

World Bank - Grant Reporting and Monitoring (GRM) Report

Report to Donor

Ref. TF012530
Printed On: 11/09/2017

Reporting Period: 06/29/2012 to 06/30/2017
Report Type: Completion
Report Status: Approved

Assignment: TF012530

Liberia FCPF Readiness Grant

FCPFR - Forest Carbon Partnership Facility

Task Team Leader: 00000084421 - Paola Agostini
Approving Manager: 00000086248 - Magdolna Lovei

Summary Information	
TF Status	LCLS
Recipient Country	Liberia
Executed By	Recipient
Managing Unit	9270 - GEN01
Grant Start Date / End Date	06/29/2012 to 05/31/2017
Original Grant Amount	3,600,000.00
Grant Amount	3,600,000.00
Outstanding Commitments	0.00
Cumulative Disbursements	3,600,000.00 as of 06/30/2017
Disbursed 06/29/2012 to 06/30/2017	3,600,000.00
Donor	TF602001 - MULTIPLE DONORS

This GRM report includes the following sections: Overview, Components, Outcome, Execution, Program(FCPFR), Completion, Disbursements, Procurement Plan, Procurement Actuals.

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OVERVIEW

Overall Assessments

Grant Objectives:

The Project Development Objective is to carry out a consultative and quantitative analysis of the different land use options for development of the national REDD+ Strategy for Liberia approved by the National Climate Change Steering Committee.

Overall progress from 06/29/2012 to 06/30/2017 with regard to Achieving Grant Objectives:

Comment:

The grant objectives were achieved with grant support. The National REDD+ management arrangements have been well established and maintained. The National Climate Change Steering Committee was re-constituted as an apex national body on climate change and REDD+. Specific outputs of the Readiness process supported by the grant include a National REDD+ Strategy; a Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (including an Environmental and Social Management Framework); the Land cover and Forest mapping and the production of base maps, the development of communications strategy on REDD+; and the preliminary reference scenario. Consultations with stakeholders were conducted as part of Liberia's commitment to a highly participatory process.

REDD+ Readiness support in Liberia has been crucial for raising the profile of sustainable approaches in forestry, improving transparency and awareness for national stakeholder, including policy makers, decision makers, and the general public in forestry.

Overall progress from 06/29/2012 to 06/30/2017 with regard to Implementation of Grant Financed Activities:

Comment:

The overall progress of the Grant Implementation has been moderately satisfactory. Initial implementation started nearly a year late; implementation progress was delayed due to the Ebola outbreak in Liberia in 2015 that halted all government and consultant activities. However, post-Ebola the pace of activities had picked up significantly and, with extensions, all planned activities were completed.

Grant follow-up and structure

Description and context of Grant:

The grant supported activities as prioritized by the REDD+ Technical Working Group arranged into the following four components:

Component 1: Support to the coordination of the REDD+ Readiness Process and consultations:

- 1.1. National Readiness Management Arrangements and activities
- 1.2. Information Sharing and Early Dialogue with Key Stakeholder Groups
- 1.3. Consultations and Participation in REDD+ Strategy Development
- 1.4. Consultation and Participation Process SESA
- 1.5. Strengthening national feedback and grievance redress mechanisms

Component 2. Contribute to the design of the National REDD+ Strategy

- 2.1. Social and Environmental Impacts Assessments during Readiness Preparation (SESA)
- 2.2. Finalization of the REDD+ Strategy

Component 3. Develop a Reference Level or Scenario (including forest cover mapping and forest inventory in priority areas)

Component 4. Project Management

Expected follow up (if any): Follow up Bank project/loan/credit/grant

Comment on follow up:

The additional funding of 5M USD from the FCPF Readiness Fund was approved in September 2015 and activities are currently under implementation. The Liberia Forest Sector Project (US\$37.5 million) with a single country Trust Fund from NIFCI (Norway) was also approved in April 2016 and is under implementation.

End Date of Last Site Visit:

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Restructuring of Grant:

Two no cost extensions, for a total period of 18 months, were processed during the grant period.

OUTCOME

Comments on outcome achieved from 06/29/2012 to 06/30/2017

All outcomes as determined at the design stage have been achieved.

Grant Outcome Indicators

Grant outcome indicators are listed below.

Consultations on land-use options with GOL and stakeholders

Baseline 0

Value:

Date: 06/29/2012

Progress to 6 (these formed part of the National REDD+ Strategy formulation process)

Date:

Date: 11/30/2016

Target Value: 4

Date: 11/30/2016

Consultations on REDD+ Strategy (county level)

Baseline 0

Value:

Date: 06/29/2012

Progress to 4 (additional consultations were held as part of the SESA and Reference Scenario processes)

Date:

Date: 11/30/2016

Target Value: 4

Date: 11/30/2016

Quantitative analysis of land use in forested and mixed agricultural lands prepared and validated by the National Climate Change Steering Committee

Baseline No

Value:

Date: 06/29/2012

Progress to Yes (this analysis formed the basis for determination of the REDD+ Strategy options)

Date:

Date: 11/30/2016

Target Value: Yes

Date: 11/30/2016

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Quantified reference scenario prepared and validated by the REDD+ Technical Working Group

Baseline No
Value:
Date: 06/29/2012
Progress to Yes (a preliminary reference scenario was produced, based on primary activity data and secondary
Date: (comparator) emission factors)
Date: 11/30/2016
Target Value: Yes
Date: 11/30/2016

Environmental and Social Management Framework drafted and validated by relevant stakeholders

Baseline No
Value:
Date: 06/29/2012
Progress to Yes (ESMF was one of the outputs of the SESA process; it identified adequate mitigation measures for the
Date: potential environmental and social risks)
Date: 11/30/2016
Target Value: Yes
Date: 11/30/2016

National REDD+ strategy to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation is prepared and validated by national stakeholders

Baseline No
Value:
Date: 06/29/2012
Progress to Yes (National REDD+ Strategy was prepared, with identified REDD+ Strategy Options, and validated at the
Date: national level and through the REDD+ Technical Working Group)
Date: 11/30/2016
Target Value: Yes
Date: 11/30/2016

COMPONENTS

Output and Implementation by Component

Component 1: Support to the coordination of the REDD+ Readiness Process and consultations

Status: Completed
Planned Output: Capacity of agencies built; communication strategy produced; stakeholder consultation forums held; consultation and participation activities for SESA conducted; FGRM developed.
Actual Output: As planned, with exception of FGRM which is now supported under the FCPF AF grant

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Component 2. Contribute to the design of the National REDD+ Strategy

Status: Completed
Planned Output: SESA conducted; ESMF produced; SESA coordinator supports the SESA process; National REDD+ Strategy finalized.
Actual Output: As planned

Component 3. Develop a Reference Level or Scenario (including forest cover mapping and forest inventory in priority areas)

Status: Completed
Planned Output: Develop a reference scenario of emissions, produce national forest cover map.
Actual Output: As planned

Component 4. Project Management

Status: Completed
Planned Output: REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU) formally established, key positions filled, and operating (support to project management, monitoring and reporting functions), project audits
Actual Output: As planned

Comment on planned and actual Output

Comment on component implementation progress

COMPONENT 1.

The implementation of this component focused on requisite support for coordination and implementation structures for REDD+ Readiness process in Liberia. This included support to the REDD+ Technical Working Group (RTWG), Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment Working Group (SESA-WG); Forest Management Advisory Committee (FMAC) and the National Climate Change Secretariat (NCCS) at the national level while supporting consultations and decision making at the regional level. Much of the support under this component targeted the provision of adequate technical and operational support to facilitate coordination, training and workshops for awareness and capacity building to understand and make informed input into National REDD+ Readiness.

COMPONENT 2.

Under this component, the FCPF funds were used to finance technical assistance, workshops, training, goods, and operational costs in order to support the design of the National REDD+ Strategy through a consultative process with national and local stakeholders and the Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA) that also included six case studies on key REDD+ issues. Mitigation measures for identified environmental and social issues were addressed in the ESMF.

COMPONENT 3.

A preliminary reference scenario for the 2005-2014 reference period was prepared, partly based on secondary data (for emission factors). Underlying studies for the Reference Scenario included compilation of Activity Data by evaluating existing spatial datasets, deforestation rate, estimation, characterization of deforestation trend and activity data development. A forest definition was validated with the following thresholds: minimum area of one hectare, minimum canopy cover of 30% and minimum tree height of five meters (it was also decided that tree crop plantations would not be considered forest). Land cover change was estimated using three main sets of spatial data # the 2014 Land Cover Map, a 2000 Forest Canopy Cover map (Hansen et al 2013), and a Forest Loss product for 2000-2014 (Hansen et al 2013). The Land Cover and Forest map was produced, based on satellite imagery from Landsat 8 and RapidEye.

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COMPONENT 4.

In order to effectively managed and implement the project FDA management established and operationalized the REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU). This component financed cost of RIU personnel and operating costs. The National REDD+ Project Coordinator, under the supervision of the FDA's Managing Director, provided daily management of the grant activities. The Procurement Specialist handled all procurement related activities under the project. The REDD+ Policy Coordinator was recruited to oversee all policy issues. The Project Accountant supported the financial management aspects. The SESA Coordinator (based at the Environmental Protection Agency) was recruited to oversee the SESA process. The REDD+ Technical Working Groups Coordinator coordinated the project activities with the REDD+ Technical Working Group (RTWG) and provided policy advice to the project.

EXECUTION

Bank project related to the grant

Project ID / Name: P124073 - Liberia-FCPF REDD READINESS
Project Status: Lending
Global Focal Area: Climate change
Product Line: CN - Carbon Offset

Implementing agency and contact details

Agency: Forest Development Authority
Contact: Darlington Tuagben
Address: Whein Town, Mount Barclay, Monserrado County, Liberia
Phone: +231-886-798425 Email: d.tuagben@gmail.com
Website:

PROGRAM

Program Specific Questions

1. Describe progress in how the Grant activities are being coordinated with other REDD+-related initiatives, including those funded by Describe progress in how the Grant activities are being coordinated with other REDD+-related initiatives, including those f

To date, through the Forestry sector and the National REDD+ strategy, important REDD+ related issues are continuously being integrated into national policies such as the Agenda for Transformation (AfT), National Gender Action Policy (NGAP), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and the National Climate Change Policy (CCP). Under the AfT 2013, the goal for the forestry sector is to integrate the community, conservation and commercial aspects (3-C strategy) of forestry to contribute sustainably to reducing poverty, improving livelihoods and the quality of rural life and increasing the ecological services provided by Liberia's forests.

Several NGOs are engaged in various REDD+ initiatives that form part of the national REDD+ process, continually offering useful lessons and insights to guide and strengthen REDD+ readiness process.

2. Describe any important changes in the technical design or approach related to the Grant activities. None.

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3. Describe progress in addressing key capacity issues (implementation, technical, financial management, procurement) related to this Grant.

The grant supported the implementation function of the Forestry Development Authority; the key REDD+ readiness staff have received exposure to REDD+ policy issues through participation in the FCPF Participants' Committee meetings and learning events. A dedicated procurement specialist supported the procurement function; the financial management function was supported by the dedicated project accountant.

Due to the lack of appropriate technical capacity in the country, most of the project's activities were implemented through consultancy contracts with qualified and experienced foreign firms/joint ventures/individuals - all these contracts included capacity building activities for national actors in Liberia.

4. Describe progress in addressing social and environmental issues (including safeguards) related to the Grant. Is the SESA conducted in accordance with the Common Approach?

SESA was conducted in accordance with the Common Approach. SESA was prepared, including through a series of consultations, and validated. Six short case studies on drivers of deforestation were produced as part of the SESA consultancy. The SESA was also conducted consistent with Liberian environmental laws and regulations and World Bank operational safeguards policies and procedures.

5. Is the ESMF prepared in accordance with the Common Approach?

ESMF prepared in accordance with the Common Approach. The ESMF sets out the procedures to be followed for identifying, assessing, managing and mitigating the potential environmental and social impacts of REDD+ interventions once the details are fully defined in the context of the future implementation of REDD+. The ESMF development was also informed by six regional consultations across the country and one national validation workshop.

6. Describe progress in stakeholder consultation, participation, disclosure of information, and the FGRM related to this Grant.

As captured in Liberia's R-PP, stakeholders' engagement, consultation and participation in policies, projects and programs are vital to developing and improving national mechanisms for REDD+ implementation. A successfully implemented stakeholders engagement, consultation and participation strategy provides the basis for national priorities, knowledge and ownership in the implementation of REDD+. Progress made under this project included the development of a comprehensive REDD+ Communication strategy, which included tools, platforms, messages about REDD+, other forest and natural resource management related issues deconstructed and culturally appropriate to suite diverse stakeholders knowledge enhancement. These tools and messages were tested and validated by local community and national stakeholders. Engagement with the private sector stakeholder has been a challenge - despite continuous efforts from the REDD+ team to engage them in the REDD+ process, there has been limited engagement from the private sector, such as large-scale companies producing palm oil, rubber and timbers as they view national REDD+ process with skepticism.

Additionally, based on the communications strategy, the RIU has utilized the RTWG and SESA platforms and hosted a series of national, regional and community level awareness and sensitization initiatives to ensure stakeholders were adequately consulted and participated in the national REDD+ processes.

A central element to facilitating consultation and participation processes were the utilization of Regional Foresters in the four (4) FDA forest regions across Liberia. These Regional Foresters who coordinate all FDA activities in the regions assisted the RIU and consultants to identify and engage stakeholders, convene meetings and workshops, co-led awareness and sensitizations through the County Stakeholders' Forum exercises. The County Fora provided an expanded outreach platform for REDD+ consultation and participation. Fora were held in Torsor, Grand Cape Mount County; Zwedru, Grand Gedeh; Bopolu, Gbarpolu County; Greenville, Sinoe County; Konia, Lofa County. All of the county fora were held on #Market Days# and aired on local community and repeated on national radio stations. Info graphics, drama episodes, newsletters, jingles, REDD+ music videos, were all validated and used during the project to ensure stakeholders were engaged and aware of developments during the REDD+ implementation.

Building on the Consultation and Participation (C&P) plan of the R-PP, the REDD+ communications strategy provided a guide for comprehensive information dissemination. The FDA and EPA websites were reconstructed and information technology staff

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trained as web masters to maintain and facilitate uploads of all project related information generated. The websites developed include (www.fda.gov.lr/REDD+ and www.epa.gov.lr/REDD+). The RIU also maintained an updated mailing list of stakeholders and periodically shared technical assessments and analysis, workshop reports, meeting minutes, MRV information, maps, safeguards instruments, and several other communication materials. In other practical aspects, the RIU distributed hard copies of reports with stakeholders in the four forest regions and nationally.

COMPLETION

Overall Assessments and Lessons Learned

Main lessons learned:

Balancing stakeholders' immediate expectation against project scope: REDD+ is a radical shift from #business-as-usual# to a more transparent and participatory approach to forest governance and equitable benefit sharing of natural resources through community and stakeholders stewardship. Interpreting the concepts of #benefits# and the processes for reaching #equitable-benefit-distribution# under the current REDD+ Readiness Phase has been a challenge for the FDA. Through the REDD+ Communications strategy, the FDA is improving its communication strategy to keep stakeholders informed and manage expectations.

Institutional arrangements and Coordination: A key cornerstone for the success of REDD+ is effective clearly institutional arrangements and coordination among government ministries, agencies, CSOs and other key stakeholders. Under

Information and data management: Liberia's forest sector lacks infrastructure and human capacity for data storage and management. Efforts to manage and store data within the sector have been in an ad-hoc manner. Overtime, this has resulted to several reports and data being lost due to the challenge of data storage. As a result of this, the project is utilizing refurbished LISGIS and websites of FDA and EPA to host data for REDD+ and forestry.

Continual National Technical Expertise deficits: Inadequate technical expertise in key areas within the forest sector still exists. Post Ebola has seen mass exodus of technicians for better opportunities, thus resulting into deficits within the sector. The remaining stakeholders, while available, lack a rounded approach and input on key issues. This has impeded the level of stakeholders' inputs to technical documents and issues in the forest and natural resource management sector.

Synergies with other National Initiatives: Through the Project, the FDA-RIU recognized the need to ensure that REDD+ is mainstreamed into national agenda for economic planning, Nationally Determined Contributions for Climate Change response and the development of the National Climate Change Policy. The REDD+ Strategy, has been aligned with existing national and subnational initiatives including reforestation, community forestry, promotion of conservation, Improving Protected Area Management, supporting REDD+ Pilot in Wonegizi, alignment with other national policies in agriculture, environment, energy, lands etc.

Adjusting to National Circumstances: During the project, Liberia experienced a major epidemic (Ebola outbreak). This resulted in the near collapse of all engagements for forestry related work. The project had to adjust to this national circumstance and plan adequately. Post Ebola recovery resulted to readjustment in sectorial priorities at subnational and national levels.

Political buy in is also a major condition for the success of REDD+: The project realized the important role of key prominent and political leaders to its success. Building on intense stakeholder engagement and national policies alignment, the project obtained significant buy in from the Presidency to local communities. REDD+ is currently playing a significant role in supporting sustainable forest management approaches in Liberia.

Overall outcome (and its Sustainability):

Comment:

The grant financed activities largely achieved their objectives. The REDD+ dialog enhanced attention to the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and increased cooperation between the forestry sector and other sectors that are at the root of deforestation and forest degradation (agriculture, energy). In the mid-term, REDD+ Readiness activities are sustained with financing from the additional funding grant. Investments for REDD+ (and eventually payments for potential REDD+ emissions reductions) are committed by Norway.

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Bank Performance:

Comment:

The Bank team provided close support and technical advise throughout implementation of the grant financed activities.

Additional Assessment

Development / strengthening of institutions:

Comment:

The capacity of the Forestry Development Authority to handle REDD+ has increased immensely thanks to the grant support. The National REDD+ management institutions (such as the REDD+ Technical Working Group, the National Climate Change Steering Committee) are well versed on REDD+ and have a better capacity for managing the national REDD+ process.

Mobilization of other resources:

Comment:

Liberia is one of just a few countries in the Africa region that has been able to access REDD+ financing at all three phases: (1) readiness preparation being implemented through the FCPF Readiness Fund (providing financing for the Formulation and Preparation stages) and also with support from NGOs (such as Conservation International); (2) investments from Norway; and (3) commitments for ER payments from Norway.

Knowledge exchange:

Comment:

The Liberia REDD+ team has been a part of various learning events on REDD+ supported by the FCPF and other sources.

Client's policy / program implementation:

Comment:

It seems too early in the REDD process to achieve tangible changes on these fronts; however, the FDA continues pursuing key policy recommendations coming out of the National REDD+ Strategy.

Efficiency:

Comment:

Outcomes planned at the onset have been largely achieved, thus efficiency is rated satisfactory.

Replicability:

Comment:

At the national level, initial REDD+ readiness support had the convening power for maintaining the dialog on deforestation and forest degradation and allowed Liberia mobilize support for its sustainable forestry sector development from Norway.

Main recommendations to stakeholders:

Need for Careful Management of Expectations

REDD+ has been communicated globally as a mechanism which seeks to incentivize activities targeted at reducing emissions from the land-use sector. This line of communication has somewhat created high and often unrealistic expectations amongst some sections of stakeholder groups of huge financial inflow for REDD+. In order to ensure the effective management of these exaggerated and unrealistic expectations, deliberate efforts need to be made to emphasize the various co-benefits which will arise from REDD+ implementation, and that any payments for implementation of REDD+ will be performance-based and will consequently require continual support and commitment from all stakeholders.

Main recommendations to Bank Management:

Need for More Specific Guidance to Teams on Supervision and Support on REDD+ related matters

REDD+ is an evolving effort, with new international rules and agreements coming up nearly at every global meeting. It is difficult for GP task teams, which are not involved in this global dialog, to stay on top of these developments AND help the

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client understand them. More support to teams, like a REDD+ specific event during GP week or more specific guidance on safeguards is needed. To mitigate, the Liberia task team has benefitted greatly from the hands-on support by the FMT team.

DISBURSEMENTS

Disbursements Summary in USD

Date From	Date To	Planned Cumulative	Planned Period	Actual Cumulative	Actual Period
01/01/2012	06/30/2012	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
07/01/2012	12/31/2012	0.00	0.00	300,000.00	300,000.00
01/01/2013	06/30/2013	0.00	0.00	305,293.00	5,293.00
07/01/2013	12/31/2013	0.00	0.00	371,177.70	65,884.70
01/01/2014	06/30/2014	0.00	0.00	594,642.89	223,465.19
07/01/2014	12/31/2014	0.00	0.00	998,889.42	404,246.53
01/01/2015	06/30/2015	0.00	0.00	1,276,754.09	277,864.67
07/01/2015	12/31/2015	0.00	0.00	1,579,091.45	302,337.36
01/01/2016	06/30/2016	0.00	0.00	2,665,662.12	1,086,570.67
07/01/2016	12/31/2016	0.00	0.00	3,421,488.57	755,826.45
01/01/2017	06/30/2017	0.00	0.00	3,600,000.00	178,511.43

PROCUREMENT PLAN

None

PROCUREMENT ACTUAL

None