
IPCC	Activity data	GHG inventory	Submission
	Emission factors		
	GHG inventory	Public awareness	UNFCCC
	Safeguards	National context	
	Other forest benefits	Financial resources	Independent reviews
		Vulnerability assessment	
		Technology transfer	

Figure 6. Information Monitoring (SIS / ESFM) and MRV Phases (separated but interlinked)

KEY PRINCIPLES OF MRV ESTABLISHED

Importantly, and as a key part of design the terms of reference for the selection of a consulting firm to undertake design of the MRV, at a high level, the key components or principles of the MRV have been agreed – as follows:

Country driven process: each country has to establish an autonomous MRV system. The national MRV system is a crucial element of REDD+ implementation.

Learning-by-doing approach: the development of an MRV system has to be based on in-country human resources being involved in the MRV development process from the very beginning and gradually improving skills whilst progressing towards its full implementation.

Safeguards: the inclusion of the ‘REDD+ Safeguards’ in the monitoring system (but not necessarily into the MRV itself) improves the consideration of biodiversity, governance and the inclusion of local communities, even if this takes place in a separate/adjacent SIS/ESFM.

Consistency: an MRV system should provide estimates that are consistent across years. Under certain circumstances, estimates generated from different methodologies in different years can be considered consistent if they have been calculated in a transparent manner.

Transparency: all the data and the methodologies used in the MRV system should be clearly explained and appropriately documented, so that anyone can verify their correctness.

Comparability: estimates of emissions and removals should be comparable among different forest owners and among Parties. For this purpose, forest owners/ Parties should follow the methodologies and standard formats provided by the IPCC and agreed within the UNFCCC for compiling and reporting inventories.

Conservativeness: when completeness or accuracy of estimates cannot be achieved, the reduction of emissions should not be overestimated, or at least the risk of overestimation should be minimized.

SUB-COMPONENT 4B: INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR NON-CARBON, MULTIPLE BENEFITS, OTHER IMPACTS GOVERNANCE AND SAFEGUARDS

As already discussed, MRV can include non-carbon components, as above (figure 5, and below), but there is strong consensus in the international community, as reflected in the decision of UN-REDD+, to separate out the non-carbon parts from MRV, leaving MRV as a carbon-only system and then developing bespoke tools for the other elements, as summarised here:

Monitoring safeguards

Countries or sub-national entities must know how to build systems for providing information on social and environmental safeguards (which requires baselines studies) and how safeguards can be implemented and respected throughout the implementation of REDD+, and in Liberia, this will be delivered via the ESMF

Governance

Monitoring of governance focuses on the performance of a sub-national or national government's capacity and governance. The success of REDD+ depends on this capacity to coordinate and collaborate between different governmental bodies, channel important amounts of funds, build capacities, fight corruption and deliver transparent data on GHG emissions.

Multiple Benefits

Monitoring of multiple benefits identifies the additional benefits that REDD+ can harness, in addition to carbon. Examples of multiple benefits can be socio-economic, like improved livelihoods, or ecosystem services, such as protection of biodiversity and watersheds. By identifying and monitoring multiple benefits it is possible to adapt sub-national/national REDD+ strategies in order to avoid harm and maximize multiple benefits.

3.0 AN ANALYSIS OF PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN THOSE ACTIVITIES FUNDED BY THE FCPF READINESS PREPARATION GRANT AND IDENTIFICATION OF FUNDING GAPS

An overview of the key activities of the various components of the REDD+ Readiness Preparation process has been provided in section 2, above. This section (section 3) captures fund allocated for implementation of the 4 key components of REDD+ Readiness Preparation Activities.

3.1 MRV AND REFERENCE SCENARIO

In the past the Forestry Development Authority of Liberia in collaboration with the German Forestry Mission established some permanent sample plots for the purpose of forest monitoring. Liberia is one of a small number of countries that have updated their forest change detection information across at least two reference periods at the full national scale. These techniques will be expanded in the Readiness Plan to include degradation and they will be used for verification purposes every 5 years.¹⁶ Unfortunately, as proposed in the R-PIN the plan to update Liberia's forest change every 5 years has not occurred due to the lack of a monitoring system.

With funding from the FCPF, Liberia's Land cover and Forest base maps are currently being produced. The Reference Scenario is envisaged to be developed combining emission factors with activity data in order to model quantity/location of forest change as well as future emissions/removals over different time periods and under various socio-economic and land use scenarios.

FCPF is funding forest cover mapping with an approximate budget of \$200,000 USD, although the actual, reported cost is \$240,000 USD (so shortfall of \$40,000), and there is no funding for validation/ground truthing (estimated \$150,000 USD, that is not in R-PP budget). Moreover, the reference scenario component will therefore also likely be under-budgeted, plus capacity building and software needs under this component.

3.2 INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR MULTIPLE BENEFITS, OTHER IMPACTS, GOVERNANCE AND SAFEGUARDS

An effective REDD+ strategy will have significant social and environmental benefits beyond climate change mitigation, both at a national and local level. Recognizing that forests play an important role as safety net for vulnerable and marginalized people, especially those living around forest areas, and for the broader community during times of stress, non-carbon aspects are highly prioritized in the National REDD+ process. Considering the growing awareness at both international and national levels of the need for effective social and environmental safeguards, Liberia is developing safeguards indicators in compliance with REDD+ Social and

¹⁶ Liberia FCPF R-PIN 2008

Environmental Standards facilitated by the Climate, Community & Biodiversity Alliance (CCBA) and CARE International. The REDD+ SES Initiative involves the definition of country-specific indicators through participatory and inclusive multi-stakeholder process and development of an assessment process. The REDD+ SES process provides a mechanism that can be used to show whether or how safeguards are being respected, including how multiple benefits are being delivered.

A Standards Committee has been established to develop the safeguard indicators based on the generic principles and criteria developed by the CCBA. The Committee comprises representatives drawn from relevant line ministries and agencies, CSOs, women groups and the private sectors. The Committee provides oversight and support for the use of the standards at the national level. Besides, a facilitation team has been established and its membership includes representative from the government and CSO.

The Standards Committee will be reconstituted into a National Standards Committee to oversee monitoring and assessment of the social and environmental impacts and also of the governance aspects of Liberia's REDD+ program; this committee will work hand in hand with the Forest Monitoring Unit to form synergies and ensure monitoring of all REDD+ benefits. This committee will approve the selection of indicators that will be used for monitoring, approve the assessment process and also approve the reports that assess performance against the indicators. Liberia-specific indicators will be developed based on the framework of principles and criteria of the REDD+ Social & Environmental Standards through a participatory process prior to approval by the committee. This will involve workshops with local communities and outreach to NGOs and other stakeholders to facilitate inputs as well as a web-based consultation. This multi-stakeholder assessment of performance against country-specific indicators will strengthen the quality and credibility of reporting on how safeguards are addressed and respected and how social and environmental benefits are being delivered.

3.3 DEVELOPMENT OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) FRAMEWORK FOR REDD+

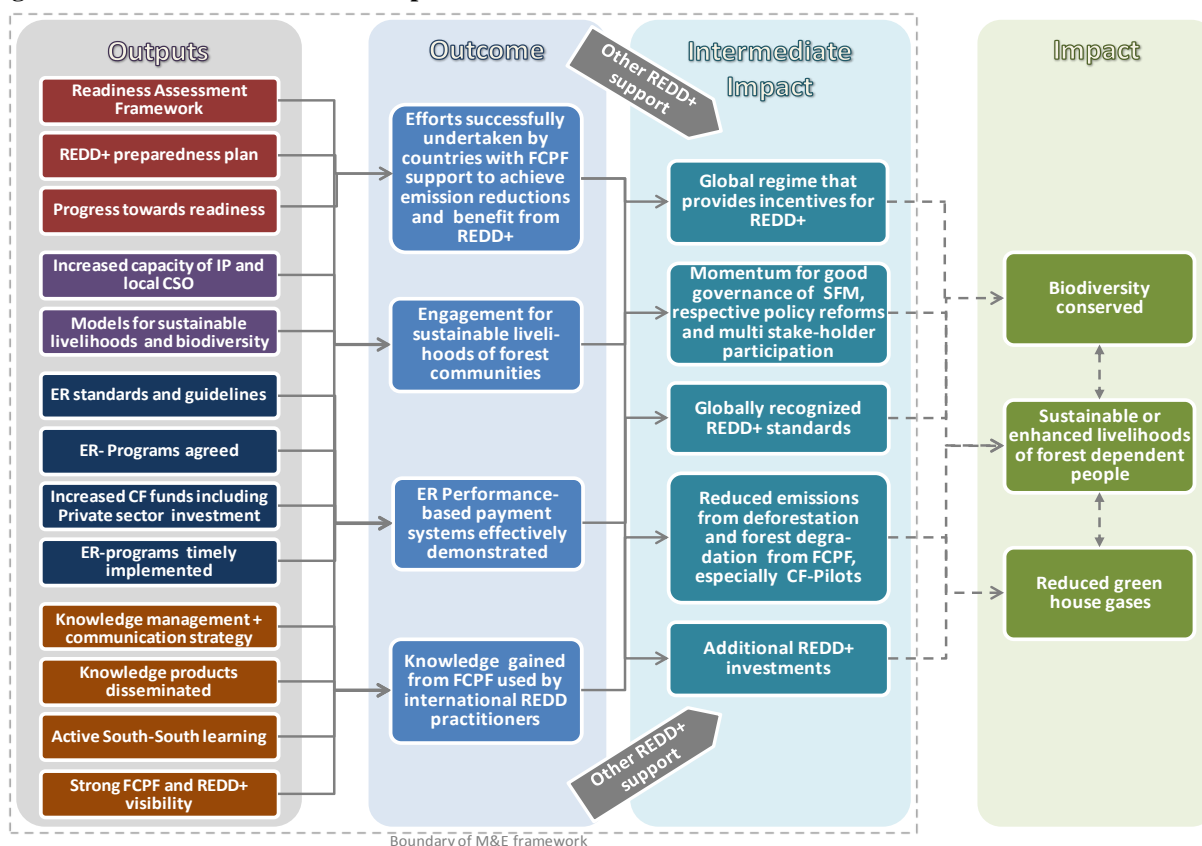
Liberia has an M&E framework which was developed through a multi-stakeholder consultative process in 2013. This framework is meant to encompass all key building blocks required for the effective monitoring and evaluation of the results achieved during the National REDD+ process. Liberia's M&E framework is designed to building on the following:

- The Result Chain see figure 8, and Logical Framework, which together provide a strategic overview of the R-PP process, by illustrating the main results to be achieved; and
- The Performance Measurement Framework (PMF), see figure 7, which is the key internal management tool to be used by the REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU) to manage the collection, analysis and reporting on the performance data that must nourish the monitoring and evaluation functions.

Figure 7. Liberia Performance Measurement Framework (extract)

Results	Indicators	Baseline	Target by 2016	Methods/sources of information	Frequency of data collection and reporting	Responsibility	Traffic light
R-PP component 1 Organize and Consult							
Outcome 1 Adequate capacity at National, county and local level to manage and engage in REDD implementation	O1 Number of REDD pilot sites established with all relevant functions to make them effective, through technical support from the national structure out in place	0	At least 3 sites have been established with all relevant management function to make their operations effective	MoU signed between forest community and FDA/county/other government authorities	6-month	FDA/Implementing partners	🟢 🟡 🔴
R-PP sub-component 1.a: National Readiness Management Arrangements							
Output 1.a.1: NCCSC Secretariat (NCCS) and RTWG/RIG meet regularly and provide guidance on R-PP process and REDD Pilot sites	1.a.1i Number of meetings dedicated to RPP process every year	n/a	NCCSC: 1; RTWG/RIG: 3	RTWG/RIG and NCCSC meeting minutes, RIU progress reports	Yearly	NCCSC, RTWG/RIG, RIU coordinator	🟢 🟡 🔴
	1.a.1ii Number of potential REDD pilot sites defined	2	At least 8 potential REDD pilot sites identified by 2016	REDD website, implementing partners reports on REDD	Yearly	RIU/RTWG/Implementing partners	🟢 🟡 🔴
Output 1.a.2 REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU) established within FDA/MPEA and operational	1.a.2 Number of staff recruited	1	4 by end of 2013	Staff contracts at FDA, MPEA, WB CO	Yearly	RIU coordinator	🟢 🟡 🔴
R-PP sub-component 1.b: Information sharing and early dialogue with key stakeholder groups							
Output 1.b.1: REDD+ communication strategy implemented	1.b.1i Examples of activities undertaken and knowledge products published, including at national level, to generate and institutionalize awareness on REDD+ such as through the inclusion of REDD+ in curricula in schools and universities (Prog. level indic. 4.1.d)	n/a	tbd in communication strategy	Signed contracts with and products from media companies	Yearly	RIU coordinator	🟢 🟡 🔴
		n/a	Tbd in communication strategy	Communication strategy monitoring reports	6-month	RIU coordinator	🟢 🟡 🔴
	1.b.1ii Number of individuals (men and women) reached with these knowledge products (RT 3.2.4)	0	10	Workshops minutes/mission orders	6-month	RIU coordinator	🟢 🟡 🔴
	1.b.1iii Number of Liberian experts who participated in any South-south learning activities (disaggregated by						

Figure 8: Result Chain of REDD+ implementation in Liberia



In the development of Liberia's M&E framework, the following steps were adopted:

- Capture the strategic goals of the R-PP process in a results chain. This involved identifying/defining the outputs, outcomes and expected impacts of the R-PP activities, which has been realized on the basis of the detailed structure and activities presented in the R-PP document.
- From the Results-chain, a logical framework (log-frame) was designed, defining assumptions to be monitored.
- A complete Performance Measurement Framework (PMF) was established. The PMF includes baseline and target values for each indicator, as well as responsibilities and timing for indicator data collection.
- A validation process with key stakeholders; an electronic feedback process covering a period of one month was initiated through the RTWG to solicit public comments and inputs.

3.4 ACTIVITIES COMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL REDD+ READINESS PROCESS

Liberia is currently in the process of developing its National REDD+ Strategy and capacity to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from forest loss and degradation, through support from the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and other donors. Designing and implementing an effective REDD+ strategy which will directly contribute to long-term sustainable economic growth, requires both consistent long term financial commitments and a transparent financial tracking system to show all funds and activities supported to date¹⁷.

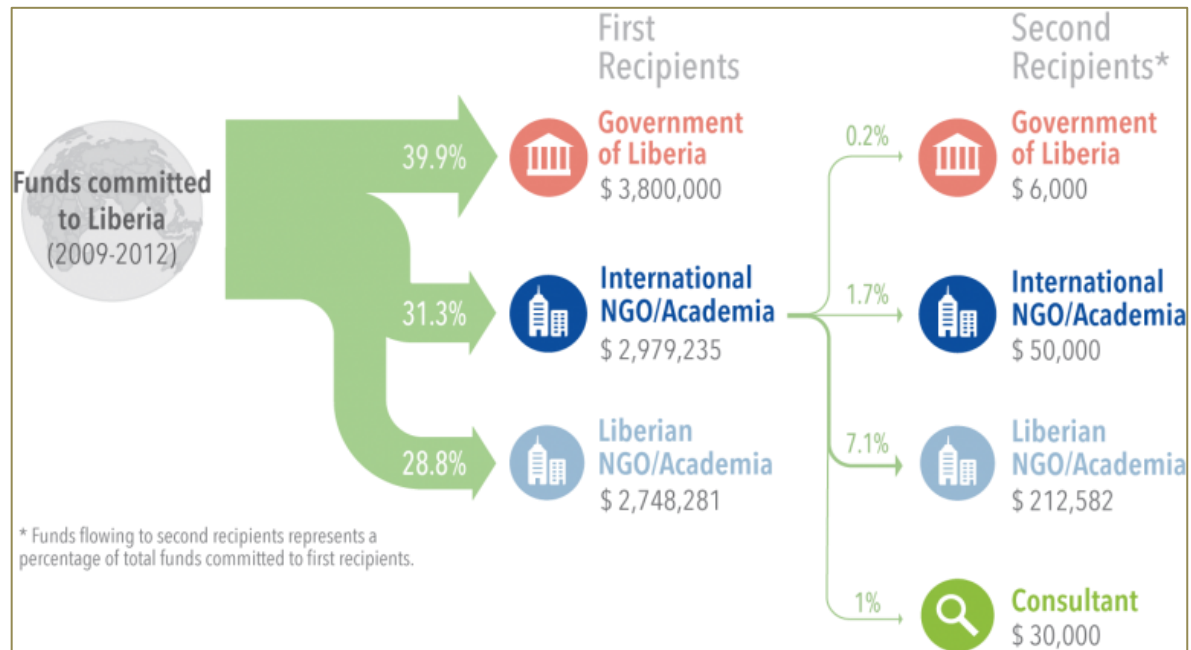
The Liberia Mapping REDD+ Finance Flows, see figure 9, a study conducted by Skills and Agricultural Development Services (SADS), the Forest Development Authority (FDA) and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Liberia with funding support from the German Government through Forest Trends indicates that over US\$9.5 million has been committed for REDD+ activities in Liberia, with US\$5.3 million disbursed between 2009 and 2012.

The finances are currently flowing to 17 projects aimed at the following key activities:

- i. Stakeholder Engagement
- ii. Rights and Tenure
- iii. MRV and reference levels
- iv. Policy and Law Analysis & Development, REDD+ Strategy Development and Advocacy
- v. Institutional Strengthening
- vi. Forest Carbon Projects design
- vii. Improved forest and land management to reduce deforestation and degradation (Implementation)

¹⁷ Liberia Mapping REDD+ Finance Flows 2009 – 2012 Report

viii. Carbon offsets and performance based payments for improved forest and land management

Figure 9: Commitments to recipients by location and type

3.5 FINANCIAL RESULTS

In June 2012 the GoL signed a **3.6 million** Dollars grant agreement with the FCPF. Table 21 shows the expenditure analysis from 2012 to present.

Table 21: Expenditure analysis from 2012 to present and funding request

R-PP Component	Total needed (A) (R-PP/ Assessment Note)	Funds Pledged (B) (FCPF)	Funds used		Funds available (= B-C)	Financing gap (=A-B)	Additional funding needs: (highlighted 2012-2014 & inflation)	Request to (FCPF) if any
			Funds Committed (c)	Funds Disbursed				
1(a) National Readiness Management Arrangements	1,540,000	560,000	115,990	96,490	444,010	980,000	5,000	785,000
1(b) Information sharing and early dialogue with key stakeholder group	513,000	250,000	299,953	0	-49,953	263,000	15,000	228,000
1(c) Consultation and participation process REDD+ Strategy & SESA	407,000	600,000	0	0	600,000	-193,000	235,000	42,000
<i>Included in 1(c) Consultation & participation process: Feedback & grievance redress</i>	200,000	200,000	0	0	200,000	0	50,000	50,000
Sub total	2,660,000	1,610,000	415,943	96,490	1,194,057	1,050,000	305,000	1,105,000

2(a) Assessment of land use , forest law, policy and governance	985,000	0	0	0	0	985,000	0	985,000
2(b) REDD+ Strategy options - incl. Forestry, Agriculture & Energy (sectors)	1,380,000	0	0	0	0	1,380,000	0	1,380,000
2(c) REDD+ implementation Framework	145,000	0	0	0	0	145,000	0	145,000
2(d) Social and Environmental Impacts (SESA)	300,000	400,000	981,068	0	-581,068	-100,000	105,000	5,000
2(e) Finalization of National REDD+ Strategy document (including partially financing of 2(b) REDD+ Strategy options)	150,000	400,000	477,030	0	-77,030	-250,000	255,000	5,000
Sub total	3,400,000	800,000	1,458,098	0	-658,098	2,600,000	360,000	2,520,000
3(a) Development Reference Level or scenario	455,000	400,000	0	0	400,000.00	55,000.00	0	55,000
3(a)(i) Forest Cover Mapping	0	200,000	240,000	24,000	-40,000.00	-200,000	200,000	0
Sub total	455,000	600,000	240,000	24,000	360,000.00	-145,000	200,000	55,000
4a National Forest Monitoring System (Emissions and removals)	845,000	0	0	0	0	845,000	200,000	1,045,000
4b Other multiple benefits & impacts	190,000	0	8,180	8,180	-8,180	190,000	0	190,000
Sub total	1,035,000	0	8,180	8,180	-8,180	1,035,000	200,000	1,235,000
6a Monitoring and evaluation	280,000	0	0	0	0	280,000	0	280,000

Sub total	280,000	0	0	0	0	280,000	0	280,000
Project Management	100,000	590,000	168,259	143,340	421,741	-490,000	495,000	5,000
Sub total	100,000	590,000	168,259	143,340	421,741	-490,000	495,000	5,000
Total	7,930,000	3,600,000	2,290,480	272,010	1,309,520	4,330,000	1,560,000	5,200,000

AUDIT STATUS

Financial audit for Fiscal Year (FY) 2012/2013 has been completed. The RIU and PFMU are in the process of hiring an independent external auditor to conduct financial audit for FY 2013/2014.

4. SUMMARY OF CURRENT FCPF READINESS STATUS

4.1 STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS

The REDD+ Implementation Unit through the RTWG has been regular in presenting to stakeholders the status of the REDD+ readiness activities meetings, workshops, print and electronic media, community radio, CSO forums and community groupings. Recently, a two day multi- stakeholder's workshop was held under the auspices of the RTWG. The workshop participants included representatives from cross- section of the society including chiefs, elders, rural women, youths, CSOs, private associations, etc. This workshop enhanced the understanding and perception of participants on the linkages between biodiversity offset and REDD+ activities in Liberia. In addition, the workshop laid the platform for CSO and community direct engagement with concessionaires and other private sector players.

Previously, a one day multi-stakeholder workshop was held to share lessons learnt and experiences from piloting REDD+ activities at the community level in two counties (Lofa and Grand Cape Mount Counties). These pilot activities were a result of funding provided to Fauna and Flora International (FFI) by the Government of Norway through NORAD. Although, NORAD funding support for these pilot activities has ended, the GOL identified these pilot sites in the M&E Framework as the first two potential REDD+ sites for Liberia. These REDD+ demonstration sites activities are further improving the understanding and knowledge of forest dependent people, project proponents, CSOs and policy makers on the importance of forest conservation, sustainable forest management, and the processes leading to the development of a REDD+ projects for the sale of carbon.

4.2 PRIVATE SECTOR ASPECTS

The private sector will be a key actor in REDD+ implementation, without who's full and active participation the entire scheme cannot be successful. Liberia will not be able to achieve sustainable, low carbon development without the private sector addressing its own emissions, while still striving to increase investment, productivity, growth and employment. To date, the private sectors involvement has been primarily that of stakeholder and consultant, participating in awareness raising activities and sharing their knowledge and needs through the consultation and participation process (component) and via the RTWG.

Far deeper consultation with the private sector will be required for the development of the REDD+ strategy options (currently underway as of mid-2014) as options will effectively represent different models of activity and growth (and associated emissions) from the key economic sectors, as driven by national policy and private sector investment, itself guided by enabling conditions (labor, policy, risk etc.) and markets, both domestic and international.

4.3 NEXT STEPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the preparation of the R-PP it was anticipated that all activities and analytical studies funded by the FCPF grant would have started once the grant agreement was signed in June 2012. In this connection, it was assumed that all planned activities were to be accomplished by the end of May 2015. On the contrary, selection activities to hire firms responsible to undertake key assignments leading to the design of the National REDD+ Strategy and the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for REDD+ implementation began more than a year after the grant agreement was signed. This was due to the delay in hiring core team members, especially the Procurement Specialist responsible for effective procurement management of the project.

Office space for RIU is not currently adequate or fit for purpose. This remains a serious challenge / constraint and although this is not linked to request for additional financial support (from the FCPF), as that must come from GoL co-finance (in-kind), it is recognised as an issue), e.g. RIU have bought printers but there is no space to set them up, and there is a plan/budget to hire a Team Assistant but that has not taken place yet, as there is no desk space.

Project accountant position also remains an issue: The R-PP says that FDA would via secondment provide an accountant to the PFMU, at no cost, but in reality FDA did not have a free accountant, so the RIU is paying for an accountant and yet there is no budget for this position, long term.

Currently, NCCS at EPA is being supported by the FDA RIU (e.g. with the purchase of office equipment, including air conditioning), although again, there is difficulty in finding appropriate budget to cover this support

Finally, in development of this report it has found that there is still a profound need in Liberia for national experts (and thus significantly more capacity building and associated FCPF financial support) in:

- SESA, including SIA and FPIC
- Carbon accounting / MRV
- Safeguards / SIS
- GIS and remote sensing
- M&E (linked to MRV)
- HR / systems

5. REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING TO THE FCPF

The FCPF Readiness Grant of **USD3.6 million** has facilitated the start of an in-depth and thorough REDD+ readiness process in Liberia, contributing enormously to the achievements outlined in this mid-term report and the majority of the preparative activities towards becoming REDD+ ready. However, as discussed previously, despite the substantial progress which Liberia has made in its REDD+ readiness process, not all key milestones can be met with the funds allocated for the implementation of the R-PP, primarily as a result of low levels of co-finance. The budget estimate for the full implementation of the R-PP was \$7,730,000 USD, but to date only \$3.6m has been sourced, with some additional funding going to projects that support general REDD+ readiness, like awareness raising, improving governance and piloting, that do help to achieve the goals of the R-PP. In particular, financing gaps in areas such as the MRV system, the REDD+ registry, FFGRM etc. are significant and have necessitated a call for additional financial resources for the full realization of our readiness objectives, in light of no significant co-finance being available for the readiness process. At present, the total estimated sum for this stands at approximately **USD7.8 million**.

Therefore, Liberia is submitting an application for additional funding of **USD5.2 million** to ensure that the R-package, which will be submitted in November, 2015, incorporates details of all readiness activities undertaken to achieve key milestones outlined in the R-PP.

The key gaps and remaining activities for which additional funding is being sought have been identified during the readiness process and are described below (and table 15, above).

Component 1(a): National Readiness Management Arrangements

Significant funds were earmarked in the original R-PP for discussions, consultations and operationalization of institutional arrangements for the management of REDD+ activities and flow of REDD+ funds in-country. A financing gap of USD980,000 with an additional USD5,000 for inflation, is evident from the financial analysis, meaning that significant funds are still required to undertake this activity properly. This figure has been adjusted, however, based on work undertaken since the R-PP was submitted, meaning that the ‘gap’ is (now) considered to be closer to USD 780,000.

Additional finance is in part a reflection of the need for national-level REDD+ discussions to engage with international negotiations (COP/SBSTA) and other national initiatives, such as NAMAs, Poverty Reduction Strategy / Vision 2030, biodiversity offsetting (mining), FLEGT and progressing National Climate Change policy. Moreover, fund management arrangements for climate finance are currently non-existent in Liberia, and will need to be framed within a complex and evolving policy environment, taking into consideration of new land law, emerging

carbon rights (law) and efforts from across the political spectrum to improve transparency and governance.

Proposed activities:

- Expert consultation and development of discussion paper for REDD+ governance arrangements and policy framework;
- High level ministerial meetings;
- National, regional and district level stakeholder consultations;
- Development of an options paper for national coordination of REDD+ finance;
- Development of draft framework for landscape level, cross-sectoral land use planning;
- On-going capacity building within RIU (FDA and EPA) and other line ministries as required;
- On-going support to RIU, REDD+ coordinator and RTWG;
- Support to the continued function and facilitation of the NCCSC (including staff positions) and NCCS

An estimated **USD785, 000** is required to follow through on this process.

Component 1(b): Information sharing and Outreach

Just under half of the required USD513,000 required for information sharing and outreach surrounding the R-PP process and updates of the REDD+ strategy, where made available through the FCPF. An additional 213,000, plus USD 15,000 for additional expenses and inflation have thus been highlighted via the financial analysis.

Not only is additional finance required to cover existing an planning activities, as above, but recent (2012-2014) developments to the R-PP process, emerging REDD+ strategy options, on-going sector-specific and cross-sectoral dialogues, national and international discussion and negotiations all need to be reflected in updated and rejuvenate information sharing

Proposed Activities:

- Convene a series of three national level sector-specific meetings (Forestry, Agriculture and Energy);
- Capacity building for communications within the RIU, including (at least one) staff position(s) (REDD+ communications);
- Generalised on-going/refresher/update (materials and workshops) on R-PP implementation;
- Development of relevant communication materials and briefs;
- Delivery of media (outreach) products, with updated content;
- Workshops, meetings and learning exchanges

These activities will require additional support of **USD228, 000** for implementation.

Component 1(c) Consultation and participation process

In addition to R-PP awareness raising, as above, the National REDD+ Strategy and SESA, which will both be available for review in second quarter of 2015, will need to be circulated for input and then updated with the outcomes of the review process. The updated strategy will need to be communicated and validated by stakeholders.

Proposed Activities:

- Publication and dissemination of updated strategy and SESA documents;
- Development of relevant communication materials and briefs;
- Delivery of media (outreach) products, with updated content;
- Workshops, meetings and learning exchanges, at all levels;
- Collation and review process;
- Validation process

These activities will require additional support of **USD42, 000** for implementation.

Included in 1(c) Consultation and participation, is the consultation and design Grievance Redress Mechanism

The FGRM has been given USD200, 000 by the FCPF for specific consultation and participatory design processes, but an additional USD50, 000 is thought to be required, either to cover consultancy costs, to propose options for a FGRM, or for additional support to the RIU/SESA coordinator. However, for Liberia to have a functional system, the system itself needs to be established. It is expected that an amount of USD200, 000 earmarked for the consultation and implementation of FGRM during the readiness phase, will be augmented by the additional request of USD50,000. Activities will include: Project preparation support for piloting (including ER Program, as relevant) to test arrangements for: benefit sharing, non-carbon benefits, land and tree tenure issues of agro forestry systems, carbon rights, safeguards and private sector engagement to inform the national strategy.

Proposed Activity:

- Expert design of FGRM options;
- Consultation on the FGRM options;
- For existing activities: compile and analyse lessons and best practices for uptake into the national REDD+ strategy;
- Develop monitoring protocol and indicators;
- Develop pilot FGRM activities within existing REDD+ demonstration projects;
- Document and share lessons.

These activities will require additional support of **USD50,000** for implementation.

Component 2(a) Assessment of land use, forest law, policy and governance

As per the final, revised R-PP, approved in March 2012, a critical gap in current REDD+ readiness in Liberia is the lack of far-reaching, in-depth and linked studies on land use (and planning), forest law, policy and governance, and frameworks to improve them. As touched upon in 1(a), for the implementation of REDD+ and low carbon development, there is a clear need for not only more holistic land use, but widespread revision of Liberia's current policy and laws.

Proposed Activity:

- Review of existing policy, law and governance structures in Liberia;
- Specific review and revision of the (new) Land Law, with a view to integrating carbon rights, REDD+ and protected areas (including those which are currently proposed) into the law;
- Inter-ministerial review of governance and institutional arrangements, relative to land, agriculture, forestry, energy and infrastructure (linked to the aforementioned meetings), and production of a roadmap for better integration and governance (in terms of improved transparency, accountability and share/use of power);
- Assessment of current land use, nationwide, linked to the Forest Cover Mapping and the National Forest Inventory (see 3(a)(i));
- Production of a single, up to date and accurate land use map for Liberia, showing all concessions, ownership, land use categories (including Protected Areas and National Forests) and land cover types;
- Production of guidelines and policy around integrated, sustainable land use planning;
- Exploration of linkages with the SESA, which will focus on specific REDD+ impacts, but within the wider landscape and context;
- Development of draft carbon rights and REDD+ policy framework;
- Review and validation process of the framework, by the legislature and President, before signing.

These activities will require additional support of **USD985, 000** for implementation.

Component 2(b) REDD+ Strategy options for key sectors

In the original R-PP, the production of strategy options for the three key REDD+ sectors where budgeted as follows: Forestry - USD650,000; Agriculture – USD610,000; and Energy (USD420,000), totalling USD1,680,000. This figure has been revised down somewhat, based on work already undertaken since the R-PP was submitted in 2012 (i.e. research and various programs (and associated reports) across all three sectors, aimed at improving sustainability and/or specific low carbon development) and various cost-saving approaches, to approximately USD 1,380,000.

Despite its critical importance to REDD+ development and implementation, constraints within the original FCPF grant and the lack of co-funding thereafter, meant that component 2(b) was, and remains, un-funded. USD400,000 was provided for the development of the National REDD+ Strategy, see 2(e) (below), including strategic options, but crucially, this preparatory work was never undertaken and no detailed, strategic, sectoral options are currently being produced.

Proposed Activity:

- Provide additional financial support, along with coordination and oversight services to the production of the National REDD+ Strategy (currently being undertaken by consulting firm LTS – sub-component 2(e)). Funding here should be used to broaden the scope of that work, to include more capacity to investigate and include both sectoral strategies, below, and other REDD+ development work in Liberia. Other REDD+ initiatives to be included should cover both existing REDD+ piloting (continuation, scaling up (including JNR) and gathering of lessons learned) and other components of the current R-PP implementation (i.e. the SESA, REDD+ Communications, REL/carbon accounting and MRV), which are of direct and profound relevance to the National REDD+ Strategy;
- Undertake three separate, but ultimately linked (through reporting and recommendations) studies into the three key sectors;
- Strategy options for the forestry, agriculture and energy sectors, developed, taking into account of national policy and law; sectoral, developmental and national strategies; the SESA into REDD+ impacts; and current climate change mitigation and adaptation policy and targets.
 - Strategic options should be provided for each key sector, taking into account emission reductions, climate change adaptation, poverty alleviation, human rights, economic development, conservation of biological diversity and the maintenance of ecosystem services. Options should be weighed against criteria relative to these individual targets, with the optimum strategy selected and described for each sector, which will balance these needs, while maximising sustainability and compatibility with emission reduction targets under REDD+.
 - Reporting should include the design of frameworks for the integration of these sectoral reforms, at the policy level and how implementation will take place on the ground, and at the county/local level
- Guidance provided for the integration of these strategy options into the National REDD+ Strategy (as above) and/or revision to the draft REDD+ Strategy (produced by LTS).

Included in sub-component 2 (b) will be an update (as above) to the National REDD+ Strategy

After the above processes and work is completed, there will be the need to update the National REDD+ Strategy, which would already have been completed, so that it reflects the additional work and thinking.

Proposed Activities:

- Stakeholder consultations on proposed update to the REDD+ strategy i.e. benefit sharing mechanism, FGRM etc.;
- Expert group meetings at multiple levels, including all Counties;
- A national workshop would be carried out in Liberia

These activities will require additional support of **USD1, 380,000** for implementation.

Component 2c): Implementation Framework

Like 2(b), above, the development of a REDD+ Implementation Framework was highlighted at a need in the original R-PP, with a suggested budget of USD185,000 but no funding was available from FCPF or other sources. It remains a key task to establishment and operationalization of Liberia's REDD+ registry and information system, although the revised figure for implementing this activity is USD145, 000. This system will become a REDD+ data information hub or platform to provide Geo-referenced data on projects, funding, benefits and transactions, as well as bring together sub-components 1(a) and all other sub-components of component 2, design of the national REDD+ Strategy, as outline above and continued below. The system will foster transparency and should be robust to prevent potential double counting.

The REDD+ registry will need to be designed in close coordination with MRV and form the foundation of the MRV and ESMF, including best practice safeguards and a Safeguard Information System, either within, or instead of the ESMF. The M&E/MRV/SIS database should support of data comprised of the following:

1. Carbon (projects/ programs database including emissions/ removals data);
2. Co-benefits (information systems for multiple social and biodiversity benefits);
3. Impacts/safeguards (carbon, social and biodiversity - SIS); and
4. Tracking (tools) of carbon transactions (emissions reduction payments).

Development of the REDD+ registry¹⁸ will be done in two phases:

- Phase 1 - the program database and information system for multiple benefits, and then
- Phase 2 - transaction tracking system.

Proposed activities:

- Collation of outputs from other sub-components, as above, for use in the design of the implementation framework and registry;
- Production of an overarching, cross-sectoral architecture (framework) for REDD+ implementation in Liberia;

¹⁸ Information taken from the 2014 Ghana R-PP Mid-Term Report

- Identification of institutional arrangements (an Administrator, a System Operator and a forest M/E entity) for the REDD+ registry;
- Undertake cost assessment for full REDD+ registry establishment and operationalization;
- Design and test registry system; and
- Installation of operating system for the registry.

These activities will require additional support of **USD145, 000** for implementation (requested for phase 1 of REDD+ registry and information system establishment and operationalization, and creation of the REDD+ implementation framework).

Included in 2(c) in the validation of the suitability of appropriate benefit sharing mechanisms

This activity (potentially a consultancy) would be set up to analyse a suite of potential options for benefit sharing arrangements, but significantly more work will need to happen before Liberia is able to establish a functional system.

Proposed Activities:

- Stakeholder consultations on suitable benefit sharing mechanism(s);
- Consolidation of lessons from pilots;
- Selection and validation of an appropriate benefit sharing mechanism.

2(d) Strategic Social and Environmental Assessment of (SESA) of the likelihood, severity, avoidance or mitigation of REDD+ impacts, and 2(e) Finalisation of the National REDD+ Strategy document

Both of these sub-components have close to sufficient funding from the FCPF already, with 2(e) also benefiting from substantial ‘co-finance’ from 2(b), as outlined earlier. However, in line with inflation, an additional USD5, 000 are requested for each sub-component

These activities will require additional support of **USD10, 000** for implementation.

3(a) Development of Reference Level and Scenarios

Although well-funded, to the tune of USD400, 000, from the original FCPG grant (plus USD200, 00 for forest mapping, see following sub-component), the R-PP highlights the need for USD455, 000 for calculating reference emission level(s) and scenarios for various emission reduction models. Accordingly, an additional USD55,000 is required to undertake this sub-component (including additional support to consultants and/or additional capacity building for the RIU).

Proposed Activities:

- Collect additional spatial data, as required, to incorporate into scenario modelling;
- Ensure linkages with site-level initiatives on reference areas, leakage and modelling (carbon accounting), with a view to benefiting from existing learning and best practice, harmonisation of approaches and pathways to JNR;
- Additional capacity building for RIU and FDA GIS department.

These activities will require additional support of **USD55, 000** for implementation.

Included in 3(a) is 3(a)(i) Forest cover mapping

No additional finance is being sought from FDCPF for this activity, as the FCPF have earmarked USD200, 000 for this, matching the agreed need.

Component 4a: National Forest Monitoring System

A National Forest Monitoring System for emission and removals (see section 2.4 Fig.3 and section 3.1) is required for REDD+ to facilitate and house the monitoring, reporting and verification of emissions and removals. This critical work will require the acquisition of data on forest degradation, and the design and operationalization of the MRV. A functioning MRV system is essential for the successful implementation of REDD+. It is therefore important that Liberia operationalizes its MRV system prior to the commencement of results-based REDD+ initiatives. TerraSAR-X SpotLight scenes would be procured to map forest degradation and further observed degradation due to selective logging.

In the 2012 final R-PP it was decided that USD845, 000 would be sufficient for the acquisition and data and design of forest monitoring systems. The costs of some spatial data have reduced in that the interim two years, but other costs have increased, especially in relation to the design and operationalizing of the MRV, including linkages to existing, sub-national monitoring systems, FLEGT and the safeguard information system (SIS) – see 4(b) below. Accordingly, an additional USD200, 000 is sought from the FCPF, resulting in a total request of USD1, 045,000.

Proposed Activity:

- Acquisition of Radar Images (TerraSAR-X SpotLight) for hot spot areas: First coverage of 30 (10 x 10 km) samples orthorectified (descending/ascending merge) including change detection layer;
- Acquisition of Optical Images (2.5 m colour SPOT6) for Quality Assurance.
- Develop standardized mapping methodology for developing activity data.
- Geometric and Radiometric rectification of acquired satellite data for further processing.

- Field data collection and ensure robust and thorough ground-truthing of forest cover maps / spatial data;
- Classification of satellite data to obtain Landuse/Landcover map for the country (by building upon the FPP model)
- Implementation of an effective accuracy assessment scheme to ensure reliability of final results
- Analyses of the satellite data to determine national baseline carbon stocks
- Construction, Resourcing and strengthening of a Remote Sensing/GIS laboratory at the Forestry Commission Headquarters and engagement of an independent agency (for example, the Centre of Remote Sensing and GIS, University of Ghana) to serve as a repository and verifier of MRV data.
- Acquisition of a wall-to-wall satellite datasets (possible for year 2015) for monitoring and evaluation
- Acquisition of Hardware and Software for all 10 Regional FSD/WD Offices, and Headquarters RS/GIS Laboratory
- Ensure linkage and synergy with emerging sub-national forest monitoring systems in Liberia and international best practice (UNFCCC/SBSTA)
- Estimating carbon stock from inventory data.
- Assess uncertainty in carbon stock estimates.
- Assess current MRV systems
- Capacity building of Staff of the Forestry Commission to man the MRV system
- Develop MRV framework
- Acquisition of a dedicated bandwidth for publishing MRV data online to enhance transparency of the system
- Test and refine MRV system
- Development of web-based interactive biomass/ carbon map;

These activities will require additional support of **USD 1,045,000** for implementation.

4(b) Information Systems for multiple benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards

Partly included and linked to the request for the establishment of a registry (Component 2c), the national REDD+ system, as part of the National Forest Monitoring System and MRV, requires a mechanism to monitor multiple benefits and impacts of REDD+. Key to this sub-component will be the exploration of various, existing impact information system models, and the subsequently design of a Liberia-specific mechanism, that also dovetails with the MRV. Consultants/experts should consider the FCPF MRV and ESMF (requirements), along with the Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES), which is more oriented towards capturing all impacts, and measuring them against agreed safeguards, and the requirements of voluntary carbon standards

(CCB and Plan Vivo), especially project-level testing in Liberia, to produce a safeguards information system (SIS) that covers all co-benefits and impacts.

Proposed Activity:

- Identify potential environmental and social impacts
- Identify stakeholders and roles
- Identify communication mechanisms needed
- Select key indicators
- Identify capacities and technical resources
- Capacity building
- Collect and assess social and environmental (biodiversity and ecosystem services) baseline data
- Design data collection system, including down-scaling (i.e. use at county, district, local levels – TBD)
- Design of the monitoring and governance system
- Specialist data collection
- Develop participatory monitoring process involving all key stakeholder groups
- Generate Social and Environmental reports
- Stakeholder review of draft reports

These activities will require additional support of **USD 190,000** for implementation.

6(a) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

As per the final R-PP, USD280, 000 was agreed as the required sum to design an M&E system, in the form of an ESMF that combines data from the MRV and SIS, along with performance and effectiveness targets and criteria.

Proposed Activity:

- Review of the National Forest Monitoring System / MRV and SIS (see above), for inclusion into project M&E;
- Review existing work undertake on the design of the ESMF for Liberia, which is primarily an M&E framework for the R-PP and implementation;
- Review UN-REDD+ and FCPF M&E examples from other countries;
- Refine / decide upon criteria and indicators;
- Design the M&E system, including multi-stakeholders and participatory data collection (with reference to the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool – METT);
- Test and refine the M&E system

These activities will require additional support of **USD 280,000** for implementation.

Project Management

Required funds for project management have been met by the current FCPF pledge, although an additional USD5, 000 is requested here for costs related to inflation and contingency.

These activities will require additional support of **USD5, 000** for implementation.

Piloting REDD+ mechanism and climate finance

As mentioned under sub-component 2(b), Strategy Options, the need to have operational REDD+ piloting in Liberia, as a demonstration and testing facility, a place to build practical capacities and to generate vital lessons for national REDD+ policy development (see to annex 3 for details of an example REDD+ pilot), has been highlighted by the WB/FCPF, FDA, Norad and other development partners.

Proposed Activity

- Continuation of a REDD+ piloting, including validation and verification, to the point of accessing sustainable climate finance, through the sale of Verified Carbon Units (emission reduction credits);
- Develop a legal framework, that secures carbon rights to tenure, at the sub-national level, for the transaction of carbon as an asset and commodity;
- Explore, using a combination of carbon, social, biodiversity, institutional and policy criteria and tools, the design requirements for scaling-up project-level REDD+ to the sub-national (Country level) and the needs, implications and opportunities therein, for landscape scale, Jurisdictional Nested REDD+ (JNR) – which is the favoured crediting scale under the World Bank’s BioCarbon Fund.

Funding for the continuing and potential scaling-up of piloting activities could in-part be covered under 2(b), but in of itself would require approximately **USD1,000,000-1,500,000** over two-three years. No additional finance has been described here, although it is a recommendation of this report that this (additional) need be considered, and included, in the final allocation.

In summary, a total of **USD5, 890,000** (see Table 22) is estimated to be the cost of additional financing needed to complete readiness. The table below summarizes the additional work, costs and time-frame.

Table 22. Summary of requested funds

Sub-component	Estimated request (USD)	2015 Workplan (quarter)			
1(a) National Readiness Management Arrangements	\$985,000				
1(b) Information Sharing and early dialogue with key stakeholder groups	\$278,000				
1(c) Consultation and participation process (REDD+ Strategy and SESA)	\$42,000				
1(c) Consultation on, and design of, the Grievance Redress Mechanism (FGRM)	\$50,00				
2(a) Assessment of land use, forest law, policy and governance	\$1,085,000				
2(b) REDD+ Strategy options – forestry, agriculture and energy sectors	\$1,680,000				
2(c) REDD+ Implementation network	\$185,000				
2(d) Strategic Environmental and Social impact Assessment (SESA)	\$5,000				
2(e) National REDD+ Strategy document finalisation	\$5,000				
3(a) Development of Reference Emission Levels and scenarios (modelling)	\$55,000				
3(a)(i) Forest Cover Mapping	\$0				
4(a) National Forest Monitoring System	\$1,045,000				
4(b) Co-benefit/safeguard (impact) monitoring – SIS	\$190,000				
6(a) Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)	\$280,000				
Project management	\$5,000				
REDD+ piloting	<i>Additional: \$1m - \$1.5m</i>				
TOTAL	\$5,890,000				

Annex 1: SESA Road Map

CODE	Activities	Institution / Organization Responsible	Time	Result Indicator (Deliverable)	Estimated Budget ('000 US\$)	Key intersections and comments
1	Start-up SESA					
1.1	Refinement of ToR	EPA (coordination with the TWG)	August 2013	Annex ToR in the Assessment Note	NA	
1.2	Hiring of Consultants					
1.2.1	Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI)	FDA - EPA (coordination with the TWG)	December 3 - 17, 2013	REOI advertised on UNDB (World Bank) website, Executive Mansion website, Daily Observer and New Democrat Newspapers	5	- Ensure consistency of timing and deliverables with the RFP for the REDD+ strategy options
1.2.2	Shortlist and Request for Proposals (RFP) prepared	FDA - EPA	January 6, 2014	Submitted to the World Bank for its no objection		
1.2.3	Request for Proposals issued to Shortlisted firms	FDA - RIU	January 27, 2014 to March 4, 2014	Proposals received and opened		
1.2.4	Evaluation of Technical Proposals	FDA - EPA (Evaluation Panel)	March 7 – 25, 2014	Technical Evaluation Report prepared and submitted to the World Bank for its no objection	1	
1.2.5	Opening of Financial Proposals	FDA - EPA	April 16, 2014	Minutes of Opening prepared and issued	NA	
1.2.6	Contract Negotiations	FDA - EPA	May 2014	Minutes and Draft Contract	NA	

				prepared		
1.2.7	Awarding of Contract	FDA – EPA (coordination with TWG)	May 2014	Signed consultancy contract	NA	
1.3	Inception Report		September 2014			
1.3.1	Work plan for SESA	Consultant	July 2014	Inception Report submitted to EPA	15	Consultants should coordinate plan preparation with consultation plan/activities for the REDD+ strategy options
1.3.2	Gap assessment of stakeholder analysis					
1.3.3	Consultation & participation plan REDD+ (SESA)					
1.4	Validation of C&P Plan		July 2014			
1.4.1	Organization of National Workshop	EPA through the consultants	July 2014	Invitation and agenda issued	50	- Includes participation of representatives of forest communities, counties and relevant institutional stakeholders
			July 2014			
1.4.2	National workshop and reporting		August 2014	Workshop report		
			September 2014			
1.4.3	Finalization of C&P Plan	Consultant		Final C&P SESA Plan	5	
1.4.4	Disclosure of C&P Plan	EPA/FDA		- Plan published in Executive Mansion, EPA, FDA and Lingo websites and FDA infoshop - Radio announcement of Plan summary	5	
1.5	Scoping of Key E&S issues					
1.5.1	Gathering and technical validation of available spatial data on - environment and, - social issues	Consultant / FDA – EPA	August-November 2014	Progress report	20	

1.5.2	Spatial mapping of - forest, biodiversity hot spots, river basins, main infrastructure projects - forest dependent communities, activities undertaken in forest areas, use and access rights to forest and land			A GIS data base and progress report that includes maps and key environmental and social issues	150	- Key intersection point with preparation of reference scenario - Update of data on forests canopy mapping will be undertaken through a separate contract - \$150 budgeted for other spatial mapping and case studies to drill down key issues when necessary	
1.5.3	Report on key environmental and social issues			Report submitted	40		
1.6	Prioritization of E&S issues						
1.6.1	Review and prioritization by selected communities in critical areas	Consultant / EPA – FDA	November 2014	Community consultation report	100		- Key intersection point to coordinate consultations with the REDD+ strategy options
1.6.2	Regional validation by community representatives		December 2014	Regional validation report	50	Likely to be workshops	
1.6.3	Review and prioritization by institutional stakeholders		January 2015	Institutional consultation report	30	Likely to be focus groups	
1.6.4	Institutional stakeholders workshop			Institutional prioritization report	5		
1.6.4	Report on E&S priorities	Consultant	February 2015	Prioritization report	15		
1.7	Assessment						
1.7.1	Analysis of REDD+ candidate strategy options vis-à-vis E&S priorities	Consultant / EPA – FDA	February 2014	Progress report	20		
1.7.2	Refinement of REDD+ candidate strategy options					SESA consultants coordinate with REDD+ strategy consultants	
1.7.3	Assessment of other E&S risks associated with refined candidate				30		

	strategy options					
1.7.4	Report on candidate REDD+ strategy options	Consultant of REDD+ Strategy	March 2014	REDD+ Strategy options	NA	- Report and consultation to be carried out by REDD+ strategy consultants
1.7.5	Stakeholder validation of REDD+ strategy options					
1.8	Environmental and Social Management Framework					
1.8.1	WB Safeguards Policies Triggered R-PP level	WB	March 2014	Assessment Note	NA	
1.8.2	ToRs	EPA – FDA	March 2014	ToRs	NA	
1.8.3	Draft ESMF	Consultant	February 2014		60	
1.8.4	Consultation of Initial Draft ESMF	Consultant	March 2014	Draft ESMF report and consultation report	150	- Key intersection to coordinate with consultations to validate REDD+ Strategy Options - Includes consultation with forests communities and at the regional and national levels
1.8.5	Final Draft ESMF	Consultant	April 2014	Final draft ESMF	20	- Input to REDD+ Package
1.8.6	SESA report	Consultant	May 2014	SESA Report	20	-Includes Final Draft ESMF
1.8.7	Disclosure of ESMF	EPA / Bank (Info shop)	June 2014	Publication in Executive Mansion, EPA, FDA and Lingo website, and FDA and WB info shops	5	Executive summaries sent to counties

Annex 2: Minutes of Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) Working Group Meeting - Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). February 14, 2014

1. Introduction

Liberia is currently implementing activities as part of the Readiness Phase of REDD+ with financial and technical support from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) of the World Bank. The Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA), which is a key component of these activities, will be undertaken in order to integrate environmental and social considerations in the REDD+ strategy options and implementation framework, as well as identify environmental and social alternatives and mitigation actions to be included in the REDD+ strategy. The SESA process needs clear oversight and this will be provided by the SESA Consultation and Participation Working Group.

In view of the above, on February 14, 2014, the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) Consultation and Participation (C&P) Working Group of the Liberia's REDD+ Readiness Process met in the conference room of the EPA.

2. Opening remarks

The meeting commenced at 11:20 a.m. with opening remarks by Mr. Stephen Y. Neufville, Acting Executive Director of the EPA. In his remarks, he welcomed all participants and stated that the objective of the meeting was to discuss the roles/responsibilities of the Working Group which is significant to the REDD+ process and to also get insights about where we are with the SESA process. He further encouraged participants to discuss the issues to the fullest. Mr. Neufville delegated the responsibility to Zinnah S. Mulbah to chair the meeting. Zinnah S. Mulbah read the agenda of the meeting and then asked for a motion to adopt the agenda. Mr. Konikay Nimely of the FDA made a motion for the adoption of the agenda and the motion was seconded by Assistant Minister Chea B. Garley, Sr. of the Ministry of Agriculture. This was followed by a silent prayer. Participants introduced themselves and this was followed by briefing on the status of the SESA process.

3. Brief note on the Status of the SESA process

Zinnah S. Mulbah, briefly informed participants that they are all aware that Liberia is implementing REDD+ preparation activities with support from the World Bank Forest Carbon partnership Facility (FCPF). According to him, the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) is a major component of these activities. He further stressed that the SESA process will ensure that the REDD+ process avoids or mitigates the risks or negative impacts and enhance benefits. He continued by stating that the SESA C&P Task Force was established during the drafting of the R-PP. The Task Force helped to conduct the consultation and participation activities in country and prepared the SESA Roadmap which is now more than a year and half

ago. He stated that since the preparation of the roadmap, the SESA C&P Task Force has been dormant and so there was a need to reactivate it.

He further informed the group that upon assuming office, the REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU) updated the SESA Roadmap and refined the Terms of reference (TOR's) for the SESA consultation. Mr. Mulbah further explained that in accordance with the procurement plan, the RIU has to hire a firm that will develop the SESA and the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). He said the Forestry Development Authority through the RIU advertised the Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) requesting expression of interest from interested firms. After the assessment of the EOIs, 6 firms/joint ventures were qualified for shortlisting but these firms/joint ventures have been requested to submit both financial and technical proposals. Mr. Saah A. David Jr., National Project Coordinator, clarified that one firm was disqualified by the Bank leaving 5 firms/joint ventures.

4. Discussion on the terms of reference for the SESA Working Group

Agenda item number 5 was put forward to the body for discussion and a number of suggestions were made. Below are the most pressing ones:

- Mr. Chea B. Garley, Sr. Assistant Minister for Technical Affairs of the Ministry of Agriculture raised concern about the change of nomenclature of the group from task force to working group. After a number of inputs from the floor; majority was in favor of the change, the body consented to the change. They resolved that the name “task force” be replaced with “working group” because the group will remain functional beyond the conclusion of the consulting firm’s works.
- Mrs. Sieane Adul-Baki of the Ministry of Gender and Development put forth a suggestion to include 2 new institutions to the Working Group and these include Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICAT) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA).
- Professor John T. Woods, Chairman of the Department of Forestry at the University of Liberia sought clarification on how institutions were selected to serve as members of the Working Group and in particular, justifications for including Liberia Girls Guide Association. He further requested the inclusion of the Society for the Conservation of Nature Liberia (SCNL) to the membership of the group. Zinnah S. Mulbah clarified that the selection of institutions was based on their relevance to the SESA process and for the Liberia Girls Guide Association, it is necessary to mainstream gender into the process and moreover, there is evidence of its active participation in both national and international climate negotiations. This justification was supported by other participants.
- The last issue discussed was clarification on the funding of the Working Group. This point was again raised by Professor Woods. He wanted clarification whether the funding of the Working Group was going to be based on request to the secretariat or detailed in the budget of the project. He said the work of the Group was important therefore issue of

funding its activities must be dealt with specifically in the budget. The project team informed the meeting that there is US\$20,000 per year for operational cost in the project's budget for the SESA. Base on the clarification, the meeting agreed that such issue be spread in the TOR of the Working Group instead of being left at the discretion of the secretariat. On this position, it was cautioned that if that be the case, the proposed budget must be assessed by the RIU to ensure it meets the requirements for inclusion in the procurement plan.

5. Decisions

After intensive deliberations, the Working Group agreed to adopt the following action points:

- The nomenclature of the body should be changed from SESA C&P Task Force to SESA C&P Working Group because the group will remain functional beyond the conclusion of the consultants' works.
- Three new institutions, namely; Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICAT), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and the Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia should be included on the membership list of the SESA C&P Working Group.
- The SESA C&P Working Group should be allowed to draft a budget in consultation with the RIU for its operations to be incorporated into the procurement plan of the REDD+ Readiness Preparation.
- The TOR's of the SESA C&P Working Group should be circulated via email so that comments, if any, could be submitted by members of the Group and the deadline for submission is February 21, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm.

Meeting Attendance

No.	Name	Institution	E-mail Address	Mobile phone no.
1.	Charlene V. Talery	L.G.G.A	ctalery@gmail.com	0886-219629
2.	Chea B. Garley, Sr.	MOA	cheabrowngarleysr@gmail.com	0886-574465
3.	Aaron K. Barlea	NACUL	aaronkbarlee@yahoo.com	0886-939782
4.	Konikay A. Nimely	FDA	Konikaya.nimely@yahoo.com	0886-562134
5.	George O. Free	FESSA	Gofree72@yahoo.com	0886-586566
6.	Abdul B. Sheriff	LMI	abdulsheriffliib@gmail.com	0886-341306

7.	Sieane Abdul-Baki	MOGD	sieaneb@yahoo.com	0886-566655
8.	Saah A. David Jr.	RIU-FDA	fawasa@gmail.com	0880-699711
9.	Alvin M. Kanneh	LICSATDUN	licsatdun@rocketmail.com	0880-255104
10.	John T. Woods	Dept. of Forestry, UL	Johntwoods38@gmail.com	0886-654070
11.	Stephen Y. Neufville	EPA	Yaba56N@gmail.com	0777531421
12.	Cyrus K. Weah	Dept. of Forestry, UL	cywea@yahoo.com	0886-121293
13.	Jefferson P. Dahn, Jr.	EPA	Jefferson.dahn@yahoo.com	0886-942794
14.	J. S. Cammue	MEA's-EPA	mawoesolomon@gmail.com	0886-138732
15.	Zinnah S. Mulbah	RIU-EPA	zoozim22@yahoo.com	0880-628168
16.	Hawa K. Walker	EPA	Hkortu01@yahoo.com	0886-547042
17.	Maerose M. Wilson	MEA's-EPA	Maerosewilson@yahoo.com	0886-843673

Annex 3: Case-Study: Norad's Support to REDD+ Readiness

As outlined above, Norad has been the major donor to REDD+ readiness in Liberia. This section highlights the role of Norad as case study in how non-FCPF projects can and have supported R-PP implementation. Two interconnected grants have been provided to FFI to implement a raft of readiness activities, designed to precede, support and underpin the FCPF process, and to introduce piloting, or REDD+ demonstration sites, as a key element (which was not part of FCPF readiness) for generating skills / capacity and 'real world' lessons learned, around which to identify gaps and develop subsequent national stagey and policy options.

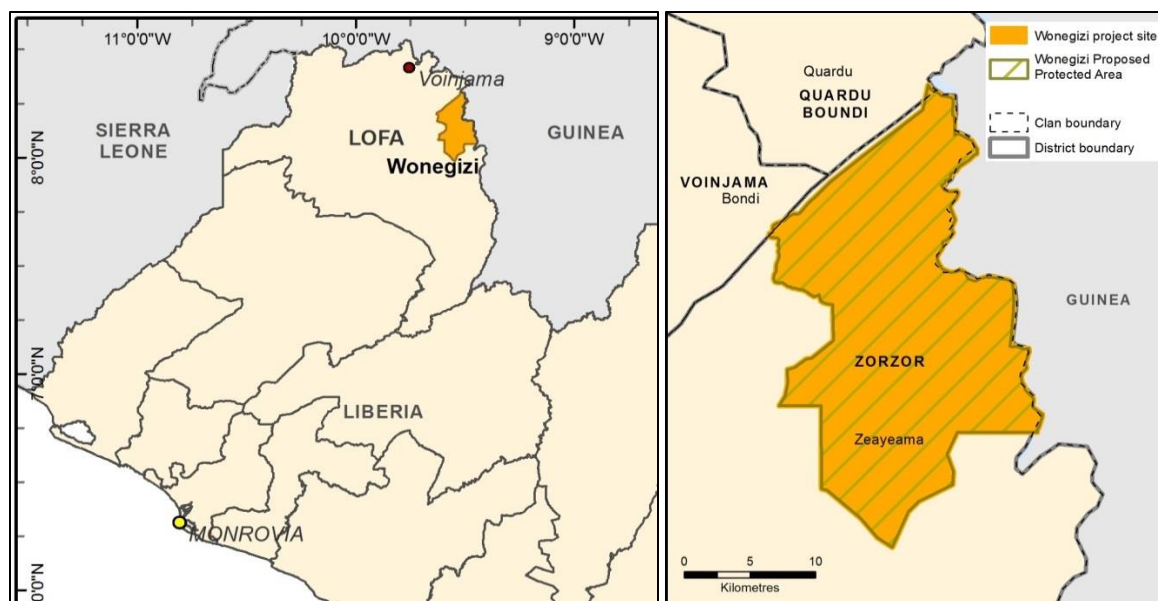
Background

The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) provided funding to Liberia's Forestry Development Agency (FDA) and technical advisors Fauna & Flora International (FFI) from July 2011 until March 2014 to design and implement a pioneering REDD+ readiness project in Liberia, entitled: ***Bridging the Divide: Empowering grassroots institutions to inform national REDD+ strategy development in Liberia through REDD+ demonstration projects.*** One the key deliverables of the project was the design and implementation of a REDD+ pilot project, to develop and trial REDD+ components and use that to inform national capacity building and policy development, including a validated Project Design Document. This brief provides a summary update on what has been achieved at the pilot site, so far, and what the options are, going forward.

Project Status

Current Norad funding for the project has come to an end, but the project continues to operate using a co-financing and bridging grant from the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO). Critically, the community are still being engaged by the project. Any significant gap (anything around/over 3-6 months) in communication or engagement with the target communities is considered a major risk to project continuity and success; with such a 'gap' likely to lead to some community members feeling abandoned and/or mislead. Looking forward, there is a significant need to move the beyond the current, low-level of engagement to implement the full suite of participatory approaches, as outlined later.

At the time of writing, the project design document (PDD) for the Wonegizi REDD+ pilot project and technical specification (carbon accounting methodology), are under review by the Plan Vivo Foundation, as part of the validation process. The audit (validation visit) will take place in mid-July this year (2014). More information is provided later, in 'achievements and challenges'.



Map 1 & 2: FFI/Norad Wonegizi REDD+ Demo Project Location

The rationale

Liberia holds the largest remaining tract of the Upper Guinean Forest that once covered all of West Africa. At the heart of this ecosystem lies one of Liberia's most important forests, the Wonegizi Proposed Protected Area, which encompasses Liberia's third highest peak and meets the Guinean border to form a massive trans-boundary forest complex with the Ziama Biosphere Reserve.

Wonegizi hosts a wide diversity of species, many of which are endangered and globally important, including the African forest elephant, chimpanzee, pygmy hippopotamus, West African red colobus monkey, and numerous threatened birds, including white-necked rockfowl (picathartes), reptiles and amphibians. It is also home to several species, including the threatened zebra duiker, which are found nowhere else in the world.

Moreover, at over 37,000ha, Wonegizi's forest contains a substantial amount of stored carbon, and carbon storage potential. These carbon stocks would be lost (emitted into the atmosphere) if the forest was cleared, burned and converted to agriculture - meaning that conservation is also a vital for Liberia's efforts toward climate change mitigation. In addition to carbon, the forest also provides a wealth of ecosystems services, from water and irrigation to pollination and the provision of foods, construction material and medicines, than underpin local livelihoods and, moreover, their resilience in the face of climate change – i.e. their ability or capacity to adapt to a changing climate.

The integrated goals of this project are to:

- Conserve biodiversity, including rare and endangered wildlife

- Protect large areas of mature forest, safeguarding ecosystem services such as freshwater provision, flood control, pollination, cultural values and the provision of foods and medicine
- Empower communities and improve wellbeing by directly supporting local livelihoods
- Prevent millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide from reaching the atmosphere

Threats: Drivers of forest loss

Liberia's forests are under enormous pressure from multiple threats: conversion to oil palm or rubber plantations, commercial logging and development of infrastructure such as roads and railways. Amidst these pressures, Wonegizi is particularly threatened by shifting cultivation and to some extent also the extraction of timber, charcoal and bushmeat, which are increasingly sold to feed an extremely poor and growing population. From a carbon and ecosystem viability perspective, shifting cultivation, which requires annual burning of primary forest, is the major threat, while hunting (for bushmeat) poses the most immediate danger to biodiversity. Local people, the Zياما Clan, depend on the forest for water, agricultural land, wild-caught protein, medicines and religious sites.

A recent grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) will pay for gazettement of Wonegizi, however, funding is aimed primarily at hard infrastructure and awareness-raising activities. These interventions are not sufficient to address the negative effect that gazettement will likely have on local livelihoods, nor buffer the new protected area against current, increasing and new threats, some of which resulting from gazettement itself.

Achievements and challenges

Under the lifespan of the Norad funded project, there have been a raft of achievements, lessons learned and challenges faced at Wonegizi. What follows is a brief summary of the main findings.

o Establishing HCV and HCS forest

Central to both FFI's mission and strategy, and as a core aim of REDD+, is the long term preservation of High Conservation Value (HCV) and High Carbon Stock (HCS) forests, to achieve a host of objectives relating to protecting biodiversity, mitigating climate change and maintaining ecosystem services.

Establishing HCV status was accomplished through biodiversity baseline surveys. 30 camera-traps were placed in the forest using a grid and randomised methodology to ensure full coverage and no selection bias. Transect walks were also established along with mist nets for identifying birds. The results included numerous species of the highest value, including several endangered species (EN), such as: forest elephant individuals in at least 3 locations; western chimpanzees, including family groups; zebra duiker; and the regionally endemic pygmy hippo (see camera-trap montage, below). The surveys also found a number of important and rare birds, small carnivores and pangolins. Analysis demonstrated that Wonegizi is not only of the highest

possible conservation value, but also retains the full suite of species indicating an intact ecosystem and very high conservation value.

Establishing the carbon value of the forest was a multi-stage process, which can be summarised as follows: (1) Provisional forest classification through remote sensing; (2) Ground truthing of forest classification by field surveys involving experienced foresters and on-the-job training for local communities; (3) revised forest classification; (4) high resolution forest cover analysis over a 12 year period (three time series) to ascertain forest cover and forest cover change; (5) Forest carbon inventory involving the development and deployment of a standard operating procedure for forest-carbon plots, tailored to the Liberian context, designed to ensure that each of the forest types (strata) identified in stages 1-4 are sampled; (6) Application of forest carbon estimates to each forest type and the estimation of change (deforestation and degradation) of each forest cover type, and associated carbon content, over time, to calculate emissions of carbon dioxide, past (reference) and (projected) future. The project also estimated leakage; the risk of shifting deforestation drivers to other areas, in terms of location (a leakage area or belt), amount of emissions from the new area and the development of mitigation measures. The results of this carbon accounting, which are subject to final approval by the third-party Plan Vivo validation (certification) are summarised in the final section.



Fig 1. High biodiversity value – Camera-trap photo montage (clockwise from top left: Male chimp; female chimp with infant; forest elephant at night; and pygmy hippo)

○ **Community-based forest management**

FFI, together with local NGO Skills & Agricultural Development Services (SADS), and with the support of the Forest Development Authority, have pioneered a new approach for forest management in Liberia. The Wonegizi Community REDD+ Pilot is a community-based approach to establish and co-manage the protected area, using participatory assessment of biodiversity, forest carbon and local institutions, livelihoods and needs.



The Wonegizi Community REDD+ Pilot will give local communities a say in the management of their forests.

To achieve this, FFI has designed and lead a very thorough process of community engagement, consisting of three interconnected activities:

- (1) The gathering of in-depth socio-economic information to develop threat assessments and baselines from which to create safeguards and build monitoring protocols;
- (2) Wide, deep and on-going application of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), meaning that the community is consulted and consent requested at each and every stage of the project. This is a highly time and resource heavy activity, but essential to ensure people's rights are being preserved;
- (3) A social impact assessment which used participatory approaches to examine people's fears, needs and constraints and through a 'theory of change' process work with them to develop a set of solutions expressed as project activities (thus ensuring participatory design and ownership of the project itself, including decision around behaviour change, land use planning and zoning, etc.).



Map 3. 3D topographic forest cover map, with project boundary and communities

○ **REDD+: Benefits for communities**

The project is targeting the eight communities of the Zياما clan that live within and/or closest to Wonegizi. These people are considered to be both forest-dependent and the source of the highest threat to the forest, from shifting cultivation. The Wonegizi REDD+ Pilot is working to establish a new kind of rural economy in Liberia that conserves forests for development, biodiversity and climate objectives. Effective forest protection will be rewarded under the REDD+ project, providing local communities with tangible benefits for reducing carbon emissions from forests, as well as for conserving and sustainably managing forests and enhancing forest carbon stocks.

Community support is required to facilitate a shift towards, and reward, sustainable management of the forest, with income generated from the sale of REDD+ carbon credits then used to maintain the compensation of local people for opportunities lost due to reduced forest exploitation by providing the following project activities. In this way, REDD+ provides both the initial incentive to change and then the reward/compensation (benefit) based on performance. All project activities were designed by the community themselves through a process of consultation, land use planning and ‘theory of change’ (as above).

Project Activities

Primarily:

- Technical support and funding to shift to more sustainable agricultural practices that are more productive and more efficient (reduce the extent of land use, though increasing the intensity

of land use and agricultural output) – as a way of transitioning from unsustainable, annual clearing of mature forest (slash and burn) to a permanent, rotational farming system.

This is positive in term of forest (biodiversity and carbon) conservation, and the subsequent generation of Verified Emission Reductions (VERs), or ‘offsets’, while also providing the community with a pathway to reduced poverty, diversified incomes and climate-smart livelihoods.

Additionally:

- Salaried forest protection and monitoring jobs as alternative income sources for local people whose livelihoods depended on hunting
- Funds to support land use-planning, co-management training and logistics
- Whole community-oriented benefits such as tree nursery, handicraft training centre and, where possible, additional community-wide benefits like repairing roofs of communal buildings

Based on provisions and regulations within the Forest Reform Law and Community Rights Law, and in consultation with the communities, the project as settled upon a two-part benefit sharing mechanism, consisting of horizontal and vertical benefit distribution arrangements. Vertically, the project will ensure 55% of the gross revenues go to the community, with a set fee set aside for FFI to maintain project coordination and oversight. Any remaining funds will go to FDA to help with the management of Wonegizi. The 55% is based not only upon forest regulation, pertaining community to involvement in (benefit from) forestry, including carbon, but also close to the recommend 60% rate suggested by Plan Vivo and now agreed to by all parties; the next step, as part of validation, is formalising this agreement on rights and benefits, in writing (a contract).

Horizontally, the 55% allocated to the community will be distributed to the communities based on population (and not proximity or dependence on forest land/resources, as these are difficult to ascertain and likely to lead to disagreement and conflict). The vast majority of the community’s share will go towards addressing the main driver of forest loss; shifting cultivation (see project activities above), with support provided to all farmers to increase yields on existing land (intensification, but without the use of off-farm inputs like chemical fertiliser, and instead utilising manure and compost to improve soil fertility).

Leading Standards and Validation

The Wonegizi Community REDD+ Pilot is being designed around the Plan Vivo Standard. This standard was chosen because it is the most community-focussed third party standard for carbon projects, with a strong emphasis on bottom-up, participatory design of project interventions and the securing of rights/tenure. In addition, the project’s biodiversity components have been

designed to be compatible with the Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) Standard, Gold Level, which many regard to be the highest for any carbon project.

Looking forward, there is a vision toward further expanding work on REDD+, at the landscape scale, potentially to the sub-national, or ‘jurisdictional’ scale (i.e. all of Lofa County). If that is deemed viable and desirable, by all stakeholders, then it might be that the Plan Vivo Standard will no longer be the appropriate framework. Already, a key part of the project has been adhering not only to third-party, voluntary standards for carbon projects, but also trying to also ensure harmony with whatever form REDD+ takes once the national strategy and policy are designed. While this is akin to shooting a moving target, there are guidelines from the UNFCCC and SBSTAs (i.e. the Warsaw Framework for REDD+¹⁹) and the recommendation of the national R-PP, which have been followed. As such, the project is already conscious of the need ensure that it is ‘*nestable*’ within national REDD+ mechanisms and compatible with UNFCCC/SBSTA (and maybe World Bank) frameworks, but to an even greater degree if scaled-up to the sub-national level.

Designing the Wonegizi initiative around leading international standards and frameworks has helped ensure the highest quality, robustness and reliability with respect to social, biodiversity and carbon benefits.

While project is currently entering the validation process, the feedback from the Plan Vivo Foundation is already excellent. According to independent reviewer, the project’s technical Specification is one of the best the foundation has ever reviewed. Validation will now happen in July/August, somewhat delayed from the original date by an outbreak of the Ebola virus in Zorzor District, Lofa County (where the project is located).

Supporting community-based REDD+

In addition to championing community-based forest management globally, FFI has been working in Liberia for 15 years, supporting government partners and local communities to better protect and benefit from their forests. For the last three years, FFI has been raising awareness and improving the capacity necessary to understand and implement community forestry as the framework for improved governance and development of REDD+, with particular attention paid to the Wonegizi pilot in Lofa County.

Key support to R-PP components / implementation

As outlined in table 3, above, the FFI/Norad project has made a very significant contribution to R-PP implementation, with activities carried out in close coordination with FDA to ensure that

¹⁹ <http://forests-liisd.org/news/cop-19-adopts-warsaw-framework-for-redd/225390/>

project interventions added value to, and avoided repetition of, existing readiness activities.

More specifically, at the national / readiness level, the Norad/FFI project helped to:

- Set up, fund and facilitate the REDD+ Technical Working Group (RTWG)
- Help establish the National Climate Change Steering Committee (NCCSC)
- Hold two, high-level, inter-ministerial workshops to promote better coordination, cross-sector communication and sustainable land use planning
- Build GIS capacity within FDA and LIS-GIS
- Undertook two legal and policy reviews relating to gaps/needs in current legislation for the commodification of carbon as asset class, and around carbon rights and transfers
- Facilitate dialogues with the chain-saw and charcoal unions, and the National and County Forest Forums, around SFM and emission reductions / REDD+
- Develop a REDD+ communications strategy involving widespread dialogue with key actors, specific training courses on REDD+ for civil society and the media / press, plus the design and delivery of a programme of national REDD+ awareness raising via radio, TV and travel ‘road-shows’ (drama/plays, songs and printed materials)
- To design, fund and undertake training courses aimed at improving skills/capacity around forest carbon surveying and monitoring, in support of future (and integrated) FLEGT VPA and REDD+ M&E / MRV
- To hold workshops, with CIDT, on improving forest governance in Liberia, in general and with specific linkages to REDD+

Key challenges and lessons learnt

FFI are currently preparing a detailed account of lessons learnt, but what follows is brief summary of the key findings:

- Communities are sceptical of outside motivations and intentions, after years of war and the activities of logging and other extractive companies. Engagement must be honest, extensive and continuous. Any significant break in communication or engagement, even if just during the worst of the rainy season, will likely cause resentment or distrust;
- All tribes and clans have ruling elites, often located in Monrovia. These groups often have the best interests of the community at heart, but not always. These people are important, but should not be seen as the only or true representatives of the community. Engagement must happen in the field, with all community members;
- Local politics in Liberia is complex and not always transparent. To avoid pitfalls and wasted efforts, projects should seek guidance from a range of local and national stakeholders, both government and civil society. This should be a key part of scoping, feasibility and site selection;
- Following on, it is vital that projects dedicate significant time and resources to scoping and feasibility assessments, as part of site selection, including assessments of biodiversity and

carbon values, community willingness, opportunity costs analysis, threat and stakeholder assessments and a review of enabling political landscape;

- REDD+ projects are new and poorly understood – they require a tremendous amount of awareness raising, with multiple actors, and several forms of approval, from various stakeholders, relating to community engagement and consent, clarification of tenure and rights to forest resources and, crucially, the exploration and clarification of carbon rights. These process are complex and should not be underestimated in terms of difficulty or time
- REDD+ pilots do provide enormous capacity building, experience and lessons for use at the national level. The Wonegizi pilot is highly valued by FDA as a test-bed and show case of REDD+ development in Liberia, and was recently endorsed by the World Bank (FCPF) as being of the uttermost important for Liberia's REDD+ strategy and policy development, going forward.

Emission reductions, offset estimation and sharing benefits

The project period is 5 years, over which the gross estimated carbon emissions avoided is **276,017 tCO₂e** (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent).

A 25% risk and leakage buffer was then applied to gross amount giving a net avoided emissions total of **206,000 tCO₂e**.

The net total, divided by 5 years, gives an annual total of **41,200 tCO₂e**.

An example, target price of **\$8 USD** per offset is the current benchmark, as this price would guarantee total financial self-sufficiency, i.e. no need for additional public funds / co-finance, if all credits (offsets) are sold. This estimated value of the Wonegizi offsets is based on estimated implementation and transaction costs of the project and reasoned by the high biodiversity, pro-poor nature (high co-benefits) of the credits. At this price, the net annual revenue will be approximately: **\$330,000/year**, minus a 5% commission to Plan Vivo (registry fees), which is enough to run the entire project. It is worth noting here that carbon credits now have a floor price (minimum) of \$7 USD in the European ETS and the price of carbon of the California exchange has never dropped below \$11 USD.

Once operational, this amount is expected to be enough to cover the community costs (operational costs, plus benefits) and incentives, which must amount to 55% of the net, and approximately \$125,000-\$150,000 for on-gong oversight, monitoring and management by FFI and partners.

Conclusion: Looking forward

The Wonegizi Community REDD+ Pilot is on the verge of becoming self-sustaining, after almost 3 years of detailed project design and development. A relatively modest, final investment will be enough to seed the long-term, sustainable financing of PES – payment for ecosystem services, based upon the forest's ability to avoid carbon emissions and sequester more carbon, if conserved. The pilot represents Liberia's only REDD+ demonstration site and a vital show-case of the values, challenges and lessons learnt of implementing REDD+. Much of what has been learnt at the site level is relevant to host of upcoming national processes and implementation

requirements. These (project) lessons have already begun to be fed into national policy dialogues, including the FCPF process, but more sharing of these experiences is necessary and called-for.

Meanwhile, the wider vision for the Norad REDD+ pilot includes:

- Scoping the feasibility of scaling up; to Jurisdictional Nested REDD+ (JNR), under the framework of the FCPF Carbon Fund / ER-PIN (see next point);
- Develop business models and a REDD+ strategy at the county (sub-national) level in Lofa that interprets and downscales from the national REDD+ strategy, but also provides vital lessons and capacity back into the national process, by (potentially) pioneering such development (with Wonegizi as the ‘core area’ in terms of a REDD+ ‘proof of concept’);
- Work with national actors to harness lessons from Wonegizi / Lofa to inform and improve biodiversity safeguards and promotion of co-benefits within national REDD+ strategy and policy.

Annex 4: Current Membership of the REDD+ Technical Working Group

#	Name	Institution	Position
Government Institutions			
1.	Hon. Harrison Karnwea	FDA	Co- Chair
2.	Hon. Anyaa Vohiri	EPA	Co- chair
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28.	Jessica Donovan- Allen	CI	Member
29.	Kumeh S. Assaf	UNDP	Member
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31.	Carlos Battaglini	EU	Member
32.	Jennifer Tolbert	USAID	Member
REDD+ Implementation Unit (GoL)			
33.	Saah A. David, Jr.	National REDD+ Project Coordinator	Member
34.	Peter G. Mulbah	Coordinator, RTWG	Secretariat
35.	Zinnah S. Mulbah	SESA Coordinator	Member