

Republic of Liberia



FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY



LIBERIA FOREST ECONOMY PROJECT(P508345)

Process Framework



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List of Acronyms

ARREST Agenda	The ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development 2025–2029 (AAID) is Liberia's national plan under President Joseph Nyumah Boakai, focusing on Agriculture, Roads, Rules and Law, Education Sanitation and Tourism
CFDC	Community Forest Development Committee
CLDMC	Community Land Development and Management Committee
CFMA	Community Forest Management Agreements
CFMB	Community Forest Management Body
CFMP	Community Forest Management Plans
CNDRA	Center for National Documents Records Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CVC	Community Verification Committee
ESF	Environment and Social Framework
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESS	Environment and Social Standard
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDA	Forestry Department Authority
FGDs	Focus group discussions
FPIC	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
FTI	Forestry Training Institute
GFNP	Gola Forest National Park
GM	Grievance Mechanism
GoL	Government of Liberia
GM	Grievance mechanism
IFC	International Finance Corporation
LLA	Liberia Land Authority
LPMR	Lake Piso Multiple use Reserve
LRA	Land Rights Act
LiFE-P	Liberia Forest Economy Project
LRP	Livelihood Restoration Plan
LSFP	Liberia Forest Sector Project
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MLME	Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organization
NTFPs	Non-Timber Forest Products
PAs	Protected Areas
PAP	Project Affected Person
PDO	Project Development Objective
PF	Process Framework
PROGREEN	Global Partnership for Sustainable and Resilient Landscapes



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PIU	Project Implementation Unit
RP	Resettlement Plan
SEC	Service Excellence Center
SOP	Series of Projects
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Program Background

The Government of Liberia (GoL) is planning to implement Liberia Forest Economy Project (LiFE-P) that will be implemented by the Forest Development Authority (FDA) of Liberia mandated to regulate, manage, and administer the country's forest resources under the National Forestry Reform Law (2006). Liberia's forests cover roughly about two third of its land area and represent about 42% of the Upper Guinean Forest, one of the West Africa's most important biodiversity hotspots. The LiFE-P is structured as an 8- to 10-year, two-phase engagement, currently estimated at US\$40 million per phase, for a proposed total IDA envelope of US\$80 million. Its objective is to improve governance, forest management, and value addition.

The two-phase SOP will target 11 counties in three clusters: Northwest—Gbarpolu, Grand Cape Mount, and Lofa; Central North—Grand Bassa, Nimba, and Rivercess; and Southeast—Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Maryland, River Gee, and Sinoe. SOP1 will focus on six counties: Gbarpolu and Grand Cape Mount in the Northwest, Grand Bassa and Rivercess in the Central North, and Grand Gedeh and Sinoe in the Southeast.

1.2 Project development objective and project beneficiaries

The Project Development Objective (PDO) of the Series of Projects (SOP) is to *“strengthen forest governance and sustainable forest management and increase forest-based employment and private investment in selected forest areas of Liberia”*. The SOP will retain the same PDO across all ensuing projects and will follow a consistent approach in terms of project design, ensuring maximum synergy and cross-learning through the different phases.

The PDO of SOP1 is to strengthen forest governance and sustainable forest management and increase forest-based employment and private investment in selected forest areas in the Northwest and Central North regions of Liberia.

The LiFE-P will include four major components. Under Component 1, the Project supports improvements in forest governance, transparency, and institutional capacity, including digital systems for traceability and monitoring, which are expected to strengthen regulatory enforcement and accountability. Component 2 focuses on the development of the forest resource through community-based natural resource management and forest restoration (including plantations), enabling communities to establish and manage CFMAs, adopt sustainable land-use practices, and develop alternative livelihoods, thereby increasing community ownership, improving land management, and reducing pressure on forest resources. This component is central to ensure the provision of the transboundary ecological services the Upper Guinea forest provides, including climate adaptation. Building on these foundations, Component 3 supports the development of forestry enterprises, skills, and investment opportunities by enhancing enterprise performance, strengthening workforce skills, and facilitating private sector investment and access to finance. Through technical assistance, results-based support, and investment facilitation, the Project is expected to improve the competitiveness of SMEs, expand domestic value addition, and mobilize private capital in the forestry sector.



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The project targets multiple beneficiaries at the community, private sector, and government levels. Forest-dependent communities, including women and youth organized under CFMAs and Community Forest Management Bodies (CFMBs), will benefit from support for sustainable forest management, restoration, and resilient forest-based livelihoods. Private sector actors and forestry entrepreneurs in timber and NTFP value chains, including MSMEs in production, aggregation, processing, and marketing, will also benefit directly. National and subnational public agencies, especially the FDA, will gain from stronger policy, monitoring, and institutional systems; improved capacity for forest governance, land-use planning, enforcement, and protected area management; and strengthened transparency, legality assurance, and service delivery.

The project is estimated to directly reach 25,000 forest-dependent households—22,500 CFMA households under Subcomponent 2.1, and 2,500 protected area buffer zone households under Subcomponent 2.3. Using the national average household multiplier of 4.4, equivalent to 110,000 persons (Liberia Population and Housing Census 2022: average household size of 4.4). This includes all beneficiaries who will receive skills and capacity development training, access to finance, improved market access, and new or improved jobs.¹⁹ At least 45 percent of beneficiaries are expected to be female.

1.3 Rationale and purpose of the Process Framework

Under the Environmental and Social Framework of the World Bank's, a "**Process Framework**" is prepared when Bank-financed projects may result in restrictions on access to natural resources within legally designated parks and protected areas. The purpose of the process framework is to establish a process by which members of potentially affected communities participate in the design of project components, the identification of measures necessary to achieve the objectives of this ESS, and the implementation and monitoring of relevant project activities"¹. The Environment and Social Standard (ESS) 5 describes these risks as restrictions on land use and limitations on access to natural resources that prevent a community or certain groups within that community from exploiting resources located in areas over which they have ancestral, customary, or recognized rights of use. The Process Framework does not refer to the physical relocation of people but results in adverse impacts on livelihoods, such as reduced access to grazing land, firewood, hunting, fishing, or other natural resource-based income and subsistence. This may include situations where the project intends to implement activities that have potential impacts associated with access restrictions in existing protected areas. Such is the case for this project, as component 2.3 of the LiFE-P is expected to introduce new restrictions on land use and access to natural resources that did not previously exist, hence triggering the ESS5 process. In accordance with national legislation specifically the Liberia Land Rights Act (2018), the Community Rights Law 2009, if the project restricts access to customary lands, then the project must obtain the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of the affected local communities.

Ultimately, FPIC has to be an inclusive, culturally appropriate, and documented process which allows communities rights to accept or reject the restrictions. Consent must be received and documented before any access restrictions are enforced. Any access restriction must take local communities customary rights must be respected and protected, even if the area is designated as public or protected land.

¹ Environment and Social Standard ESS5: Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement, Annex 1.



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Therefore, both ESS1 and ESS10 are to be applied in a complementary manner of the national legislation in this project. Under ESS1 and ESS10, the Bank requires projects to comply with applicable national law, making these FPIC requirements binding on the project.

The Process Framework describes the participatory process by which communities and project authorities, or other relevant agencies, will jointly recommend restrictions on resource use and agree on measures to mitigate any significant adverse impacts of such restrictions. Specifically, the Process Framework aims to :

- Identify risks of restricted access to priority ecosystem services for communities near project sites.
- Involve local communities in project design to ensure effective mitigation and define eligibility criteria for support measures.
- Ensure inclusive participation of affected communities in analyzing access restrictions and in developing prevention, mitigation, and compensation strategies.
- Define strategies to avoid, reduce, or compensate for access-related impacts, in collaboration with institutional actors and affected populations.
- Promote sustainable natural resource management to foster coexistence between the project and local communities.
- Outline procedures for monitoring and evaluating resource access restrictions.
- Establish a conflict resolution mechanism for disputes arising from restricted access.



2 Description of Project Components

2.1 Project Overview

In West Africa, Liberia remains the country with the most forests, occupying between 42 percent of the Upper Guinean Forest that stretches from Guinea to Cameroon² Liberia's 6.69 million ha of forests comprise evergreen forests in the Southeast around the border with Ivory Coast and deciduous forests in the Northwest bordering Sierra Leone and Guinea. These forests cover about 69 percent of the land mass of Liberia³. Liberia's forests are home to over 2,200 flora species of vascular plants (including 225 tree species), of which 4.7% are endemic; and 881 known fauna species (including 600 bird species, 150 mammal species, and 75 reptile species), of which 0.8% are endemic and 4.2% threatened. Liberia's forests also produce a wide range of other environmental goods and services, which are part of its economy.

Forest cover in Liberia has been declining over the last few decades, including both deforestation and forest degradation. As of 2020, 92% of forest cover in Liberia was natural forests, and according to FAO the rate of deforestation in Liberia was 30.3 kha per year between 2015 and 2020. Primary dense forest in Liberia has declined in extent and condition, with increasing levels of fragmentation. From 2015 to 2024, Liberia lost 343.3 kha of humid primary forest, making up 5.7% loss of this type of forest⁴. Also, during that period Liberia lost 1.76 million hectares of tree cover⁵, equivalent to a 27% decrease in tree cover since 2000, resulting in 1.48 Gt of CO₂e emissions.

2.2 Rationale for the project

In response, under the Environmental Sustainability pillar of the ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development 2025-2029⁶, the Government of Liberia (GoL) is focused on generating more income; and revenues for the country by restoring degraded ecosystems, addressing deforestation and forest degradation, and promoting sustainable land use practices to improve forest assets. However, structural weaknesses in forest governance, limited value addition, weak enforcement, and declining forest capital have constrained the sector's ability to contribute meaningfully to job creation, fiscal revenues, and inclusive growth. Addressing these constraints is essential to transform Liberia's forests from a subsistence safety net into a driver of sustainable economic development.

² Broderick, C. E., & Appleton, N. S. (2018). A case study for Liberian agroforestry: science and the implementation of a co-management prospectus for agriculture and forestry. *Forestry Research and Engineering: International Journal*, 214–224

³ Liberia National Forest Inventory 2018/2019. Liberia established a definition of forest, which was developed and validated by the FDA as an area of land that has a canopy cover of minimum 30%; contains trees with a minimum of 5 m height or the capacity to reach it; covers a minimum of 1 hectare of land. This includes shifting cultivation in its fallow phase (as far as the threshold values are met), and does not include land with predominant agricultural use (including tree crops such as oil palm and rubber).

⁴ Global Forest Watch. <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/LBR/?category=forest-change>

⁵ Tree cover is defined as all vegetation taller than 5 m. in height as of 2000. "Loss" indicates the removal or mortality of tree cover and can be due to a variety of factors, including mechanical harvesting, fire, disease, etc. As such, "loss" does not equate to deforestation.

⁶ <https://liberia.un.org/en/287777-arrest-agenda-inclusive-development-2025-2029>



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2.3 Project Development Objective

The Project Development Objective (PDO) of the Series of Projects (SOP) is to “improve forest governance, expand community-managed forests, and increase income and jobs for forest-dependent people in selected areas of Liberia”. The SOP will retain the same PDO across all ensuing projects and will follow a consistent approach in terms of project design, ensuring maximum synergy and cross-learning through the different phases.

2.4 Project Components

This SOP 1 includes an IDA of US\$40 million and a PROGREEN grant of US\$ 5.4 million to address critical challenges facing Liberia’s forests and to unlock their economic, social, and environmental potential. The Project will support Liberia’s forest sector in Private Capital Mobilization and Private Capital Enabling for private sector investments in forestry. The Project will help create enabling conditions by removing capital investment barriers related to legal and property risks. The LiFE Project directly contributes to the World Bank’s priority on jobs by investing in the natural infrastructure that underpins economic activity and by fostering the conditions necessary for private investment to take root. Through this dual focus, the Project lays the foundational groundwork to expand employment opportunities across the forestry sector and into agribusiness, creating pathways for sustained job creation at scale. By aligning systems, rules, and partnerships across institutions, the Project enables the kind of coordinated reform and strategic investment that can translate sectoral growth into meaningful, lasting employment in Liberia’s forestry economy, connecting forest stewardship with broader economic opportunity for communities that depend on it.

Component 1: Strengthen the enabling environment for sustainable, transparent, and commercially viable forest management

Component 1 will strengthen the enabling environment for sustainable, accountable, and transparent forest management. It will deliver a data-driven forest governance system by strengthening legal enforcement; improving monitoring, licensing, and traceability systems; enhancing cross-agency coordination; and supporting the harmonization of the legal and regulatory framework. It will also build the FDA’s institutional capacity by strengthening governance, human resources (HR), and internal systems, while introducing a structured pathway to fiscal sustainability as well as measures to safeguard project assets. *Sub-component 1.1: Improved Forest Governance and Transparency* This subcomponent will strengthen forest governance by improving coordination, enforcement, transparency, and the legal and regulatory framework for commercial forestry and community rights. It will support: (a) a Forest Economy Task Force, co-chaired by MFDP and FDA, to provide oversight and high-level coordination; (b) stronger risk-based enforcement through the Wildlife Crime Task Force, including updated SOPs, a national risk-targeting model, joint training, field equipment, and quarterly enforcement reports; (c) upgrades to FDA’s public dashboard to disclose active concessions, license holders, and related payments in open-data format; and (d) priority policy, legal, and regulatory harmonization through analysis, consultations, draft amendments, and explanatory memoranda to reduce ambiguity, align laws with national objectives, and separate FDA’s regulatory, forest management, and commercial functions.

Sub-component 1.2: Strengthened Institutional Capacity and Performance

The objective of this subcomponent is to enhance the FDA’s institutional capability to regulate forests transparently, efficiently, and accountably. It will strengthen FDA governance, staffing,



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inventory, and monitoring; provide equipment to secure project assets; digitize regulatory processes and chain-of-custody management, including LiberTrace handover; improve fiscal sustainability; and implement regulatory amendments separating FDA’s regulatory, commercial, and forest management functions.

Component 2: Sustainable Forest Resource Development and Resilient Livelihoods

This Component will create a pipeline of market-ready community forest enterprises by combining legal tenure and capable governance bodies (2.1), a productive and sustainably certified resource base (2.2), and stronger conservation and ecotourism assets (2.3). The community enterprises, CFMA clusters, and forest management plans developed under this component constitute the supply base of legal timber, certified NTFPs, and nature-based tourism assets that Component 3's private sector engagement instruments, off-take facilitation, SME support, and matching grants (Window 2) are designed to connect to commercial buyers and investment partners. To ensure long-term viability, community forest enterprises, restoration activities, and protected area interventions will apply sustainability principles to help CFMAs, and protected areas maintain productivity and ecological integrity beyond the project period. Financial sustainability will be strengthened through progression between a two window matching grants system reducing reliance on project funding and supporting self-sustaining, market-integrated forest enterprises.

Communities hold legal rights over large CFMAs but often lack the capacity, capital, and market links to manage them sustainably and profitably. Without viable forest-based livelihoods, they may convert forests to agriculture or rely on informal extraction, driving degradation, and weakening governance. Component 2 addresses this supply-side gap by developing legally recognized, sustainably managed community forest enterprises whose timber and NTFP outputs can meet Component 3 market and investment requirements. Its key innovation, the CFMA Cluster Approach, groups two or more CFMAs under shared governance and investment structures to create the scale, credibility, and bankability needed to attract buyers, finance, investment, and private partners.

Sub-component 2.1 - Community-based management and use of natural resources

This subcomponent will support formal recognition of 10 new CFMAs through the nine-step process under the Community Rights Law and strengthen 10 existing CFMAs, prioritizing those supported under the closed LFSP. It will build CFMB capacity through governance and biodiversity management training and support participatory CFMPs with business and sustainability strategies for timber, NTFPs, and viable agricultural commodities. The FDA, with qualified partners as needed, will lead community engagement and forest extension services. Support will cover participatory planning, land zoning, natural resource and business planning, contract renegotiation, engagement with private operators, and small infrastructure. Approved CFMPs will guide all forest uses, including reduced-impact logging in approved production zones consistent with FDA harvesting practices, while conservation agreements will protect biodiversity-rich and high-conservation value areas. The project will support at least 30 percent female representation in CFMBs and promote women’s meaningful participation as essential to effective governance.

To support the growth of community enterprises from start-up activities to market-integrated operations, the subcomponent implements Window 1 to support nature-based matching grant mechanism,³⁰ drawing from PROGREEN funds. Window 1 is targeted at early-stage community and household-level enterprises in CFMA areas and protected area buffer zones. It finances sustainable and



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climate-resilient alternative livelihoods—particularly NTFP-based activities such as bamboo, rattan, bitter kola, honey, snails, and locusts and small-scale investments in post-harvest and aggregation infrastructure, including storage, drying, and packaging equipment utilizing renewable energy, with beneficiary co-financing contributions required. Window 1 is explicitly designed as a catalytic, time-limited entry point: It supports enterprises at the stage when commercial viability has not yet been demonstrated, and access to formal finance is unavailable. Enterprises that graduate from Window 1, demonstrating production capacity and identified market linkages, become eligible for the larger IDA-financed grants under Window 2 in Component 3, which finances equipment and small-scale processing infrastructure for more mature CFMA-based MSMEs.

Sub-component 2.2 - Forest Restoration and Timber Production

This subcomponent focuses on land-use planning for the six counties, restoring degraded landscapes, planting more trees, and increasing sustainable timber production within and around CFMA landscapes. Investments will include practical production systems for timber, fuelwood, rubber, and other tree-based products, aligned with the intended purpose of the plantations, while generating income and maintaining ecological functions. Restoration and sustainable forest management also contribute directly to the project's GHG emissions reduction targets, sequestering carbon and reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation. Activities under this subcomponent are therefore central not only to the livelihood's objective but to the project's climate outcomes. Community members will be trained in forest and biodiversity monitoring to feed data into the national monitoring system supported under Component 1, ensuring that results can be tracked and attributed.

Participatory land-use plans will identify and allocate areas for forest biodiversity conservation, restoration, plantations and agricultural production—including cocoa, rubber, and oil palm—in response to community priorities identified under Subcomponent 2.1. Capacity building on land restoration practices³³ will train staff to promote women's participation, adapt training materials, and deliver practical community-level sessions followed by hands-on field coaching. Restoration activities will rehabilitate 6,000 ha of degraded lands using context-specific approaches, with a focus on priority areas, including Gbarpolu and Grand Cape Mount counties and areas around the transboundary GFNP. The project will support approximately 13,116 ha of commercial plantations through community woodlots and rehabilitation of old-growth plantations. Sustainable timber production will also be promoted through the valorization of abandoned logs and aged rubberwood.

Sub-component 2.3 - Improved management of high value transboundary protected areas (PAs)

The protected areas supported under this subcomponent—GFNP and Lake Piso Multiple Sustainable Use Reserve—are not isolated from the CFMA landscape activities in Subcomponents 2.1 and 2.2. They form the conservation anchors of the same landscape mosaic within which community forest management is being developed. Strengthening their management, therefore, directly reinforces the outcomes of the broader component: well-managed protected areas sustain the ecosystem services such as water regulation, biodiversity, and soil quality, that underpin the productivity of surrounding CFMA lands. Conversely, the community enterprises and buffer zone livelihoods developed under Subcomponents 2.1 and 2.2 reduce encroachment pressure on the parks, creating a mutually reinforcing dynamic between conservation and community development.

This subcomponent will strengthen management of GFNP and Lake Piso Reserve to enhance ecological integrity, transboundary impact, and long-term economic value. Key activities include preparing a



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participatory Lake Piso management plan and updating the GFNP management plan; providing vehicles, GPS, and radio equipment for biodiversity and animal monitoring; preparing an ecotourism strategy with revenue-sharing mechanisms; constructing priority park infrastructure, including offices and housing; rehabilitating patrol tracks and roads; and demarcating protected area boundaries. Stronger management is expected to deliver climate mitigation benefits by avoiding deforestation and forest degradation. The project will also support transboundary biodiversity connectivity assessments across Wonegizi/Ziama, Diecke, Nimba, and Sapo/Grebo/Taï, building on bilateral MOUs to inform conservation cooperation. Specifically, this subcomponent will strengthen the management of GFNP and Lake Piso Multiple Sustainable Use Reserve to enhance their ecological integrity, transboundary impact, and long-term economic value. Key activities include (a) development of a participatory management plan for Lake Piso Reserve and update of the GFNP management plan; provision of equipment, including vehicles, global positioning system (GPS), and radio equipment, for biodiversity and animal population monitoring; and preparation of an ecotourism strategy with revenue-sharing mechanisms for both protected areas (b) construction of priority park infrastructure, including staff offices and housing, rehabilitation and maintenance of patrol tracks and roads, and demarcation of protected area boundaries. By strengthening management effectiveness, the subcomponent is also expected to generate significant climate mitigation benefits through avoided deforestation and forest degradation, and (c) the project will additionally support transboundary biodiversity connectivity assessments across the Wonegizi/Ziama (Liberia-Guinea), Diecke (Guinea), Nimba (Guinea-Liberia-Côte d'Ivoire), and Sapo/Grebo/Taï (Liberia-Côte d'Ivoire), building on existing bilateral MOUs to strengthen the evidentiary basis for transboundary conservation cooperation.

The ecotourism activities under this subcomponent are preparatory, designed to de-risk and lay the groundwork for larger ecotourism investments under SOP2. Ecotourism is conceived as a non-extractive livelihood stream for communities in and around the protected areas, complementing the NTFP and timber-based enterprises developed under Subcomponents 2.1 and 2.2, with revenue-sharing mechanisms ensuring income flows back to buffer zone communities. The PPP framework to be piloted is aligned with the private investment facilitation work of Component 3.

Specifically, SOP1 will deliver (a) tourism market demand and feasibility assessments for the proposed Northwest Circuit linking Lake Piso, Blue Lake, and the Gola Forest landscape; (b) biodiversity-based and climate-resilient ecotourism development strategies for both protected areas; (c) a PPP transaction framework covering concession models, licensing arrangements, and revenue-sharing mechanisms between the FDA, communities, and private operators; (d) identification, prequalification, and preliminary engagement of potential private sector partners for SOP2 concessions; and (e) climate-resilient and biodiversity-friendly infrastructure specifications including ecolodge footprints, visitor interpretation centers, and trail network designs, to inform SOP2 design and costing, alongside the completion of required environmental and social assessments for planned tourism development sites.

Component 3: Creating enabling conditions for private investment in commercial forestry for more and better jobs

Component 3 focuses on commercializing Liberia's timber and nontimber forestry products by promoting sustainable production, transparent management, and competitiveness to unlock the sector's potential to create more and better jobs. It will (i) strengthen forestry MSMEs through technical assistance and access to finance, (ii) improve skills and labor supply via targeted training programs, and (iii) attract private investment in value addition by supporting enabling infrastructure, policy reforms, and investment promotion initiatives. These efforts build on regulatory reforms under Component 1 and



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coordination improvements under Component 2, jointly creating a stronger business environment, increasing domestic value addition, and expanding private sector-led job creation in Liberia's forestry sector. Firm-level support will be limited to businesses sourcing timber and NTFPs from legally and sustainably managed CFMAs under Sustainable Forest and Biodiversity Management principles, creating a direct incentive for sustainable sourcing and making climate-compatible forest use more commercially attractive.

Sub-component 3.1: Support to Forestry Entrepreneurs: Capacity and Finance

The subcomponent aims to address critical market failures that constrain investment, value addition, and job creation in Liberia's timber and NTFP value chains. The project will support commercially viable MSMEs and larger enterprises, including women and youth-led businesses engaged in timber and rubberwood processing, wood products manufacturing, NTFP processing, aggregation, and marketing, including enterprises with sourcing arrangements and productive partnerships with forest communities through a Forestry Enterprise Readiness and De-risking Program and a performance-based financing facility through window 2 of the nature-based matching grant mechanism. The program is designed as a pathway to investment readiness for forestry enterprises. It addresses the investment readiness gap that prevents forestry enterprises from accessing commercial finance.

Technical assistance will strengthen enterprise capabilities and market linkages, while performance-based financing will cofinance investments constrained by limited finance and perceived risks. Together, these measures will help firms formalize, expand, create better jobs, build commercial relationships with forest communities, buyers, and off-takers, and establish reliable revenues and cash flows. They are expected to reduce investment risks, improve bankability, and create a pipeline of investment-ready enterprises able to access commercial finance. Building on LIFT (P171997) and partner support, businesses will be selected based on viability, scalability, sustainability, and job-creation potential, with results-based financing and matching requirements to address incentive and bankability constraints. A private sector service provider will manage implementation under FDA and SBA oversight, following an operations manual with eligibility criteria. Support will require legal sourcing and climate-resilient forest management, including reduced-impact logging to preserve canopy cover, soil integrity, and watershed functions and reduce climate-related productivity losses.

Sub-component 3.2: Skills development for Forestry Jobs

To address skills gaps in value-added commercial forestry, the project will (a) upgrade the Forestry Training Institute to establish the Service Excellence Center (SEC) in partnership with the institute, community colleges, tertiary institutions, and the private sector; (b) establish a wood lab at the University of Liberia; and (c) support graduate placement in wage or self-employment. A private sector skills demand assessment will guide infrastructure upgrades by identifying workforce gaps, hiring needs, and wage levels, ensuring that curricula, equipment, and training cohorts match market demand. Given current sector conditions, near-term priorities are primary processing skills—such as sawmilling, kiln drying, grading, veneer, and forest management operations—before moving to higher-value secondary processing skills like furniture and moldings. Eligible SEC investments include (a) facility rehabilitation and industry-standard equipment; (b) competency-based curricula with modules on climate-resilient silviculture and harvesting, flexible programs for women, and accreditation; (c) training of trainers with regional support and short-term technical assistance; and (d) structured South–South exchanges with priority regional institutions. Training will also include ecological silviculture techniques within Liberia's tropical rainforest context, including reduced impact logging and assisted natural regeneration. The SEC



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will serve as a national hub delivering decentralized short courses through partner colleges. To keep training demand-driven, the project will also seek private sector representation in SEC oversight, alongside the Forestry Training Institute.

Sub-component 3.3: Catalyzing Private Investment in Sustainable timber processing through targeted Investment Promotion and Public Private Partnerships)

This subcomponent will increase private investment in Liberia’s forest sector through targeted promotion, facilitation, retention, and risk-sharing instruments such as PPPs for climate-resilient infrastructure. Complementing Component 1 reforms, the project will strengthen the capacity of the FDA, National Investment Commission (NIC), and Liberia Special Economic Zones Authority (LSEZA) to attract new investors, support expansion by existing firms, and build backward linkages with clustered and trained CFMAs under Component 2. The following activities will be supported:

- (a) **Forestry market intelligence and investment facilitation.** Eligible activities include establishing or strengthening a forestry market intelligence and investment facilitation platform, training, promotional materials, outreach campaigns, backward linkage support, grievance mechanisms, public-private dialogue, and digital tools for investment promotion and monitoring.
- (b) **Capacity building and a policy and regulatory framework for private investment.** This includes support to the FDA Commercial Department, review of incentive frameworks relevant to wood processing (for example, the Forestry Investment Code), and stronger regulations for commercialization in sawmills, plantations, NTFPs, and chainsaw mills.
- (c) **Enabling climate-resilient infrastructure to de-risk private investment in value addition.** To address infrastructure gaps, the project will mobilize private capital through well-structured PPPs, including design-build-operate-transfer sawmills and eco-forestry lodges in two protected areas. Eligible activities include a Preparation Facility (PF) to finance pre-feasibility and feasibility studies covering economic, financial, commercial, environmental, social, and climate issues, and transaction advisory and legal support for PPP structuring. The facility will focus on transactions, producing bankable documents and investment-ready projects. It will also provide US\$5 million in public sector support for climate-resilient infrastructure projects³⁸ identified and prepared through the PF, with a clear handoff to commercial lenders, especially for SOP2.
- (d) **IFC Local Champions Initiative.** The project will identify high-potential MSMEs for the IFC Local Champions Initiative, which provides targeted advisory services to prepare firms for possible IFC investment.

Component 4: Project management and implementation

Key activities include establishing and operating the PIU with the staffing, training, tools, and logistics needed for central and regional teams, alongside annual work plans, budgets, procurement plans, and implementation schedules. The component will strengthen fiduciary management through improved procurement and contract management, sound systems, timely quarterly interim financial reports (IFRs), annual financial statements, and external audits. It will develop and operate a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system using the FDA Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification Framework and the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) Safeguards Information System for performance tracking and results verification, and support preparation of the



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Mid-term Review and Project Completion Report. It will also strengthen environmental and social management capacity in line with Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) requirements through clear roles, trained staff, operational tools, and targeted mentoring for regional teams. Finally, it will institutionalize standard operating procedures for subnational implementation, with clear reporting lines and periodic joint supervision missions to strengthen feedback between the field and FDA HQ.

2.5 Exclusion Criteria

The project applies to both geographic and activity-based exclusion criteria. Geographically, the project will not operate in areas with unresolved boundary disputes, active concession conflicts, or within core zones of formally gazetted national parks. Activities that would convert or significantly degrade natural habitats, cause involuntary resettlement or displacement, adversely impact cultural heritage, threaten biodiversity or sensitive ecosystems, or involve illegal trade in wildlife or other prohibited goods will not be financed under the project. The activities that will be excluded are shown in Table 2-1 below.

Table 2-1: Exclusion List – Activities that will not be financed under the Project

ESS Issues	Activities that will be excluded
Biodiversity Conservation and sustainable Management of living natural resources	Activities causing significant degradation or conversion of natural habitat, including national parks, protected forests, and other types of conservation areas, for example, new infrastructures leading to fragmentation of important nature habitat. Activities with significant adverse impacts on biodiversity, particularly those threatening endangered species or ecosystems of high conservation value.
Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use, and Involuntary Resettlement.	Large scale activities or infrastructures that are likely to generate a wide range of significant adverse risks and impacts on human populations or the environment: there will be no creation of new protected areas, extension of existing protected areas and community forests. Plantation activities involving large scale physical displacement of the population. Tree planting or afforestation activities on government-owned land that is contested by local communities regarding ownership: Existence of large-scale legacy or outstanding complaints regarding land acquisition process.
Community health and safety	Activities in areas affected by ongoing armed conflict or social unrest, where risks to communities and Project staff cannot be adequately mitigated.
Cultural heritage	Activities with potentially significant adverse impacts on cultural heritage sites that are registered in government data or recognized by communities as



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	<p>their ancestral heritage. This includes activities that may have an adverse impact on tangible and intangible cultural heritage.</p> <p>Site classified as national or international heritage / recognized archaeological site or one with high prehistoric potential.</p>
Risk of exclusion of vulnerable groups	<p>Large-scale activities negatively impacting livelihoods of rural communities and reliant on land and natural resources.</p>
Sensitive ecosystems	<p>Infrastructure and rehabilitation work and agricultural activities within or adjacent to classified environmental sites (RAMSAR, CITES, protected areas such as classified and</p> <p>community forests, and so on) where impacts could be long-term, permanent, and/or irreversible</p>
Site with significant environmental constraints	<p>Construction or rehabilitation of hydroelectric dam site.</p> <p>Large-scale infrastructure or interventions likely to cause widespread, irreversible, or cumulative risks and impacts on people or the environment, such as the creation or extension of protected areas or community forests without proper consultation or safeguards.</p>
Illegal activities	<p>Trade in wildlife or wildlife products regulated under CITES.</p> <p>Production or trade in tobacco and tobacco products.</p> <p>Production or trade or procurement of weapons and ammunitions.</p>
Rangers	<p>No financing for arms, weapons, military equipment or infrastructure. Project will also not provide advice on security or military policy, which is outside its technical competence and comparative advantage.</p>

2.6 Proposed Subprojects covered by the Process framework

The potential sub-projects and activities proposed to be implemented by the project are as follows (Table 2-2).



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Table 2-2: Potential sub-projects and proposed activities

	Component	Sub-component	Sub-project/Activity	Description of physical works	Potential locations for works near PAs/Ramsar
1	C1.2	Institutional Capacity & Performance	IT Infrastructure Deployment at FDA HQ and Regional Offices	Works will include procurement and installation of IT hardware servers, computers, networking equipment, backup systems at FDA headquarters in Monrovia and existing regional offices. No new construction. Activities confined to existing office buildings.	FDA headquarters in Monrovia and existing regional offices.
2	C1.2	Institutional Capacity & Performance	Secure Hosting Environment for LiberTrace	No civil works. IT system upgrade activity including SEAL migration, change-of-ownership approvals, local sales tracking, revenue reporting, and plywood processing modules. Physical footprint limited to server/hosting infrastructure within existing FDA premises	Within existing FDA premises
3	C1.2	Institutional Capacity & Performance	Forest Monitoring and GIS Unit - R&D Center	Physical establishment of a GIS and remote sensing unit within the FDA R&D Center, involving procurement and installation of GIS workstations, servers, large-format printers/plotters, and related equipment may require minor refurbishment of existing office or laboratory space to accommodate the unit.	Within the Research and Development Center of the FDA
4	C2.1	Community-Based NRM & Livelihoods	Establishment and formal recognition of 20 CFMAs and CFMBs	20 CFMB office structures could be constructed or rehabilitated across the project area. Land footprint across up to 20 CFMA areas in Gbarpolu, Lofa, Rivercess, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, and River Gee	CFMAs in some counties may likely be in the GFNP buffer zone landscape. Similarly, CFMAs in Grand Cape Mount



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				Counties.	County may be in the LPMR buffer zone. CFMB offices in some locations may be sited adjacent to PA buffer zones.
5	C2.1	Community-Based NRM & Livelihoods	Boundary Marking and Demarcation of 20 CFMAs	Physical demarcation of CFMA boundaries using boundary markers, posts, signs, and cleared boundary lines across forest landscapes. While individually small-scale, the cumulative footprint across 20 CFMAs (including clustered CFMAs exceeding 50,000 ha) is extensive, covering large areas of forest and community land. Involves clearing of boundary paths/lines and physical placement of permanent markers.	Could overlap with the GFNP boundary and LPMR in Grand Cape Mount County
6	C2.1	Community-Based NRM & Livelihoods	Reduced-Impact Logging (RIL) within Clustered CFMAs	Implementation of commercial timber harvesting using reduced-impact logging techniques within newly established clustered CFMAs managing over 50,000 ha. Physical works include tree felling, log extraction using skidders or cable systems, construction of temporary logging roads/skid trails, log landings, and log sorting/storage areas. Significant physical footprint across large, forested areas.	Clustered CFMAs managing more than 50,000 ha and operating under Forest Management Contracts in Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties would conduct RIL operations in the landscape surrounding GFNP.
7	C2.1	Community-Based NRM & Livelihoods	Matching grant scheme-Window 1: Early-stage household and community IGAs Matching grant	Physical investments at household and community level: NTFP processing and drying facilities (small sheds or covered structures), aggregation points, small equipment for beekeeping, sustainable harvesting, and NTFP valorization. Individual subproject footprint. Distributed across CFMA areas and PA buffer	Processing infrastructure grant investments in the GFNP and LPMR buffer zones



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			<p>scheme-Window 2: Mature CFMA-based MSME investments</p>	<p>zones.</p> <p>Processing equipment, storage structures, and market-integration infrastructure for more mature enterprises. Subproject footprint variable to be determined through individual subproject screening. Investments may include small, covered processing sheds, equipment sheds, and access tracks at community level</p>	
8	C2.2	Forest Restoration & Timber Production	<p>Establishment of 3,375 ha Community Woodlots</p>	<p>Land-based physical works: site preparation, land clearing of degraded areas, planting, and maintenance across approximately 3,375 ha. Distributed across CFMA areas in priority counties. Involves soil disturbance, planting of tree species, and potential minor access track establishment</p>	<p>Surrounding landscape/buffer zone of Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties</p>
9	C2.2	Forest Restoration & Timber Production	<p>Rehabilitation of 9,741 ha of degraded tree plantations (rubber, cocoa, oil palm)</p>	<p>Land-based physical works on existing degraded plantation areas: clearing of overgrown vegetation, soil preparation, replanting, and silvicultural maintenance across approximately 9,741 ha. Located across multiple counties.</p>	<p>Surrounding landscape/buffer zone of Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties.</p> <p>Foya, Lofa County</p>
10	C2.2	Forest Restoration & Timber Production	<p>Restoration of about 6,000 ha Degraded Forests and Lands</p>	<p>Land-based physical works: assisted natural regeneration, enrichment planting, and active restoration across approximately 6,000 ha in priority areas including Foya (Lofa County) and areas surrounding Gola Forest National Park (Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties).</p>	<p>Surrounding landscape/buffer zone of Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties</p>



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				Involves soil disturbance, planting, and invasive species management.	
1 1	C2.2	Forest Restoration & Timber Production	Reduced-impact logging (RIL) within clustered CFMAs	RIL harvesting operations- skid trail construction, log landing preparation, post-harvest site rehabilitation	Surrounding landscape and buffer zone in GFNP in Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties including Foya (Lofa County)
	C2.3	Improved Management of Selected PAs	Staff Offices and Housing (GFNP and LPMR)	Construction or rehabilitation of staff offices and staff housing located at both GFNP and LPMR.	Within GFNP and LPMR in Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu county
1 3	C2.3	Improved Management of Selected PAs	PA boundary demarcation (GFNP and LPMR)	Physical boundary demarcation, along the park perimeter, placement of permanent markers and installation of signage at strategic entry points along and within PA boundaries of GFNP and LPMR. Activity along boundary corridors within existing PA legal boundaries.	Park perimeter and within PA boundaries of GFNP and LPMR in Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu county
1 4	C2.3	Improved Management of Selected PAs	Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Roads and Patrol Tracks (GFNP and LPMR)	Rehabilitation of internal patrol tracks within the park and access roads connecting surrounding communities to the GFNP. Rehabilitation of patrol tracks within the LPMR	Within GFNP and LPMR in Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu county
1 5	C2.3	Improved Management of Selected PAs	Community-based monitoring systems and capacity reinforcement	equipment including vehicles, GPS, radio equipment, and disruptive technology for monitoring animal populations technology.	Deployed to field offices at GFNP and LPMR in Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu county



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16	C2.3	Improved Management of Selected PAs	Ecotourism PPP (SOP 1)- Preparatory/Design Works (No Physical Construction);	SOP1: No civil work - feasibility assessment, market demand analysis, and ecotourism strategy preparation-- Informs SOP2	
	C2.3	Improved Management of Selected PAs	SOP2: Conditional Physical Works (Subject to Demonstrated Market Demand)	<p>Ec lodge construction</p> <p>Visitor interpretation centers</p> <p>Tourist trail network tourism development sites</p> <p>Private sector concession infrastructure linked to PPP agreements</p>	GFNP and/or LPMR in Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu county
17	C2.3	Improved Management of Selected PAs	Alternative livelihood support for PA buffer zone communities	Physical investments in PA buffer zones: NTFP processing facilities, beekeeping equipment, agroforestry plot establishment, and small storage structures.	communities buffer zones GFNP and LPMR in Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu county
18	C3.1	Support for Forestry Entrepreneurs	Forestry Enterprise Readiness and Derisking Program - Results-based financing (capital expenditure grants)	procurement of productivity-enhancing equipment, small processing infrastructure, and technology systems. Physical footprint at individual MSME enterprise premises. May include minor construction of equipment sheds, storage, or processing space upgrades	
19	C3.2	Skills Development for Forestry Jobs	Rehabilitation of FTI facilities and establishment of Service Excellence Center (SEC)	Civil works: rehabilitation of existing FTI buildings structural repairs, electrical and plumbing upgrades, roofing, internal fittings. Procurement and installation of industry-standard equipment- investment-ready activities from pre-feasibility and feasibility studies under the PPP projects, design-build-operate-transfer (DBOT) models for sawmill, roads and ports infrastructure. Physical footprint confined to existing FTI campus. Potential for asbestos-containing	



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				materials in existing structures	
20	C3.3	Catalyzing Private Investment	PPP Project Preparation Facility: Pre-feasibility and feasibility studies (DBOT sawmills, roads, ports)	No civil works at this stage. Analytical and advisory services: economic, financial, commercial, environmental, and social feasibility studies; transaction advisory; legal structuring of contracts. Outputs are bankable documents.	
21	C3.3	Catalyzing Private Investment	PPP Infrastructure Development- DBOT sawmills, roads, and port infrastructure (conditional on feasibility outcomes)	High-risk civil works (if advanced under SOP2): construction of DBOT sawmill facilities, improvement of road corridors, and port infrastructure development at Greenville (Sinoe County) and Grand Bassa. Large physical footprint - specific site and scale determined through feasibility studies.	



3 Policy, Legal and Institutional framework

3.1 Relevant national legislation

The relevant Liberian environmental and other statutory laws and regulations to guide the implementation and monitoring of the LIFE-P include the following:

- The Constitution of the Republic Of Liberia, 1986;
- The Forestry Development Authority (FDA) Act, 1976;
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Act, 2002;
- Land Commission Act, 2010;
- National Forestry Reform Law, 2006;
- Environment Protection and Management Law, 2003;
- Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) Act, 2009;
- Public Procurement and Concessions Act, 2010;
- Community Rights Law (with respect to Forest Lands), 2009; and
- Minerals and Mining Law, 2000.
- Draft Wildlife Conservation and Protected Areas Management Act (2012)
- Protected Areas Management Act (2013)
- Liberia Land Rights Act (2018)
- National Wildlife Conservation and Protected Area Management Act (2016)

The Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, 1986

The Constitution of Liberia supports sustainable management of the natural resources. Article 7 of Chapter 11 states “The Republic shall, consistent with the principles of individual freedom and social justice enshrined in the constitution, manage the natural economy and natural resources of Liberia in such manner as shall ensure maximum possible participation of Liberian citizens under conditions of equality as to advance the general welfare of the Liberian people and the economic development of Liberia”. The constitution therefore provides for the protection of the natural resources including biological diversity. It also gives the right to every Liberian to fully participate in management of these resources.

The Forestry Development Authority (FDA) Act, 1976 (As Amended)

The Act (as amended) creates the Forestry Development Authority as a corporate body pursuant to the Public Authorities Law. The primary objectives of the Authority are as follows:

- Establish a permanent forest estate made up of reserved areas upon which scientific forestry will be practiced;
- Devote all publicly owned forest lands to their most productive use for the permanent good of the whole people considering both direct and indirect values;
- Stop needless waste and destruction of the forest and associated natural resources and bring about the profitable harvesting of all forest products while assuring that supplies of these products are perpetuated;
- Correlate forestry to all other land use and adjust the forest economy to the overall national economy;



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- Conduct essential research in conservation of forest and pattern action programs upon the results of such research;
- Give training in the practice of forestry; offer technical assistance to all those engaged in forestry activities; and spread knowledge of forestry and the acceptance of conservation of natural resources throughout;
- Conserve recreational and wildlife resources of the country concurrently with the development of forestry program.

They give the FDA the power to establish Government Forest Reserves, Native Authority Forest Reserves, Communal Forests and National Parks.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Act, 2003

The Act creates the Agency as the principal authority in Liberia for the management of the environment and shall co-ordinate, monitor, supervise and consult with relevant stakeholders on all activities in the protection of the environment and sustainable use of natural resources. The functions of the agency include to:

- Review project documents for donor-sponsored environment-related projects to ensure and/or recommend to the negotiating ministry or agency, the inclusion of strategies and activities for capacity building of nationals;
- Identify projects, activities, policies, and programs for which environmental impact assessment must be conducted under this Act;
- Build the capacity of line Ministries, authorities and organizations through the exchange of data and information, and to render advice, technical support and training in environment and national resource management so as to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively;
- Ensure the preservation and promotion of important historic, cultural and spiritual values of natural resources heritage and, in consultation with indigenous authority, enhance indigenous methods for effective natural resource management;
- Promote public awareness through public participation in decision making and formal and non-formal education about the protection and sustainable management of the environment, and to allow at minimal or no costs, access to environmental information and records made in connection with this Act;
- Establish environmental criteria, guidelines, specifications and standards for production processes and the sustainable use of natural resources for the health and welfare of the present generation, and in order to prevent environmental degradation for the welfare of the future generations;
- Review and approve environmental impact statements and environmental impact assessment submitted in accordance with this Act;

The act further recognizes that all sectors of the population has the duty to protect the environment, and the Agency may in the performance of its functions under subsection (1) and by published notice delegate any of its functions to a Ministry, Agency, Organization, a Technical Committee or any public officer.

Land Commission Act, 2010



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Land Commission Act, 2010 establishes the Land Commission with a five year mandate to propose, advocate and coordinate reforms of land policy, laws and programs in Liberia. The LC has no adjudicatory or implementation powers. The mandate of the LC extends to all land and land based natural resources, including both urban and rural land, private and public land and land devoted to residential, agricultural, industrial, commercial, forestry, conservation and any other purposes.

The following are objectives to be accomplished within the five-year life span of the Commission.

- Equitable and productive access to the nation’s land, both public and private;
- Security of tenure in land and the rule of law with respect to landholdings and dealings in land;
- Effective land administration and management; and
- Investment in and development of the nation’s land resources.

National Forestry Reform Law, 2006

National Forest Reform Law (NFRL 2006) is consistent with the Forest Policy and provides the legal framework needed to achieve the policy goal of sustainable forest management through balanced and integrated development. It proposes and supports the granting of user and management rights to local communities, as well as recognition that local communities must equitably participate in and benefit from sustainable management of forests. Section 3.1 of NFRL “Objectives” includes social and environmental aspects that charge FDA with: a) “sustainable management of the Republic’s forest land, conservation of the Republic’s forest resources, protection of the Republic’s environment, and sustainable development of the Republic’s economy, with the participation of and for the benefit of all Liberians, and to contribute to poverty alleviation in the nation,” and b) “To protect the environment ... take a precautionary approach to ... threats of serious or irreversible damage to the environment, ...[and] not rely on a lack of full scientific certainty as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.”

Environmental Protection and Management Law, 2003

The law forms the legal framework for the sustainable development, management and protection of the environment and natural resources by the Environmental Protection Agency in partnership with relevant ministries, autonomous agencies and organizations as well as in a close and responsive relationship with the people of Liberia. It also provides high quality information and advice on the state of the environment and matters connected therewith.

The Law is intended as a comprehensive coordinating legal framework, to be implemented through collaboration between the Environment Protection Agency and line ministries and agencies (in the case of forest resources, the FDA), local authorities and the public. It provides the framework for formulation, reviewing, updating and harmonizing all environment-related sectoral laws. Further, the Law anticipates stand-alone, sector-specific statutes, rules and regulations to facilitate implementation. It also addresses a wide range of environmental issues including environmental impact assessment, audit and monitoring; environmental quality standards; pollution control and licensing; guidelines and standards for the management of the environment and natural resources; protection of biodiversity, national heritage and the ozone layer; inspection, analysis and records; international obligations; information, access, education and public awareness; and offences.



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Part III of the 2003 Law establishes a fairly comprehensive framework for EIA, including procedures and substantive standards for the approval and rejection of projects. It also provides for public participation and procedures for appeals against EPA decisions.

Community Rights Law (with Respect to Forest Lands), 2009

The Community Rights Law (CRL) with respect to forest lands gives statutory recognition to customary ownership of both forests and forest resources within community lands, provides for the management of community forests by community forest management bodies, and requires prior informed consent of the community for concessions to be made on community lands. The Community Forestry Management Body is appointed by the Community Assembly which is composed of county legislators and represents the highest authority over a community's forest resources. The Law amends contradictory provisions of the National Forestry Reform Law (which implies that those resources are owned by the state) and establishes precedence over it. Executive Order 66 of January 2015 extends the tenure of the Land Commission by one additional year, ending January 9, 2016. The order further requires that during the period of the extension, the Commission will work along other Government agencies to complete draft legislation and activities to facilitate the transition into a new land agency.

Guiding principles of Community Rights Law (2009) establish that all forest resources in Liberia, regardless of land proprietorship, shall be regulated by the Authority for the benefit of the people, except forest resources located in community forests and forest resources that have been developed on private or deeded land through artificial regeneration. Any decision, agreement, or activity affecting the status or use of community forest resources shall not proceed without the prior, free, informed consent of that said community.

Sections 6.1–6.4 of Chapter 6 of Community Rights Law 2009 govern "Commercial Use of Community Forest Resources," requiring that communities must give their consent before any commercial contracts are signed with third-party logging companies.

Liberia Land Rights Act (LRA), 2018

The Liberia Land Rights Act (LRA) 2018 establishes legal recognition of land rights, particularly for communities, and defines four categories of land ownership with clear rules for acquisition, use, and transfer. The four categories include :

- i. Public Land: it refers basically to land acquired by the government through purchase, escheat, or confiscation that is not currently being used and is neither private nor customary land. This land can be sold or leased to eligible persons through a public competitive bidding process.
- ii. Government Land: It's land owned and used by the government for its public edifices including offices, military bases, public schools, hospitals, and infrastructure.
- iii. Customary Land: concerns land acquired and owned by a community based on long-standing customary practices and norms. The communal property is formally recognized with equal legal protection to private land. Communities have the right to manage, use, and transfer portions of this land, subject to specific restrictions.
- iv. Private Land: refers to land owned by individuals, corporations, or institutions. For this category, the ownership is restricted to Liberian citizens, citizen-owned businesses, and benevolent institutions. It is alienable, descendible, and devisable.



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The most significant achievement of the LRA is the formal recognition of Customary Land. The Act stipulates that customary land ownership arises by operation of law based on a proven, long-standing relationship between a community and the land, typically established by at least 50 years of continuous use or occupancy. To manage these lands, the Act mandates the creation of a Community Land Development and Management Committee (CLDMC). The CLDMC is responsible for the day-to-day administration of customary land and must include equal representation of men, women, and youth.

This governance structure ensures that decision-making is inclusive and democratic. The Act also places specific restrictions on the alienation of Customary Land. While communities can lease land for up to 50 years, the outright sale of Customary Land to private persons is strictly prohibited for a period of 50 years following the effective date of the Act. However, community members are entitled to automatic ownership in fee simple of the residential areas they occupied at the time the Act was passed.

The LRA encourages to obtain the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of the affected local communities if the project restricts access to customary lands, then the project. Article 33 stipulates that *“Save for Concessions, contracts, permits and other rights previously granted in Customary Land by the Government prior to the Effective Date of this Act, and subject to the Government’s Constitutional right to extract all Mineral Resources found below the surface of the Land, any interference with or use of the surface of customary Land require the Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) of the Community”*.

Article 42 of the same Law goes on to say *“A portion of Customary Land may be set aside as a Protected Area by the Government (i) at the request of the Community; or (ii) upon the request of the Government following good faith negotiations. Every Protected Area in a Customary Land shall be and remains owned by the Community and conserved and managed by the Community for the benefit of the Community and all Liberians. Protected Areas within Customary Lands may include forest, wetlands, major water sources and land set aside by a Community for ecotourism.*

The Land Rights Act is widely praised for its progressive stance on gender equality. It explicitly guarantees that all community members, regardless of gender, have equal rights to the use and management of Customary Land. Furthermore, the requirement that women have equal representation on the CLDMC ensures that women have a direct voice in land governance and resource allocation. This represents a significant departure from traditional patriarchal land tenure systems that often marginalized women.

National Wildlife Conservation and Protected Area Management Act (2016)

The objectives of this Act are to:

- Provide, within the framework of national legislation, including the National Environmental Protection and Management Act and the Forestry Reform Law 2006, for the establishment of conservation areas and the management of wildlife;
- Provide for the protection of wildlife and wildlife management throughout the Republic
- Provide for co-operative governance in the establishment of conservation areas and management of wildlife;
- Effect a national system of conservation areas in Liberia as part of a strategy to manage and conserve its biological diversity;
- Provide for a representative network of conservation areas on state land, private land and community lands;



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- Promote sustainable utilization of conservation areas for the benefit of people, in a manner that would preserve the ecological character of such areas;
- Promote participation of local communities in the management of conservation areas and wildlife, where appropriate; and
- Facilitate an integrated management of conservation and wildlife.

The Act designates the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) as the primary body responsible for its implementation. Its functions include promoting biodiversity conservation, sustainable management of wildlife and conservation areas, developing wildlife management policies, and enforcing international conservation conventions like CITES. The FDA is also responsible for recommending areas to be declared as wildlife management and conservation areas, developing management plans, and controlling trade in wildlife and their specimens.

The Act defines various categories of protected areas, including National Parks, Nature Reserves, Game Reserves, and Community Wildlife Management Areas. It outlines processes for their establishment, demarcation, and management, requiring stakeholder consultation and legislative action for certain categories.

In areas designated as protected areas, this requirement for FPIC applies. The National Wildlife Conservation and Protected Area Management Act (2016). Section 5.4 of this law requires that the establishment of any new protected area must be subject to the Indication of prior, free, informed consent of the community where Community Forest Lands are affected.

Section 5.4.1 stipulates that the Authority, while taking the rights of forest communities and private landowners into account, shall establish a Protected Area Network, together with corridors and incorporating existing national forests and community forest lands with consent of the community, to cover at least 30 percent of the existing forested area of Liberia, representing about 1.5 million hectares

The National Wildlife Conservation and Protected Area Management Act (2016) introduce the concept of "cooperative governance" between the state and local communities, ensuring that communities participate in decision-making regarding wildlife and conservation areas on their land. **National guidelines on community consultation and Free, Prior, Informed Consent (FPIC) (2019)**

Liberia developed dedicated National FPIC Guidelines in 2019, spearheaded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and supported under the Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP). These guidelines are the most explicit operationalization of FPIC in Liberian policy, providing: A standardized definition of FPIC aligned with international standards; Detailed procedural requirements for obtaining FPIC in the context of forestry and land-based investments; Guidance on culturally appropriate consultation formats and languages; Requirements for documenting community consent decisions.

The National FPIC Guidelines are not yet enacted as legislation but serve as the primary operational reference for FPIC implementation in World Bank-financed forestry projects in Liberia, including LiFE-P.

3.2 Relevant Forestry Regulations and Guidelines

Guidelines for Forest Management Planning in Liberia (2007)

Guidelines for Forest Management Planning in Liberia (2007) provide instructions to help foresters and logging companies prepare the forest management plans required under the Forest Management



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Contracts (FMC), Timber Sales Contracts (TSC), or other FDA commercial contracts, including commercial logging in community forests.

FDA Ten Core Regulations (2007)

FDA Ten Core Regulations (2007) were essential to resuming commercial logging in Liberia. The 10 regulations are as follows: Public Participation; Forest Land Use Planning; Pre-qualification; Tender, Award and Administration; Pre-Felling Operations; Benefits Sharing; Forest Fees; Chain of Custody; Penalties; and, Rights of Private Land Holder.

Code of Forest Harvesting Practices (2007)

Code of Forest Harvesting Practices (2007) provides guidelines to help foresters and logging companies select practices to be followed when carrying out harvesting operations under FMCs and TSCs.

Regulation on the Commercial and Sustainable Extraction of Non-Timber Forest Products, FDA

Regulation No. 111-08 (2009)

The regulation provides guidelines for the extraction of non-timber forest products in Liberia. In the provision of these guidelines the FDA aims to:

- Act as trustee of the Republic's Forest Resource, in a professional, transparent, and non-discriminatory manner, without personal interest or aim of self-enrichment.
- Provide social and economic livelihoods, cultural and religious benefits for forest-based communities and Liberia's populace in general.
- Assure sustainable development and conservation of the forest and its genetic resources for the present and the future generation.

CRL Regulations (2017)

These regulations provide detailed, step-by-step procedures for the implementation of the 2009 Community Rights Law, specifically outlining how communities can acquire and manage community forest rights. By establishing rules and procedures, the Amended CRL Regulation has the objective of (i) facilitating implementation of the CRL, (ii) clarifying rights, roles and duties of the FDA and communities engaged in community forestry programs, (iii) establishing rules and procedures to enable communities to exercise ownership of community forests, and to access, manage, use and benefit from the forest resources, and (iv) ensuring sustainable management of forest resources within community forests.

The Amended CRL Regulation requires conformity of all forestry programs managed by communities to the NFRL, CRL, statutes of Liberia, international conventions and treaties ratified by Liberia and Regulations and policies adopted by the FDA. It provides procedures for approval of an Authorized Forest Community and for executing and terminating Community Forest Management Agreements. It further sets up the governance structures of Authorized Community Forests, including roles, responsibilities, elections, tenures, meetings, etc. of the Community Assembly (the highest decision-making body of the Authorized Forest Community) and the Community Forest Management Body (the manager of the day-to-day activities pertaining to the community forest).

The Amended CRL Regulation then details the kinds of commercial contracts that an Authorized Forest Community may negotiate and guidelines for fiscal and other benefits derived from community forests.



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Chain Saw Milling Regulation # 115-11, 2012

The purpose of this Regulation is to recognize and regulate chain saw milling in order to optimize its positive benefits and also mitigate its negative effects. The Regulation therefore establishes a structured process by which authorization for chain saw milling is requested, reviewed, and granted or denied. The object is to ensure that chain saw milling is carried out in an environmentally appropriate manner and through procedures and practices that promote the mutual interests of chain sawyers, communities and sustainable forest management in the Republic of Liberia.

3.3 Relevant national policies and strategies

The relevant national policies related to the proposed project include the following:

- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, 2004;
- National Forestry Policy and Implementation Strategy, 2006;
- National Forest Management Strategy, 2007;
- Land Rights Policy, 2013;
- Land Administration Policy, 2015;
- Guidelines for Forest Management Planning in Liberia (2007);
- National Energy Policy, 2009;
- National Environmental Policy, 2003; and
- National Environmental and Occupational Health Policy, 2010.
- Draft Revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, (2015)
- Liberia Protected Areas Network Strategic Plan (2008)
- Liberia land right Act implementation strategy (2018)

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, 2004

The overall goal of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2004) is to sustainably use biodiversity on a long-term basis to meet the needs of both the present and future generations. The plan comprises two components: the vision statement, the guiding principles, the goals and objectives on one hand; and the Actions for Biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing on the other. The goals and objectives were developed in consonance with the guiding principles. Six goals are developed upon which all the actions are based. Priority areas for immediate actions are Land Rehabilitation, Forestry Sector Reform, Timber Management, Poverty Alleviation, Food Security, Addressing Bushmeat Crisis, Restoration of Electricity, Environmental Impact Assessment, Addressing Coastal Erosion and Mangrove Destruction and Providing Alternative Sources of Protein.

National Forestry Policy and Implementation Strategy, 2006

The policy sets sustainable forest management as an overriding goal and explicitly recognizes the need to move from a “one-sector” approach of sustained timber yields to a multi-sectoral approach where inter-sectoral coordination, policy integration, and effective participation and interaction of forest-sector stakeholders and their institutions are essential. The aim of the policy is to move away from the country’s historic focus on commercial aspects of forestry and optimize benefits for all Liberians by conserving and sustainably managing all forest areas to ensure and maintain environmental stability, in



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keeping with Liberia’s commitments under international agreements and conventions. The policy seeks to integrate the “three Cs”—commercial, community, and conservation interests—in forest management

National Forest Management Strategy, 2007

National Forest Management Strategy (2007) summarizes the FDA philosophy for managing the national forest endowment and outlines the FDA approach to forest management, its long-term end-states, or goals, and the authority’s major management objectives. Its primary objective is to allocate and manage Liberia’s remaining 4.59 million hectares of forest as either forest management contract areas, timber sales contract areas, community management areas, or protected areas. The strategy allocates these forest lands into the four land-use categories of Multiple Sustainable Use Management, Timber Sales Contracts, Community Management, and Protected Area Network.

Land Rights Policy, 2013

This Land Rights Policy concerns four land rights categories (Public Land, Government Land, Customary Land, and Private Land), and a cross-cutting sub-category called Protected Areas, which must be conserved for the benefit of all Liberians. For Public Land and Government Land, the Policy sets forth critical policy recommendations regarding: how the Government transfers such land, and how the Government acquires land, especially through the exercise of eminent domain (i.e. forced acquisition). With respect to the new category of Customary Land, there are several significant recommendations: Customary Land and Private Land are equally protected; and communities will self-define, be issued a deed, establish a legal entity, and strengthen their governance arrangements to make them fully representative and accountable. The Government also undertakes to support communities in implementing these recommendations. Finally, several Private Land issues are detailed, which include loss of ownership, leases, easements, and adverse possession.

Land Administration Policy, 2015 (Draft)

The Land Administration policy presents a framework for land administration in Liberia. It focuses on the main features of good land administration and those pertaining to the identification, ownership, use, and valuation of land, including information on all lands, as well as the identification of land and the determination of rights to the land, recording of those rights, valuation of land and the management of government and public land, coordination of land use planning, the establishment of the institutional framework at central and local government levels to carry out this mandate, and the broader issues of governance, policy development, and legislative and regulatory reform necessary to attain government’s objectives, including the formation of dedicated land agency (Lands Authority), which will replace the Lands Commission and consolidate the land functions of several ministries and agencies with a dedicated focus on land, as well as implement the policy recommendations contained in the Land Administration Policy.

National Energy Policy, 2009

The objective of the National Energy Policy (2009) is “to ensure availability of modern energy services for all Liberians, in both the urban and rural areas.” The policy recognizes access to modern energy services as an essential requirement for sustaining livelihoods and propelling communities living at subsistence levels to higher levels of prosperity. Estimates suggest that over 95% of the population relies on



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firewood, charcoal, and palm oil for their energy needs, which as noted above is one of the key drivers of deforestation.

National Environmental Policy, 2003

The overall policy goal is to ensure long-term economic prosperity of Liberia through sustainable social and economic development which enhances environmental quality and resource productivity on a long-term basis that meets the requirements of the present generation without endangering the potential of future generations to meet their own needs. The policy recognizes the need for maintaining ecosystems and ecological processes essential for the functioning of the biosphere; ensuring sound management of the natural resources and the environment; adequately protecting human, flora, fauna, their biological communities and habitats against harmful impacts, and to preserve biological diversity; integrate environmental considerations in sector and socio-economic planning at all levels; throughout the nation; and seeking common solutions to environmental problems at regional and international levels.

Liberia land right Act implementation strategy, 2018

The core Objectives of the Strategy include:

- To provide communities with formal, deeded ownership of their customary land.
- To establish and empower community-level land governance structures (CLDMCs).
- To resolve inter-community and intra-community land disputes through formal and alternative mechanisms.
- To ensure women, youth, and marginalized groups have equal rights to own, use, and manage land.

The strategy centers on a standardized, participatory process for communities to secure their land rights describe as follow:

- Community Self-Identification (CSI): The community formally identifies itself as a land-owning entity and applies to the LLA.
- Participatory Mapping & Boundary Harmonization: Communities map their land and reach agreements with neighboring communities on boundaries.
- Governance Strengthening: The community establishes a Community Land Development Management Committee (CLDMC) and drafts by-laws.
- Formal Registration & Deeding: The LLA conducts a confirmatory survey and issues a formal deed to the community.

The Implementation Strategy for the Land Rights Act in Liberia identifies key stakeholders whose roles and responsibilities within the process are clearly defined

- Liberia Land Authority (LLA): It's the primary regulatory body responsible for oversight, confirmatory surveys, and the issuance of deeds.
- CLDMCs: Corresponds to the community-level executive body responsible for the day-to-day management of the land.
- Civil Society Organizations (CSOs): It play a critical role as "Technical Service Providers," facilitating the CSI and mapping processes in remote areas.



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- Development Partners: their main involvement concern provision of financial and technical resources required to scale up formalization across Liberia's 15 counties.

3.4 Relevant World Bank Standards

Environmental and Social Standard ESS 5: Land Acquisition, Land-Use Restrictions, and Involuntary Resettlement

For projects financed by the World Bank, ESS 5: Land Acquisition, Land Use Restrictions, and Involuntary Resettlement will apply. The borrower is required to take all feasible measures to avoid or minimize the adverse impacts of land acquisition and land use restrictions associated with the project. The fundamental objective of ESS 5 is to ensure that, if physical or economic displacement cannot be avoided, displaced persons (as defined below) are compensated at the replacement cost of land and other assets, and that they receive the necessary assistance to improve or at least restore their income and standard of living.

The objectives of ESS 5 include:

- Preventing forced eviction;
- Improving the living conditions of poor or vulnerable people who are physically displaced by ensuring they have adequate housing, access to services and facilities, and the right to remain in their homes;
- Design and implement involuntary resettlement activities as a sustainable development program, providing sufficient investment resources to enable displaced persons to benefit directly from the project, depending on its nature;
- Ensure that information is widely disseminated, that meaningful consultations take place, and that affected people participate in an informed manner in the planning and implementation of resettlement activities.

ESS 5 also establishes key principles to be followed during the planning and implementation of resettlement. These principles consist of the following:

- All displaced persons are entitled to compensation for land and related property, or to other forms of equivalent assistance instead of compensation; the absence of legal rights to lost property does not preclude displaced persons from being entitled to such compensation or other forms of assistance;
- Compensation rates correspond to the amounts to be paid in full to the eligible owner(s) or user(s) of the lost property, without depreciation or deductions for costs, taxes, or other expenses;
- Compensation for land, structures, unharvested crops, and all other fixed assets must be paid prior to the date of impact or expropriation;
- When cultivated land must be acquired for project purposes, [name of implementing agency] shall endeavor to provide replacement land of equivalent productive value if this is the preference of the displaced persons;
- Community services and facilities will be repaired or restored if they are affected by the project;
- Displaced persons must be consulted during the preparation of the resettlement plan so that their preferences can be gathered and taken into account;



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- The resettlement plan (in both its draft and final versions) is made public in a manner accessible to displaced persons;
- A grievance management mechanism through which displaced persons can submit their claims shall be established and administered in a manner appropriate to their needs;
- Negotiated settlement procedures are acceptable as an alternative to legal expropriation if they are properly implemented and documented.
- Land donations are acceptable only if they are entirely voluntary and duly confirmed in writing;

3.5 Gaps between national laws/practices and ESS5 requirements

Table 3-1 presents the gaps between national laws/practices and ESS 5 requirements, along with bridging measures.



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Table 3-1: Comparison between national laws/practices and ESS5 requirements

Theme	Liberian Legislation	World Bank ESS5 Requirement	Gap identified	Bridging measure
Land Acquisition Procedure	The Land Rights Act (2018) and the Liberian Constitution provide for the acquisition of private land for public purposes, with property owners entitled to reasons for expropriation and a right to just compensation. However, there is no statutory requirement to prepare a comprehensive Resettlement Plan (RP).	ESS 5 requires a systematic land acquisition process supported by a comprehensive RP, prepared through meaningful consultation with affected persons, prior to any displacement or acquisition.	The Land Rights Act does not mandate the preparation of a RP as a precondition for land acquisition, creating a procedural gap relative to ESS5.	ESS 5 shall govern. All subprojects under LiFE-P that trigger land acquisition or restrictions on land use shall require preparation of site-specific RPs, cleared by the World Bank, prior to commencement of any civil works or activities causing displacement. (See Section D: RP Preparation Procedures)
Eligibility for Benefits	Liberian law recognizes the rights of persons with formal legal title or documentary evidence of ownership. Persons who are informally occupying land (squatters or encroachers) have no legal entitlement to compensation or resettlement assistance.	ESS5 recognizes three categories of eligible persons: (i) those with formal legal rights; (ii) those without formal title but with claims recognizable under national law (e.g., customary rights); and (iii) those with no recognizable legal claim (informal occupants/squatters), who are entitled to resettlement assistance and compensation for structures and investments, but not for land.	Liberian law does not extend eligibility to informal occupants or squatters, excluding a significant portion of forest-dependent communities who may lack formal documentation of their land rights.	ESS5 shall prevail. All three categories of affected persons, including informal occupants and those with customary rights, shall be eligible for resettlement assistance and compensation for non-land assets and investments in accordance with this RF. Cut-off dates shall be established and publicly disclosed to prevent influx of new claimants. (See Annex 2]: Eligibility Criteria and Entitlements)
Valuation of and Compensation for Losses	Article 24(a)(1) of the Liberian Constitution provides for prompt payment of "just compensation." However, neither the Constitution nor subsidiary legislation specifies	ESS5 requires compensation to be paid at full replacement cost defined as the market value of lost assets, plus transaction costs, without deduction for depreciation	Liberian law does not define or mandate full replacement cost as the valuation standard, and prevailing government valuation rates frequently fall below	Full replacement cost methodology shall be applied for all assets affected under LiFE-P subprojects, consistent with ESS5. Independent valuers shall be



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	the methodology for valuation, and government valuation schedules (e.g., from the Liberia Revenue Authority or Ministry of Agriculture) commonly apply depreciated market values that do not reflect full replacement cost.	sufficient to allow affected persons to replace what was lost and restore their living standards.	this threshold.	engaged where government rates are insufficient. Compensation shall cover land, structures, crops, trees, and other productive assets at replacement value without depreciation. (See Section H: Valuation Methods and Compensation Standards)
Timing of Compensation Payment	The Liberian Constitution requires "prompt" payment of just compensation but does not define when "prompt" payment must occur relative to the start of project activities or displacement.	ESS 5 is explicit that full compensation must be paid before displacement occurs, before land is acquired, and prior to commencement of any civil works or project activities that cause or contribute to displacement.	The absence of a defined timeline in Liberian law creates a risk that compensation may be delayed until after displacement, contrary to ESS 5.	Compensation for all affected assets, land, and livelihoods shall be paid in full prior to any displacement, land acquisition, or commencement of civil works under LiFE-P subprojects, in strict adherence to ESS5. (See Section F: Compensation Payment Procedures)
Resettlement Assistance and Livelihood Restoration	There is no provision in Liberian law for resettlement assistance during the transition period following displacement, nor for livelihood restoration support for economically displaced persons who lose access to income-generating resources or activities.	ESS 5 requires that displaced persons be provided with transitional support including moving allowances, temporary accommodation, and income restoration measures for a period sufficient to restore their livelihoods and living standards to pre-displacement levels or better.	Liberian law is entirely silent on transitional resettlement assistance and livelihood restoration, leaving economically displaced persons without a legal basis for support beyond compensation for lost assets.	ESS5 shall apply. LiFE-P RPs shall include livelihood restoration plans for economically displaced persons, incorporating transitional support, skills training, access to alternative income sources, and monitoring of restoration outcomes. Special attention shall be given to communities whose livelihoods depend on forest resources restricted under the project. (See Annex 3: Livelihood Restoration)



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				Measures)
Vulnerable Groups	No specific provision exists in Liberian law to identify or provide targeted assistance to vulnerable individuals or groups in the context of resettlement or displacement. The Decedents Estate Law (1972) and the Land Rights Act (2018) offer some protection to widows and women in customary marriages, but these are limited to inheritance and land rights, not resettlement assistance.	ESS 5 requires that particular attention and targeted assistance be provided to vulnerable groups including persons below the poverty line, the landless, the elderly, women, children, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities who may be disproportionately affected by displacement.	Liberian law lacks a comprehensive framework for identifying and protecting vulnerable groups during resettlement, beyond limited inheritance protections for women.	ESS5 shall prevail. A vulnerability assessment shall be conducted as part of the socioeconomic survey for each subproject RpP. Vulnerable households shall receive supplemental resettlement assistance, including enhanced livelihood support, priority access to replacement land or housing, and dedicated monitoring throughout implementation.
Information Disclosure and Consultation	Article 17 of the Liberian Constitution guarantees the right to assemble and consult. The Freedom of Information Act provides for public access to information. The Land Rights Act (2018) requires consultation prior to land acquisition. However, procedures for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) as relevant for customary communities are not formally established.	ESS 5 requires timely, relevant, and accessible disclosure of information and meaningful consultation with affected persons and communities throughout the resettlement process from planning through implementation and monitoring with particular attention to FPIC	Liberian law provides a general right to information and consultation but lacks defined procedural standards including FPIC procedures to ensure that customary forest communities are meaningfully engaged in decisions affecting their lands and livelihoods.	ESS 5 and ESS 10 (Stakeholder Engagement) shall govern disclosure and consultation under LiFE-P. FPIC-consistent consultation processes shall be applied for all subprojects affecting customary communities. Consultation shall be documented and ongoing from RP preparation through implementation and monitoring. (See Section L: Stakeholder Engagement and Consultation)
Grievance mechanism (GM)	Article 17 of the Liberian Constitution provides access to courts and formal legal channels for grievances. The formal judicial system is the primary recourse available. Liberian law does not require	ESS5 requires that affected persons have access to an accessible, transparent, and impartial project-level grievance mechanism that allows them to raise concerns and receive timely responses,	Liberian law does not require project-level GMs, leaving affected persons reliant on formal courts, which may be inaccessible, slow, and costly particularly for rural and forest-dependent	A multi-tiered, project-specific GM shall be established and operational prior to commencement of LiFE-P activities. The GM shall operate at community,



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	project-level grievance mechanisms for affected persons.	without prejudice to their right to pursue legal remedies.	communities.	district, county, and project levels, with documented procedures for registration, response, escalation, and resolution. The GM shall complement not replace Liberia's existing judicial system. (See Section K: Grievance mechanism)
Resettlement Planning and Mandatory RP Preparation	There is no Liberian law that mandates a project proponent to prepare a Resettlement Action Plan or equivalent instrument prior to displacing persons. The EPA's procedural guidelines (2017) reference compensation and broad stakeholder participation, but a RP is not a statutory requirement.	ESS 5 requires the preparation of a Resettlement Action Plan reviewed and cleared by the World Bank prior to implementation of any activities causing displacement. The RP must be disclosed publicly and implemented before any physical or economic displacement occurs.	The absence of a statutory RP preparation requirement in Liberian law means that without Bank oversight, displacement could proceed without the systematic planning, compensation, and monitoring processes required under ESS5.	Bank standards shall govern. RPs shall be prepared for all LiFE-P subprojects identified as causing physical or economic displacement, cleared by the World Bank and approved by the EPA, and publicly disclosed prior to implementation. No displacement shall occur before RP implementation is complete. (See Section C: RP Preparation and Approval)



3.6 Relevant international Convention

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

Liberia ratified the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity on 8 November 2000 with the realization that it is the best international instrument to address conservation of biological diversity and sustainable use of its components.

The Convention on Biological Diversity provides a comprehensive framework for stopping biodiversity loss. It is a carefully balanced, legally binding international treaty that commits Parties to the triple objective outlined below:

- The conservation of biological diversity;
- The sustainable use of its components; and
- The fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), 1992

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international environmental treaty negotiated at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), informally known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro from 3 to 14 June 1992. The objective of the treaty is to "stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system". With respect to national resource conservation, Article 4(1.d) of the convention requires all Parties to the conventions, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, to "Promote sustainable management, and promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, including biomass, forests and oceans as well as other terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems".

Liberia ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in November 2002 and implemented an 18-month National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) project in 2004. The national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory report of Liberia has been prepared as part of Liberia's Initial National Communication (INC), fulfilling its mandatory obligation as a non-Annex I party to the UNFCCC in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 1(a), and Article 12, paragraph 1(a) of the Convention.

3.7 Institutional Framework

Biodiversity protection and management does not only depend on strong environmental laws and regulations, supported by scientific information. More importantly, it also depends on their effective implementation and enforcement on the ground. Liberia has a number of government agencies, ministries and bureaus, along with municipal and state industry entities, whose mandate include natural resources management. Their efforts are complemented by a number of local and international NGOs, educational institutions and international financial organizations. The key government institutions and their responsibilities are indicated below.



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Forestry Development Authority (FDA)

FDA is a State Corporation with the mandate of ensuring the sustainable management and conservation of Liberia’s forest and related natural resources for the benefit of current and future generations. FDA Provides long and middle-range planning in the forestry sector as well as preparing forestry policy, law and administration; supervises of adherence to forest legislation and concession agreements; calculates and determines forestry fees; evaluates investment proposals, executes reforestation and forest research and training; monitors activities of timber companies and executes protected area programmes and administers wildlife and national parks.

Environment Protection Agency (EPA)

Principal authority for the management of the environment, and mandated to coordinate, monitor, supervise and consult with relevant stakeholders on all activities in the protection of the environment and sustainable use of natural resources; promotes environmental awareness and implementation of the national environmental policy and the environmental protection and management law; oversees the implementation of international environment related conventions.

Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministrie Plans, executes, administers, manages and supervises agriculture programs and provides extension services; trains local farmers in improved cultural practices, and supplies farm inputs to enhance food security.

Liberia Land Authority

The LLA, established by an Act of the National Legislature on October 6, 2016, as an autonomous agency of the Government with operational independence, subsumes land functions that were performed by several agencies of the Government, including the key land administration agencies – Department of Lands, Survey and Cartography of the former Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy (MLME), now the Ministry of Mines and Energy, the Deeds and Titles Registry of the Center for National Documents Records Agency (CNDRA), and functions of County Land Commissioners from the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The LLA’s mandate of the Authority is to develop policies on a continuous basis, undertake actions and implement programs in support of land governance, including land administration and management in Liberia.

Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA)

The MIA is responsible to administer the affairs of all Government functionaries ‘within local and urban areas of Liberia. The Ministry oversees the activities of local Government bodies such as the chiefdoms and clans; supervises all County Superintendents; guarded by the revised interior regulations of Liberia, which give the Ministry custodianship over all private and public properties within the territorial confines of the country.



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Local Government Authorities

The local government bodies are responsible for the overall development of the areas under their jurisdiction, and their functions include: to prepare and submit development plans and budgets to superior institutions for approval and implementation.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs has responsibility to administer the affairs of all Government functionaries ‘within local and urban areas of Liberia. The Ministry oversees the activities of local Government bodies such as the chiefdoms and clans; supervises all County Superintendents; guarded by the revised interior regulations of Liberia, which give the Ministry custodianship over all private and public properties within the territorial confines of the country.

Traditional Authorities

Traditional authorities encompass chiefs or traditional rulers. The traditional authorities are now largely the custodians of the traditions and customs of their subjects. Chiefs (or other traditional rulers) have important role as custodians of communal land and exercise traditional authority over people living within their areas.

NGOs/ Civil Society

There are numerous NGOs/Civil society groups both national and international in Liberia and can be found operating in all parts of the country in one way or the other. Within the forestry sector group alone, there are such groups as given below:

Table 3-2: List of Relevant NGOs

Institution	Functions and responsibilities
Action for Greater Harvest (AGRHA)	The Mission of AGRHA is to “Ensure Sustainable Food Security for Rural Liberian Households”. The vision is “A Liberia where rural Liberian households create sustainable food security for themselves”.
Association of Environmental Lawyers (Green Advocates)	Founded in 2001, Green Advocates is Liberia’s first and only public interest environmental law organization. It is dedicated to protecting the environment, advancing human rights protection and advocacy through sound environmental policies, and giving voice to rural, indigenous, and tribal peoples who have been denied the benefits of natural resource extraction from their tribal and ancestral lands.
Environmental Relief and Development Research Organization (ERADRO)	ERADRO promotes rural extension services to address health problems linked to environmental factors. Its activities include environmental research, community organization, public education on health and hygiene, and waste disposal programs in schools and



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	communities.
Society of Conservation of Nature of Liberia (SCNL)	Founded in 1986, SCNL is the oldest environmental NGO in Liberia. Its conservation projects include the creation and maintenance of protected areas, wildlife conservation, biomonitoring, and the use of socioeconomic surveys.
The Nature Compact (TNC)	The Nature Compact (TNC) is an environmental and natural resources management organization established by Liberian natural resource management, development, and environmental professionals with experiences cultivated from USAID, WORLD BANK (WB) and European Union (EU), Public and Private Sector interventions implemented in Liberia. TNC was established to provide technical assistance through partnerships to institutions, communities, and natural resource users on Natural Resource Management and Policy Advisory, Environmental Management, Awareness and Education, Biodiversity Conservation, Agroforestry and Climate-Smart Agriculture, Climate Change and Payment for Ecosystem Services, Sustainable Land Management, Research, and Evaluation.
Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF)	WCF aims to enhance the survival of the remaining wild chimpanzee populations and their habitat, the tropical rain forest, throughout tropical Africa. WCF focuses on education, conservation and research projects. In Liberia, WCF is working in Sapo National Park and Grebo Forest.
Partners in Development (PADEV)	PADEV was founded in August 2016 to contribute to national development. The current PADEV team worked extensively with the USAID funded Land Rights and Community Forestry Program (LRCFP), which supported the development of the Community Rights Law (CRL) with Respect to Forestland and its regulation, and helped to establish the initial five (5) Authorized Forest Communities (AFC).
Conservation International (CI)	CI was established in Liberia in 2002 with an initial mission to help establish a protected area network with funding from The Critical Ecosystem Partnership fund. CI - Liberia's focus is now primarily on the East Nimba Nature Reserve (ENNR) Protected Area which is located in northern Nimba county.
Fauna and Flora Internationa (FFI)	Fauna & Flora began working in Liberia in 1997 and played a crucial role, together with its partners, in re-

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	<p>establishing operations in the country’s oldest protected area – Sapo National Park – after years of civil conflict. Drawing on this work in Sapo, FFI have since worked closely with our partners to help identify and prioritise sites for a protected area network across Liberia and establish the foundations for sustainable forest and environmental management. FFI is also working extensively to improve collaboration between local, national, regional and private stakeholders across various sectors and national boundaries to reduce threats to biodiversity from subsistence pressures, illegal wildlife trade, oil palm operations and large-scale mining operations.</p>
<p>Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF)</p>	<p>WCF aims to enhance the survival of the remaining wild chimpanzee populations and their habitat, the tropical rain forest, throughout tropical Africa. WCF focuses on education, conservation and research projects. In Liberia, WCF is working in Sapo National Park and Grebo Forest.</p>



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4 Description of Project affected counties for SOP 1

The proposed project intervention areas for SOP1 will initially cover a manageable set of counties including Gbarpolu, Lofa, and Grand Cape Mount in the Northwest cluster, and Rivercess, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, and River Gee in the Central North and Southwest clusters.

This chapter presents descriptions of the socio-economic environment across these seven counties. The sociodemographic factors considered include demography, ethnicity, and livelihoods.

General overview of Liberia

The Republic of Liberia is located at latitudes 4°21' N and 8°33' N of the equator and longitudes 11°28'W and 7°32'W. Liberia covers 111,369km², and is located entirely within the humid Upper Guinean Forest Ecosystem in West Africa on the Atlantic Coast. The area of Liberia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) is 229,700 km², extending 370.4 km (200 nautical mi) seaward from shore (Figure 1).

Liberia's total population is approximately 5.25 million (2022 census). The country is located along the Atlantic Coast of West Africa, between Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea. The territory is divided into 15 administrative counties. The capital, and by far the largest town, is Monrovia, located in Montserrado County, with a population of one million. The rest of the country is mainly agricultural or forested, with other major towns having diverse populations of inhabitants.

According to Liberia's 2022 National Population and Housing Census, the seven SOP1 counties collectively host a population of approximately 1,367,959 people, with the Northwest Cluster comprising Gbarpolu (95,995), Lofa (367,376), and Grand Cape Mount (178,867) accounting for 642,238 persons, and the Central North and Southwest Cluster comprising Rivercess (90,819), Grand Bassa (293,557), Grand Gedeh (216,692), and River Gee (124,653) accounting for a further 725,721 persons. Based on Liberia's 2022 national census, population densities across the SOP1 counties are uniformly low, ranging from 9.9 persons per square kilometre in Gbarpolu to 37.0 persons per square kilometre in Grand Bassa.



4.1 Sociodemographic description of SOP1 counties

Lofa County

Lofa County, originally known as the Western Province, comprises four districts: Kolahun, Voinjama, Zorzor, and Swan Bopolu. It was established as a county in 1964 and was once the largest county in Liberia, with eleven administrative districts and a diverse population. However, five administrative districts were later removed from Lofa and designated as Gbarpolu County. The capital city of Lofa County, Voinjama, is home to six of Liberia’s ethnic groups: the Lorma (spoken by the majority 51%), Kissi (12%), Gbandi (spoken by 26%), Mende, Mandingo (3%), and Kpelle (6%). Currently, Lofa is the second largest county in Liberia, covering an area of 9,982.5 square kilometers, which is 7.8% of Liberia’s landmass (Lofa County Development Agenda, 2025-2029).

Lofa County, located at the northern tip of Liberia, has the fourth largest population of the fifteen counties. Based on Liberia’s 2022 National Population Census, Lofa has an estimated total population of 367,376. Males comprised 49.8% (183,100) and females constituted 50.2% (184,276) of the total population.

Gbarpolu

Gbarpolu County is located in the northwestern part of Liberia. It is previously known as Lower Lofa County and was established in 2003. It is the youngest of Liberia’s 15 counties. It was formed from a territory formerly known as Lower Lofa County.

The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Systems (LISGIS) reported a population of 95,995 in Gbarpolu County in 2022. Households have an average size of 4.3 persons, slightly lower than the national average of 4.4. The literacy rate was 43.3%, lower than the national average of 59.9%. The dependency ratio in the county is 1.20. Furthermore, households are mainly headed by men (70.1%), surpassing the national average of 64.4%. Elderly-headed households comprise approximately 8%, like



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the national average. The primary ethnic languages spoken in the county are Kpelle and Gola; however, people from other Liberian ethnic groups also reside in Gbarpolu County (Gbarpolu County Development Agenda, 2025-2029).

The county has a predominantly Christian population with a significant Muslim and Traditional Religion presence. These religious groups and traditional customs have coexisted peacefully throughout their common history.

Gbarpolu County is known for its rich natural resources, particularly its diamond and gold production. With its abundant resources, the County is well-equipped and poised to recover from its prolonged national isolation as well as the civil crisis.

Grand Cape Mount

Created in 1856, Grand Cape Mount County, located in Liberia, is a first-level administrative division with its capital being Robertsport. Spanning 5,160 square kilometers (km²), Grand Cape Mount is one of Liberia's 15 counties situated in the western region, in the south-eastern corner of Liberia and bordered in the Northeast by Gbarpolu County, in the East by Bomi and Lake Piso, in the South by the Atlantic Ocean and in the West by Sierra Leone.

In 2022, shortly before Liberia's 2023 General and Presidential Elections, LISGIS reported the population of Grand Cape Mount County to be 178,867. The gender distribution was 96,757 (54%) males and 82,110 (46%) females of the total population. The population census measured an average household size of 4, compared to the national figure of 4.4. Like the rest of Liberia, the local society was predominantly patriarchal, with 68.1% of households headed by men. Further distribution shows that the county's working population was 24.8%, slightly lower than the national average population of 27.8%. The 2022 census survey also measured the average literacy rate in Grand Cape Mount at 42.3%, which is lower than the national average of 59.9% (Grand Cape Mount County Development Agenda (2025-2029)).

Rivercess

Rivercess was the twelfth county to be established in Liberia. The county's name comes from the Cestos River, with the word "cestos" meaning "crawfish basket." The county's capital city is Cestos.

The estimated population of Rivercess County, according to the 2022 census, is 90,819, with an average household size of 4.3. The county has a higher dependency ratio than the national average at 1.43 compared to 1.37. Most households are headed by males, with only 28% headed by females. The Bassa-speaking people comprise 96% of the population, with other ethnic groups such as the Kpelle, Kru, Grebo, and others making up the remaining 4%.

Grand Bassa

Grand Bassa County, established in 1833, is one of the original counties that formed the Republic of Liberia. Its capital is Buchanan City, named after Thomas Buchanan, an American politician and diplomat and the first Governor of the Commonwealth of Liberia. Grand Bassa County played a crucial role in the early days of Liberia's formation. As one of the three original counties that first formed the Republic of Liberia in 1833, it was instrumental in establishing the foundation of the new nation. The county's capital, Buchanan City, became an important port for trade and commerce, facilitating the export of goods and resources.



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The estimated population of Grand Bassa County is 293,689, according to the LISGIS report of 2022. Most of the population, 204,083 (77%), live in rural areas, while 89,606 (23%) live in urban areas. Of the total population, 51% (150,280) are male, and 49% (143,409) are female. The average household size is 4.2 persons, slightly smaller than the average in other counties in southeastern Liberia and the national average. The dependency ratio in the county is 1.33, lower than the national ratio of 1.37. Like the rest of Liberia, households in Grand Bassa County are predominantly male headed at 71.5%. Most of the county's population (94%) is of the Bassa ethnic group. Other ethnic groups in the county include the Kpelle (5%), the Kissi (1%), and various smaller ethnic groups. Additionally, there are Kru people, who often come from neighbouring Sinoe County, and Fanti fishermen and traders among the population.

Grand Gedeh

Grand Gedeh County, in eastern Liberia, was established in 1964. Previously known as the Eastern Province under the 1847 Constitution of Liberia, its original capital was Tchien, now known as Zwedru.

Based on Liberia's 2022 national population census, Grand Gedeh has an estimated total population of 216,692, with 53% males and 47% females. The average household size in Grand Gedeh County was 5, which is higher than the national average. Most of the population in the county are Krahn speaking people, accounting for 96%. In addition to the Krahn-speaking people, there are other ethnic groups in the county, such as the Sapo (1%), the Bassa (1%), and the Kpelle (2%). All 16 of Liberia's tribes are believed to be represented in the county, albeit in small numbers.

4.2 Forests and Livelihoods

According to the Liberia CPF (2025), forests play an important role as a safety net for vulnerable and marginalized people, especially those living around forest areas. As of 2015, around 39,880 full time equivalent workers (of which about 35 percent women) were formally employed by the forestry sector.

The six counties targeted by LiFE-P namely Gbarpolu, Lofa, Rivercess, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, and River Gee collectively constitute two of the three target forest landscapes identified under the preceding LFSP: the Northwest (Gbarpolu, Lofa,) and the Southeast (Rivercess, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, River Gee) (LFSP ESMF, 2016). These counties hold some of Liberia's most significant remaining forest cover, ranging from 86 percent of land area in Grand Bassa to as high as 99 percent in Grand Gedeh and 98 percent in both Gbarpolu and River Gee (World Bank. 2013. Assessment of Key Governance Issues for REDD+ Implementation in Liberia). In the Western Cluster counties (Gbarpolu, Lofa), forest products contribute approximately 27 percent of total household income in forest-dependent communities, with dominant activities including farming, hunting, NTFP collection, pit sawing, and charcoal production (World Bank. 2020. People and Forest Interface: Contribution of Liberia's Forests to Household Incomes, Subsistence, and Resilience). In Lofa, Gbarpolu, specifically, rice production, animal rearing, and tree crop cultivation alongside artisanal chainsaw milling are the primary forest-linked livelihoods recommended by the communities (LSFP, PF, 2016). In the Eastern Cluster (Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Rivercess), forest products contribute approximately 32 percent of total household income, with timber extraction, NTFP harvesting (fruits, nuts, honey, medicinal plants, rattan), bushmeat, and fishing serving as critical livelihood pillars. World Bank. 2020. People and Forest Interface: Contribution of Liberia's Forests to Household Incomes, Subsistence, and Resilience). Industrial-scale timber production has historically concentrated in these landscapes, the southeast (Grand Bassa, Rivercess, Grand Gedeh, River Gee) and northwest (Lofa, Gbarpolu,) encompass the two main timber production regions in



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Liberia though severe governance failures, illegal logging, and the absence of benefit-sharing prior to 2003 have left communities with limited economic gains from commercial forestry (World Bank. 2013. Assessment of Key Governance Issues for REDD+ Implementation in Liberia). Grand Gedeh is experiencing particularly acute deforestation pressure, driven by cacao cultivation expansion, with community forests in the county facing increasing illegal encroachment (Global Forest Watch. 2020–2025 County-level Forest cover data for Liberia).

Clusters/16	Counties
Western Cluster	Bomi
	Gbarpolu
	Grand Cape Mount
	Lofa
Central Cluster	Bong
	Grand Bassa
	Margibi
	Rural parts of Montserrado
	Nimba
Eastern Cluster	Grand Gedeh
	Grand Kru
	Maryland
	River Cess
	River Gee
	Sinoe

Figure 4-1: Forest Cover in the Three Clusters (Source: People and Forests Interface: Contribution of Liberia's Forests to Household Incomes, Subsistence, and Resilience (2020))



5 Description of potential project restrictions of access and livelihoods and mitigation measures

This section discusses the impacts associated with restrictions on access to resources resulting from the LiFE project. However, since the project intervention areas have previously experienced projects that involved land acquisitions and restrictions on access to resources, it is important to first describe this context preceding the LiFE project in order to clearly understand how existing restrictions were tightened by LiFE project activities or which ones were newly introduced.

5.1 Pre-existing restrictions of access to natural resources

Experiences from the Liberia Forestry Sector Project (LFSP, P154114), which was implemented across overlapping forest landscapes and counties, including Lofa, Gbarpolu, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Rivercess, and River Gee, confirmed that restrictions on access to natural resources resulting from specific project component activities—particularly within and around protected areas and community forest boundaries—affected forest-dependent communities, including farming households, hunters, traditional healers, firewood collectors, and chainsaw operators. Table 5-1: below delineates which restrictions pre-exist the LiFE project and highlights the associated geographic scope and communities that were affected.

Table 5-1: Pre-existing Restriction of access and geographic scope

Counties	Pre-existing Restriction of access to resources encountered	Are there unresolved E&S issue? Yes/No	If yes, what measure will be taken to resolve the pending social issues?
Gbarpolu County	The experience of LFSP involved adjustments to the boundaries of several protected areas, notably the Gola Forest National Park in Gbaporlu County, which resulted in restrictions on access to agricultural areas for affected farmers and required transparent documentation and the restoration of livelihoods.	No. Among the mitigation measures that were implemented, key ones include i) sufficient consultations held with stakeholder communities and groups/ persons to provide amicable agreements over boundary demarcations; ii) Grievance mechanism prepared, implemented and followed by all parties	
Lofa	The experience gained through the LFSP, where land-use planning in the “Northwest Landscape”—where Lofa County is located—under Component 2 of the project, which focuses on strengthening the management of targeted forest landscapes, has led to adjustments in the boundaries of cultivated land and, consequently, restricted access. Compensation for the affected farmers was among the	No. Compensation for the affected farmers was among the mitigation measures	



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	mitigation measures		
Grand Cape Mount	Grand Cape Mount County contains communities adjacent to the Gola Forest National Park and was a focal area for both protected area management reinforcement as part of component 2 of LFSP. Reinforcement of Gola Forest National Park boundaries has restricted customary resource extraction.	No	
Rivercess Grand Gedeh River Gee Grand Kru	The LFSP project’s targeted interventions (particularly under components 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4) took place within three major “Target Forest Landscapes” (TFLs). Communities living in the Southeast TFL, encompassing Grand Gedeh, Sinoe, River Gee, Rivercess, and Grand Kru counties, have faced several restrictions on access to resources imposed by the improved Land Use Planning activities (Component 2.1) as well as strengthening Management of Protected Areas of Targeted Forest Landscapes (Components 2.2).	No	

5.2 Project-induced restrictions of access to resources

The first phase of LiFE-P (SOP1) will be implemented across seven counties organized into two geographic clusters: the Northwest Cluster comprising Gbarpolu, Lofa, and Grand Cape Mount; and the Central North and Southwest Cluster comprising Rivercess, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, and River Gee.

The LiFE-P subproject activities that are likely to require land acquisition and/or restrictions on land use are predominantly small to large-scale, dispersed, and community-based in nature infrastructure investments.

Subprojects in densely populated areas will have higher potential for physical displacement. Proposed project activities are distributed across rural and peri-urban forest landscapes in the SOP 1 counties and are more likely to generate widespread economic displacement through restrictions on land use and forest access and potentially physical relocation of communities or households.

The specific project activities with potential adverse social and environmental impact and interventions are listed below under Table 5-2.



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Table 5-2: Proposed project activities with potential impact on land acquisition and access restrictions

Project Subcomponent	Proposed activities	Legal/manage ment basis	Description of Impact on access restrictions and land acquisition	Geographic scope	Communities likely to be affected	Proposed mitigation measures
Component 2: Sustainable Forest Resource Development and Resilient Livelihoods						
Sub-component 2.1 - Community-based natural resource management (NRM) and Resilient Livelihoods	CFMA Establishment and Forest Management Planning	Community Rights Law Regulations (2011/2017) defines CFMA as a legal contract between the community and the FDA that grants the community the right to manage a specified forest area. Forest Management Planning is a mandatory requirement under National Forestry Reform Law (2006) and is a precondition for any	CFMA establishment covering thousands of hectares of customary land will likely affect farming households whose cultivation cycles include fallow land within the target zones. Activities will also restrict customary resource access and Community Forest Management Plans will impose zoning restrictions that constrain current farming and gathering practices.	Small to medium-scale, participatory activity in terms of physical footprint at any individual site, but its cumulative geographic reach covering multiple communities across seven counties	Multiple communities in seven counties Gbarpolu: A preliminary estimate of 200 to 500 economically displaced households across Gbarpolu is considered plausible under SOP1, primarily from land-use restrictions within CFMAs and the Gola Forest National Park buffer zone. Lofa: A preliminary estimate of 500 to 1,200 economically displaced households and a small number of physically displaced households (likely fewer than 50) is indicated for Lofa under SOP1 activities. Rivercess: A preliminary estimate of 150 to 400 economically	Develop a Grievance mechanism and implement it with participation of all parties Review GM complaints related to livelihood restrictions monthly; Conduct bi-annual independent assessment of livelihood restoration programs for communities affected by access restrictions. Use participatory, gender-



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		commercial or community-based forest activity.			displaced households under SOP1 Grand Gedeh: A preliminary estimate of 200 to 500 economically displaced households under SOP1. River Gee: A preliminary estimate of 150 to 400 economically displaced households is indicated for River Gee	sensitive planning methodologies; Conduct separate consultations with women, youth, and persons with disabilities; integrate women's priorities and constraints explicitly into CFMPs and financial sustainability plans
Sub-component 2.2 - Forest Restoration and Timber Production	Restoration of degraded lands using context-specific approaches, including the establishment of 3,375 ha of community woodlots, the rehabilitation of 9,741 ha of old tree plantations, and the restoration of 5,000 ha of degraded forests and lands across priority areas, including Foya (Lofa County) and areas surrounding Gola	National Forestry Reform Law (NFRL) of 2006 Mandates the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) to identify suitable sites for reforestation and afforestation (Section 8.2).	The conversion of these lands to managed woodlots, community plantations, or restored forest will result in the permanent or temporary loss of agricultural access for affected households. The displacement risk here is predominantly economic, loss of productive farmland, crops, and income with a limited risk of physical displacement for	While individual restoration sites are likely to be small to medium in scale, their aggregate extent is substantial.	Farming households practicing shifting cultivation, who rely on these areas as part of their regular land rotation cycles. Rivercess: A preliminary estimate of 150 to 400 economically displaced households under SOP1. Grand Gedeh: A preliminary estimate of 200 to 500	Delivery of alternative livelihoods, ensuring communities are not economically displaced before mitigation measures are in place Develop a Grievance mechanism and



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	<p>Forest National Park in Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu Counties.</p>	<p>It defines "afforestation" and "reforestation" and provides the legal basis for forest operations including plantation management.</p> <p>Environmental Protection and Management Law (EPML) of 2003 Provides for the protection and management of the environment, including land reclamation, rehabilitation of degraded lands, and the management of fragile ecosystems.</p> <p>Land Rights Act (LRA) of 2018 Recognizes and protects</p>	<p>households whose homesteads or permanent farms are situated within restoration boundaries. Degraded lands and abandoned plantations targeted for rehabilitation are frequently encroached upon by farming households practicing shifting cultivation, who rely on these areas as part of their regular land rotation cycles.</p>		<p>economically displaced households under SOP1.</p>	<p>implement it with participation of all parties</p> <p>Review GM complaints related to livelihood restrictions monthly;</p> <p>Conduct bi-annual independent assessment of livelihood restoration programs for communities affected by access restrictions.</p>
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		customary land rights, empowering communities to manage and restore their lands. It provides the legal basis for community-led restoration initiatives on customary land				
Sub-component 2.3 - Improved management of selected protected areas	Supporting the FDA in strengthening the management of Gola Forest National Park (GFNP) and Piso Lake Multiple use Reserve (LPMR) to enhance their ecological integrity and long term economic value. Key activities will include: (i) strengthening governance foundations through the development of participatory management plan for LPMR and the update of the GFNP management plan,	The National Wildlife Conservation and Protected Area Management Law is the most specific and comprehensive law for protected areas. It establishes the legal framework for the creation, management, and protection of wildlife.	The reinforcement of Gola Forest National Park and Piso Lake Multiple use Reserve boundaries and the tightening of access controls will restrict the customary use of forest resources including bush meat hunting, fishing, fuelwood collection, and small-scale farming by communities that have historically depended on these protected areas for subsistence in the park's buffer zone. Support provided to the management of these two protected areas could also exacerbate	Medium-scale, site-specific displacement risk, focused specifically on communities residing in or around buffer zones in the County of Grand Cape Mount.	Communities residing in or around buffer zones of Gola Forest National Park (Grand Cape Mount County) and Piso Lake Multiple Use Reserve in the County of Grand Cape Mount. A preliminary estimate of 400 to 900 economically displaced households and a moderate physical displacement risk contingent on infrastructure location is indicated for Grand Cape Mount	Complete environmental and social assessments for all planned tourism development sites before finalizing infrastructure specifications; Apply biodiversity offset principles where avoidance is not possible Establish a



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	<p>the establishment of monitoring systems combining FDA ranger patrols and community-based teams, the reinforcement of ranger capacities, and the preparation of an ecotourism strategy which includes revenue-sharing mechanisms for both PAs; (ii) supporting basic infrastructure investments, including the demarcation of protected area boundaries and the rehabilitation of trails, patrol tracks, and ranger camps to ensure a sustained field presence and effective enforcement;</p>	<p>The 2016 Act and the 2006 NFRL emphasize rights-based conservation through Co-Management Agreements allowing local communities to participate in the decision-making and day-to-day management of protected areas.</p> <p>The National Forestry Reform Law (2006) provides the broad mandate for the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) to establish and manage a "Protected Forest Area Network"</p>	<p>existing conflicts between local communities and park rangers. These conflicts are generally due to restrictions on access to forest resources imposed by the historical creation of protected areas. Furthermore, the very demarcation of the protected areas' boundaries is likely to lead to disputes over land boundaries. The development of eco-lodge infrastructure within the parks introduces a more localized physical displacement risk, depending on the specific sitting of facilities.</p>			<p>formal GFNP /LPMR Co-Management Committee.</p> <p>Develop a participatory GFNP/LPMR Zoning Plan</p> <p>Conduct participatory resource-use mapping across all buffer zone communities at GFNP (Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu) and LPMR (Grand Cape Mount)</p> <p>Review GM complaints related to livelihood restrictions monthly;</p> <p>Conduct bi-annual independent assessment of livelihood restoration programs for</p>
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						<p>communities affected by access restrictions.</p> <p>Provide enforcement actors with clear, written legal authority mapping permissible vs. restricted uses within LPMR</p> <p>Establish a resource access dispute resolution mechanism.</p> <p>Establish a cross-border incident reporting and response procedure</p>
Component 3: Creating enabling conditions for private investment in commercial forestry for more and better jobs						
Sub-component 3.2: Skills development for Forestry Job	Upgrading facilities at the Forestry Training Institute, to establish a Service Excellence Center	National Forestry Reform Law (NFRL) of 2006. Section 3.1 (Mandate of the FDA): The Forestry Development Authority	Physical displacement risk is minimal unless expansion beyond the current premises is required. Enabling Infrastructure such as Roads, Sawmills, and PPPs (Sub-component 3.3) constitutes the highest potential for	Rehabilitation and upgrading of existing facilities at the Forestry Training Institute is expected to remain largely within the existing institutional footprint. However, the scale of this risk will only be	Homesteads, farms, and informal businesses in its vicinity.	Ensure environmental and social screening is integrated into all pre-feasibility and feasibility study methodology



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		<p>(FDA) is mandated to manage, conserve, and develop Liberia's forest resources. This includes the responsibility to provide or facilitate the training of personnel required for effective forest management.</p>	<p>both physical and economic displacement among all LiFE-P components, and represents the greatest uncertainty given that infrastructure corridors, sawmill sites, and port facilities have not yet been sited or designed. Depending on the scale and routing of road infrastructure and the location of proposed DBOT sawmill facilities, this subcomponent could require the acquisition of agricultural land, customary land, or informally occupied land along infrastructure corridors, and may affect homesteads, farms, and informal businesses in its vicinity. While road construction in Liberia's forest counties typically traverses sparsely populated terrain, any traversal through village settlements or farming communities carries meaningful physical displacement risk.</p>	<p>determinable once feasibility studies and engineering designs are completed.</p>		<p>s; require ESIA for all PPP transactions prior to SOP2 investment decisions</p> <p>Develop Construction Environmental and Social Management Plans for all civil work</p>
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5.2.1 Potential Categories of affected persons

The communities likely to be affected are those residing within or immediately adjacent to targeted forest zones, CFMA boundaries, and protected area buffer zones, where customary land use and forest-based livelihoods due to small to medium-scale activities.

Based on the nature of LiFE-P's subproject activities and the socioeconomic profile of communities across the seven SOP1 counties, the following categories of project-affected persons (PAPs) are anticipated:

- Agricultural landowners with customary rights form the largest PAP category in all seven counties. These are households farming land under customary tenure within or adjacent to CFMA boundaries and restoration zones. They face economic displacement through loss of farmland, fallow land in cultivation rotation, and crop loss.
- Agricultural tenants and sharecroppers are present throughout the project area, particularly in Lofa and Grand Bassa, where land markets are more active and tenant farming arrangements are common. These persons face heightened vulnerability as they may not be recognized as eligible for compensation under customary or formal tenure systems.
- Users of common property resources including hunters, fishers, fuelwood collectors, NTFP gatherers, and traditional healers are the most numerically significant PAP category in terms of economic displacement across all counties, as restrictions on forest access directly curtail their subsistence and income activities.
- Informal dwelling occupants and squatters are most likely to be present in Grand Bassa and Grand Cape Mount, where peri-urban growth along road corridors has resulted in informal settlements that may be affected by enabling infrastructure siting.
- Informal businesses including small-scale timber traders, chainsaw operators, fuelwood vendors, charcoal producers, and market traders will be economically displaced in areas where forest access restrictions reduce the supply of forest commodities on which their businesses depend.
- Vulnerable groups across all seven SOP1 counties include female-headed households, widows and women in customary marriages with insecure inheritance rights, elderly household heads with limited adaptive capacity, youth with limited formal employment options, ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities who are disproportionately excluded from community decision-making and compensation processes. These groups will receive dedicated identification, targeted assistance, and priority access to livelihood restoration measures under site-specific RPs.



6 Identification and Eligibility Criteria for Affected Persons and Communities

To ensure fair and effective resettlement, the FDA PIU will establish clear eligibility criteria for receiving compensation and assistance. This section outlines the process for identifying eligible beneficiaries and the types of benefits they may receive.

6.1 Categorizing Affected Persons by Legal Status

The census will categorize persons based on their legal status regarding the affected assets. This categorization directly influences the type and extent of benefits provided:

- **Category A – Persons with Formal Legal Rights-** These include individuals or legal entities holding formal, legally recognized ownership rights over the affected land or assets (e.g., titled landowners, registered businesses).
- **Category B: Persons with Recognizable Legal Claims:** These are individuals or entities (e.g., communities) without formal legal title but whose claims to land or assets are recognized or recognizable under national law or customary tenure systems. In the African context, this often includes:
 - Community/Clan Land Users: Individuals with usufruct rights based on membership in a community, clan, or family, where land is held under customary tenure. These rights, though often unwritten, are typically recognized by traditional authorities and national laws.
 - Individual Customary Land Users: Individuals or households with secure and inheritable rights to specific plots for housing or farming within customary systems, recognized by the community, even without formal titles.
 - Bona Fide Occupants/Lawful Occupants: These are individuals who have been living on and utilizing land for an extended period, often with the implicit or explicit consent of traditional authorities or the registered owner, even if they lack formal title. All bona fide and lawful occupants identified within the census of affected persons shall be recognized as eligible PAPs, their occupancy rights shall be documented and respected regardless of the absence of formal title, and they shall receive compensation and resettlement assistance consistent with their recognized rights under Liberian law and the full replacement cost standard required by ESS5. The Land Rights Act of 2018 formally recognizes customary occupation and use of land constitutes a legitimate and legally protected form of tenure. Communities and individuals who have occupied and used land in accordance with customary practices including those who settled with the consent of Paramount Chiefs, Clan Chiefs, or Village Elders are recognized as holders of protected land rights. Furthermore, Article 22(b) of the 1986 Liberian Constitution affirms that all persons have the right to own property and that no person shall be deprived of property without due process of law.
- **Category C: Persons with No Recognizable Legal Claim:** This category includes individuals or entities with no recognized legal right or claim to the land or assets they occupy or use (e.g., recent informal settlers).



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6.2 Determining Compensation and Assistance

Compensation and assistance will be determined by how land acquisition or restrictions on land use affect housing, income, and livelihoods for each category, following the principle of **replacement cost**.

- **Minor Losses:**
 - **Categories A and B:** If the loss of land or other assets is minor (i.e., does not significantly affect income, livelihood, or housing), affected persons will receive **compensation at replacement cost** for the lost land and assets. This covers the asset's full replacement value and all associated transaction costs (e.g., registration fees, taxes).
 - **Category C:** Similarly impacted persons will receive **compensation at replacement cost for assets other than land** (e.g., crops, fencing, sheds, other improvements they made to the land).
- **Loss of Housing (Physical Displacement):**
 - **Categories A and B:** Persons facing residential property loss and requiring relocation will be offered a choice:
 - **A replacement property** of equal or higher value, featuring secure tenure, comparable characteristics, and an advantageous location.
 - **Cash compensation is equivalent to the replacement cost** of their lost residential property.
 - **Category C:** Persons displaced from their homes will receive **compensation at replacement cost for assets other than land**, including dwellings and other land improvements. They will also receive **relocation assistance** designed to help them restore their standards of living at an adequate alternative site.
- **Significant Impact on Income or Livelihood (Significant Economic Displacement):**
 - **Categories A and B:** Persons who lose land or other assets that significantly impact their income, or livelihood will be offered a **replacement property of equal or greater value** (e.g., agricultural or commercial sites). If a suitable replacement property is not available or desired, **cash compensation at replacement cost** will be provided.
 - **Category C:** Persons facing similar impacts will receive:
 - **Replacement cost for lost assets other than land** (e.g., crops, irrigation, land improvements).
 - **Assistance to re-establish their livelihoods elsewhere** (e.g., skills training, job placement support, small grants, access to common property resources) instead of land compensation.

Operational Process for Community-Based Verification, Documentation, and Registry Maintenance is discussed in Chapter 7



7 Procedure for determining Preliminary eligibility criteria and proposed measures to assist Affected persons and communities

The process for determining eligibility must be transparent, inclusive of all affected and interested parties, and community-driven, ensuring that all Project Affected Persons (PAPs), including those without formal legal rights, are accurately documented. Once the areas have been selected, this will form activities for reference, as each specific area may have unique characteristics. The next step will be to define what will be undertaken in a particular area and whether it will cause restrictions. Such assessments will identify the number of people affected, activities, and anticipated severity of adverse impacts to livelihoods from the imposition of any proposed use restrictions. People who entered the area after the assessment had been completed will not be considered.

This Chapter provides an operational description of the processes required for identifying, verifying, and managing the registry of people eligible for assistance.

7.1 Procedure for determining Eligibility criteria

7.1.1 Socioeconomic survey

During Resettlement Plan preparation, the FDA PIU will conduct a **census and asset survey**. This crucial step serves several purposes:

- **Identify all persons affected** by land acquisition or restrictions on land use.
- **Inventory affected land and assets** (e.g., structures, crops, trees, businesses).
- **Determine eligibility** for various forms of compensation and assistance.
- **Prevent ineligible claims** (e.g., from opportunistic settlers) by establishing a clear baseline.

FDA will be typically accompanied by local community leaders to conduct door-to-door visits to capture essential data including household composition, land and resource use patterns, and specific indicators of vulnerability. This baseline data is critical for determining eligibility and the type of assistance required.

7.1.2 Community-Based Verification Process

A robust verification process will be put in place to validate the results of the socio-economic census studies, to ensure that no eligible persons have been excluded. It will be important for this stage to be led by the community through in order to strengthen local ownership and improve the accuracy of the data.

To ensure public disclosure of the information, the draft list of Affected Persons will be displayed in public places that are easily accessible for a minimum period of 14 to 21 days to enable public review. A public notice with dates and locations will serve as a tool for information disclosure. To ensure community validation, a Community Verification Committee (CVC) will be formed, including local leaders, PAP representatives, and vulnerable group members. Public Community validation meetings organized by the CVS will help to review the list, confirm the presence of PAPs, and identify any missing eligible persons.



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For the process to be as inclusive as possible, it is important to use as many avenues as possible to inform all stakeholders through advertisements, national radio and television etc. For the community, this may be through community presentations in durbars, during religious gatherings (churches, mosques), local FM radio announcements and personal contacts. To inform only specific groups in the community, the project will start with key persons such as opinion leaders in those groups who may already be known. It is easier then to solicit their help to spread the message to other members. They can also help in deciding where to place other information so that target groups will be likely to encounter it.

7.1.3 Documentation and profile creation

Once the CVC has completed its verification process, the FDA team will be able to draw up a detailed profile for each eligible individual or household, who will be required to provide additional digital information to support their eligibility application. Each PAP will be provided with an individual file containing copies of identity documents, property titles or certificates of traditional occupation, and an identity photograph alongside their relevant assets. At the end of this procedure, each PAP whose eligibility has been verified will be issued with a temporary identity card or a certificate of eligibility to facilitate future transactions.

7.1.4 Registry preparation and maintenance

All information resulting from the verification will be recorded in a digitized register, which will serve as a database for all compensation and assistance activities throughout the project lifecycle. The registry will be updated on a regular basis, taking into account resolutions from the Grievance Redress Committee (GRC). FDA will maintain overall responsibility for data security and registry management, while the CVC provides the essential local-level validation.

7.1.5 Establishing a Cutoff date

In conjunction with the census, a **cut-off date** for eligibility will be established. This date, as required by **ESS 5**, marks the deadline after which new occupants or improvements to land will not be eligible for compensation or resettlement assistance. The cut-off date must be publicly disseminated.

7.1.6 Identification, support and arrangements for vulnerable groups

Vulnerable sub-categories are entitled to specific, targeted assistance beyond standard compensation. This additional support is designed to ensure that these groups are not disproportionately affected and are provided with the necessary means to improve or at least restore their livelihoods.

7.1.6.1 Identification of vulnerable groups

This project will require the identification of vulnerable groups and individuals, followed by an analysis of the causes and consequences of their vulnerability. This identification will be carried out as part of the socio-economic study. The procedure for determining eligibility of vulnerable group will follow the same approach presented above including community validation, registry preparation, disclosure, and cut-off date communication.

These stages are essential because vulnerable people often do not attend information meetings organized by the Project, and their existence may remain unknown unless the Project adopts a very proactive approach to identifying them.



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The categories of Vulnerable groups across all seven SOP1 counties will include:

- Female-headed households;
- Widows and women in customary marriages with insecure inheritance rights;
- Elderly household heads with limited adaptive capacity,
- Youth with limited formal employment options;
- Ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities who are disproportionately excluded from community decision-making and compensation processes.
- Seasonal and transient resource users including pastoralists, NTFP harvesters from neighboring communities;
- Charcoal traders.

Women groups should be specially targeted. Their role in forest management, livelihood interventions, incentive and benefit sharing makes them vital to the process. The message must be simple and clear, and in the languages that the community speaks. That means both using plain, understandable English, and using other languages spoken by people in the community.

For seasonal and transient users, the Community Verification Committee (CVC) plays a vital role in identifying those who have historically used the resource, even if they are not present during the initial census.

7.1.6.2 Priority support to vulnerable groups

All the vulnerable groups listed above will receive dedicated targeted assistance, and priority access to livelihood restoration measures under site-specific RPs as discussed in Table 7-1.

Table 7-1: Additional Entitlements and Priority Support for vulnerable groups

Vulnerable groups category	Specific additional entitlements	Priority support mechanism
All Vulnerable PAPs	A one-time cash granted as vulnerability Allowance (typically equivalent to 3-6 months of local minimum wage) to assist with transitional costs.	First priority in employment for project-related labor opportunities (e.g., construction, maintenance).
Female-Headed Households	Gender-Sensitive Training: Access to vocational training programs specifically designed for women's needs.	Ensuring that any replacement land or housing is registered in the woman's name or jointly with her spouse.
Widows and women in customary marriages with insecure inheritance rights	Provision of free legal services to help widows secure their inheritance rights or formalize land claims. Facilitating mediation with traditional leaders to recognize the woman's occupancy and use rights.	Ensuring that replacement land or housing is registered solely or jointly in the woman's name to prevent future dispossession. Additionally, a targeted cash grant to cover immediate needs during the transition of legal or customary status.
Elderly household heads	Direct support from the project team for moving personal belongings and salvaging materials from affected structures.	Priority in the selection of resettlement sites that are close to health clinics, markets, and public transport.
Youth with limited formal	Vocational Scholarships for certified	Mandatory percentage of project-



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employment options	training in high-demand trades (e.g., mechanics, construction, digital skills).	related non-skilled and semi-skilled jobs reserved for local youth
Seasonal and transient resource users	Funding for Alternative Livelihood activities that reduce dependence on restricted forest resources (e.g., beekeeping, poultry).	Where possible, provide regulated permits for continued sustainable harvesting of specific NTFPs
Ethnic Minorities	Culturally Appropriate Housing: Design of replacement housing that respects traditional architectural styles and community layouts.	Access to all project information and grievance mechanisms in their native language.
Charcoal traders	Assisting charcoal traders or NTFP harvesters to transition into sustainable value chains (e.g., sustainable charcoal production).	Transitional Income Support: Cash-for-work or food-for-work programs during the "off-season" or during the transition to new livelihoods.

7.2 Livelihood Restoration for affected communities

The measures to assist affected persons and communities depend on the type of loss, what they will lose, degree of access restrictions, the location, and available alternatives and opportunities with their suitability as per specific area/location. A fundamental objective of this Process Framework is to ensure that persons and communities affected by restrictions to forests and wildlife resource define and undertake activities that, at least, restore their income to the levels they would have enjoyed, had there been no restrictions. This objective ensures that the extent of mitigation measures is commensurate with the extent of loss of access to resources due to restrictions. This also ensures that those who are

Clause: *No enforcement of project-related access restrictions (including physical barriers, patrolling, or legal prohibitions) shall commence in any specific area until the alternative livelihood measures and compensation packages for the identified affected households have been fully documented as available, accessible, and operational. The FDA PIU will provide written verification, endorsed by the Community Verification Committee (CVC), that the replacement livelihood options are in place before any restrictive actions are taken.*

affected more severely are assisted to a greater extent than those who incur smaller losses.

CFMPs, business planning, and sustainable forest management will strengthen community resilience by promoting diversified and climate-resilient livelihood systems while reducing dependence on unsustainable forest extraction. The project will promote integrated livelihood alternatives in its components including: agroforestry, ecotourism, beekeeping, sustainable NTFP value chains, climate-smart agriculture, and landscape restoration. These activities will



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expand income opportunities and reduce households' vulnerability to climate shocks and seasonal fluctuations.

7.2.1 Gender-Differentiated Analysis of Alternative Livelihood Options

Gender issues must be considered when restoring livelihoods. This approach helps to better manage the risk of women being marginalised and prevents the fundamental objectives of the ESS 5 from being achieved. It also helps to better identify the barriers women face and to implement targeted, supportive measures. In this way, the project can ensure that the transition to sustainable forest management serves as an opportunity for women's economic empowerment and social inclusion.

This analysis identifies how alternative livelihood options impact men and women differently in the project area. It specifies which options are most accessible to women, the enabling conditions required for their success, and the targeted measures to address gender-specific barriers. Table 7-2 presents a detailed analysis of gender differentiated livelihood.

Table 7-2: Analysis of gender-differentiated livelihood

Livelihood Option	Accessibility for Women	Enabling Conditions Required
NTFP Harvesting (e.g., honey, bamboo, rattan, bitter kola, honey, snails, and locusts)	High: Women are traditionally the primary harvesters of many non-timber forest products.	Secure access permits for women; training in sustainable harvesting and quality control.
CFMA based activities	Medium: Traditionally male-dominated due to underrepresentation of women in CFMB	Providing support for female representation in CFMBs and promote women's meaningful participation as essential to effective governance
Climate smart agriculture	Medium: Women face significant and interconnected barriers to accessing and adopting climate-smart agriculture practices	Programs combining financial literacy, business skills, climate-smart agriculture training
Eco-Tourism (e.g., guiding, catering)	Medium: Requires specific skills and presence away from home.	Training in hospitality and language skills
Silviculture	Medium: Requires specific skills and presence	Technical training programs with modules on climate-resilient silviculture and harvesting

Despite their significant role in the forest economy, Liberian women face several systemic barriers:

- **Insecure Land Tenure:** Limited formal ownership of land, often dependent on male relatives (addressed by the Land Rights Act 2018 but implementation is slow).
- Lack of collateral, and tenure insecurity especially when rights are mediated through male relatives.
- Underrepresentation in CFMBs:
- **Time Poverty:** Heavy burden of unpaid domestic and care work, limiting time for training or new economic activities.
- **Restricted or limited Access to finance :** 74% of female workers are in the informal sector with little access to formal banking or micro-finance.



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- **Literacy Gaps:** Higher rates of illiteracy among rural women, making technical manuals or written information less accessible.
- Lower financial literacy:

The project will address these gaps by supporting women’s inclusion in land governance and zoning, direct benefits from CFMA-based activities, stronger participation, and leadership in CFMBs. For instance, the project will support at least 30 percent female representation in CFMBs and promote women’s meaningful participation as essential to effective governance. It will provide targeted training in climate-smart agriculture, restoration, and business planning, and expanded access to finance, inputs, and equipment. Under Component 2, it will prioritize women and youth in forest-dependent communities through sustainable livelihoods and climate-smart agriculture and forest-based value chains, helping women move into higher-value activities, increase incomes, and reduce pressure on forests while strengthening their participation, representation, and influence.

7.2.1.1 The project is estimated to generate 25,000 new and improved jobs for existing forest-dependent workers in CFMA and protected area buffer zone households receiving market access and livelihood support. Women are expected to account for approximately 67 percent of the More and Better-Paid Jobs (MBJ) estimate, consistent with their dominant role in Liberia's NTFP workforce.

7.2.1.2 Sex-Disaggregated Monitoring Indicators

The success of livelihood restoration will be tracked using the following indicators, all of which must be disaggregated by sex:

Table 7-3: Sex-disaggregated monitoring indicators

Indicator Category	Specific Monitoring Indicator
Income Restoration	% of female PAPs whose monthly income has returned to or exceeded baseline levels.
Asset Ownership	% of women with sole or joint legal title to replacement land or housing.
Participation	% of women attending community verification meetings and LRP consultation workshops.
Skill Development	% of women who have successfully completed vocational or technical training.
Grievance Redress	% of female-initiated grievances resolved within the 14-day project-level timeline.

7.2.2 Methodology for establishing livelihood baseline

The methodology for establishing the Livelihood Baseline will comprise the following data collection tools.

7.2.2.1 Household surveys

The PF requires a socio-economic household survey to obtain more detailed information on the status of the affected population. This information covers, in particular, household structure, main economic activities, sources of income, resources used, immovable and movable property and, as far as possible, an initial assessment of the population’s needs regarding resettlement and compensation, as well as



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information on the ethnic, cultural or religious situation. A structured questionnaire will be administered to 100% of affected households with core indicators such as

- **Income:** Total annual household income (cash and in-kind), sources of income, and average daily expenditure per capital, Number of distinct income-generating activities per household and the percentage of income derived from restricted vs. non-restricted resources.
- **Livelihood diversity:** Number of distinct income-generating activities per household and the percentage of income derived from restricted vs. non-restricted resources.
- **Food Security:** e.g. Number/percentage of food secure households

7.2.2.2 Focus group discussions

Focus group discussions (FGDs) will be organised with local communities, taking care to ensure they are as inclusive, transparent and open as possible, and giving a voice to different social groups, including women, young people, older people and marginalised groups. Where necessary, and where possible, women-only focus group consultations will be organised to ensure that women feel confident in expressing their views and concerns. The ultimate objective of the FGDs is to understand community-level resource use patterns and seasonal variations.

7.2.2.3 Key informants' interviews

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) are essential qualitative tools used to gather in-depth information from individuals with specialized knowledge of community livelihoods, resource use patterns, and local power dynamics. Key informants will need to be selected based on their specific expertise or role within the community. The key categories of informants may include:

- Traditional Leaders who can provide useful information to understand historical land use, customary rules, and community boundaries.
- Resource User Leads comprising heads of hunter Associations, charcoal unions, NTFP harvesters who can provide technical data on seasonal patterns, volumes of resource extraction, and market prices.
- Vulnerable Group Responsible: Heads of Women's Groups, Youth Leaders, Disabled Persons Organization representatives who can help to identify barriers to participation and specific vulnerabilities within the community.
- Technical Officers from FDA Foresters, MoA Extension Officers, Local NGO staff

KIIs can cover multiple core topics such as : i) Resource Dependency (which forest products are most critical for food security vs. cash income?) ii) Seasonality (how do livelihood activities change between the rainy and dry seasons?); iii) Access & Rules (who is allowed to harvest what? Are there "sacred" or restricted areas already?); iv) Market Dynamics (where are products sold? How have prices changed in the last 3-5 years?); v) Impact of Restrictions (what would happen if access to a specific area was limited? Who would suffer most?)

Ultimately, KIIs provide the "story" behind the baseline data. By carefully selecting informants and using a semi-structured approach, the project can identify hidden risks and opportunities that a standard survey might miss, ensuring that livelihood restoration measures are grounded in local reality.



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7.2.3 Measuring the Sufficiency Standard

The sufficiency standard in World Bank ESS 5 ensures that households affected by land acquisition or restrictions on land use are not just compensated, but their livelihoods are restored to at least pre-project levels, with a focus on vulnerable groups.

Monitoring will be conducted at the following intervals:

- **Baseline:** Before project implementation (Year 0). An Assessment of pre-project income sources, assets, and living standards of affected households to establish a benchmark.
- **Mid-term Review:** 18-24 months after the commencement of alternative livelihood measures.
- **Completion Audit:** 3-5 years after implementation, or when the project is preparing for closure.

A household is considered to have met the sufficiency standard if:

- **Income Maintenance:** Real household income (adjusted for inflation) is equal to or greater than the baseline.
- **Food Security Stability:** The HDDS is stable or improved, and the household reports no increase in "coping strategies" (e.g., skipping meals).
- **Resilience:** The household has at least two viable income sources that are independent of the restricted natural resources.

If the sufficiency standard is not met at the mid-term review, FDA PIU will have to trigger a Livelihood Improvement Plan (LIP). This plan includes additional technical assistance, top-up grants, or the provision of alternative assets to bridge the gap and ensure full restoration by the time of the completion audit.

7.3 Preparation of Site-Specific Livelihood Restoration Plans

Site-specific LRPs are the primary instrument for managing the social risks associated with protected areas and CFMAs. Following a structured preparation and approval process, allows the project to ensure that conservation goals are met without compromising the well-being of local communities.

7.3.1 Responsibility for preparation

As PIU, FDA, through its Social Safeguards Unit, will be primarily responsible for the preparation of the LRPs. A number of NGOs They may engage specialized social consultants or NGOs with expertise in community-based conservation and livelihood development to lead the data collection and plan drafting. The Forestry Development Authority (FDA) and local Community Forest Management Bodies (CFMBs) will provide technical inputs and facilitate community access.

7.3.2 Content Requirements of the Livelihood restoration plans in the protected areas and CFMAs

The site-specific LRP for protected areas and CFMAs must follow a standardized template to ensure consistency and compliance. The minimum content includes:

1. Project Description



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For this component, the main focus will be on documenting the specific activities in the protected area or CFMA causing access restrictions. In this regard, components 2.3 and 2.2 of the project will serve as a perfect illustration of the types of activities in question.

2. Baseline Data

The baseline data will focus on a Site-specific census of PAPs, socio-economic profiles, and resource dependency levels. These data will be collected through socioeconomic surveys.

3. Eligibility Criteria

A clear definition of who is eligible for assistance at that specific site will be important to document.

4. Entitlement Matrix

Present a detailed table linking specific impacts to compensation or restoration measures.

5. Alternative Livelihoods

Present a detailed description of the proposed livelihood options (e.g., beekeeping, sustainable farming).

6. Implementation Schedule

A phased timeline showing the sequencing of livelihood measures vs. enforcement.

7. Budget & Resources

Itemized costs for all restoration activities and identified funding sources.

8. Monitoring Plan

Identify site-specific indicators and frequency of sufficiency measurement.

7.3.3 Consultation Requirements

The preparation of LRPs must be highly participatory. The affected persons/ community should be engaged in active consultations at the beginning of the project, and any planned or proposed access restriction should be well in advance. Their input to the process is essential and their cooperation will be forthcoming when the project objective is adequately explained to them. They should have access to the Livelihood Restoration Plan and be encouraged to provide input. It is proposed to have this as part of an Engagement Plan which will indicate who will be engaged, when to engage, what to engage on and methodology for effective engagement. Consultation requirements include:

- **Initial Sensitization:** Informing communities about the project, the need for LRPs, and their rights under ESS5.
- **Participatory Resource Mapping:** Working with community members to identify the specific areas and resources to which access will be restricted.
- **Livelihood Preference Surveys:** Consulting with PAPs to identify their preferred alternative livelihood options to ensure they are culturally appropriate and viable.
- **Validation Workshops:** Presenting the draft LRP to the affected community and the Community Verification Committee (CVC) for feedback and endorsement.



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7.3.4 Approval and Disclosure Process

The approval and disclosure process will be articulated in three phases including:

- **Internal Review:** The draft LRP will be reviewed by the FDA PIU and the relevant government agencies (e.g FDA, EPA).
- **World Bank Clearance:** All site-specific LRPs must be submitted to the World Bank for "No Objection" prior to implementation.
- **Public Disclosure:** Once cleared, the LRP must be disclosed in a language and format accessible to the affected communities (e.g., summaries in local languages, physical copies in community centres) and on the project website.

7.3.5 Timeline Relative to Restriction Enforcement

The development and implementation of the LRP must strictly precede the enforcement of access restrictions. Table 7-4 presents timeline relative to restriction enforcement.

Table 7-4: Timeline related to restriction enforcement

Phase	Timeline
LRP Preparation	6-12 months before any planned access restriction.
Consultation & Approval	3-6 months before any planned access restriction.
Implementation Start	Livelihood measures (e.g., training, asset delivery) must begin at least 3 months before enforcement.
Restriction Enforcement	Only once the FDA PIU and CVC have verified that alternative livelihoods are available and accessible.



8 Stakeholder engagement

8.1 Stakeholder engagement during project design

Stakeholder identification and consultation is an integral part of project management throughout the Project life cycle. An effective stakeholder identification requires the identification of all individuals and groups who are affected by the project and may have an interest in the project. Stakeholder analysis is a process for identifying different stakeholders, grouping them according to their level of interest and influence in the project, and determining how best to engage with them based on the socio-economic characteristics.

Community representatives may provide helpful insight into the local settings and act as main conduits for dissemination of the Project-related information and as primary communication links between the Project and targeted communities and their established networks. Community representatives including women leaders, elders, youth, religious and traditional leaders, may also be helpful intermediaries for information dissemination in a culturally appropriate manner, building trust, confidence and engendering community ownership of project interventions. Especially for vulnerable groups, stakeholder engagement should be conducted in partnership with their representatives. Among other things, they can provide help in understanding the perceptions of their challenges and strengths, which will influence increased utilization of project outputs and results. It is therefore important to verify the representatives of each stakeholder group by confirming that they are legitimate and genuine advocates of the stakeholder group they represent.

Keeping in mind the nature of the LIFE-P and its setting, the Project stakeholders include:

- i. National government ministries, departments and agencies with mandates for forestry, land administration, parc conservation;
- ii. Local Government/national authorities;
- iii. National and international NGOs engaged in conservation and development;
- iv. Community-based organizations including:
 - a. Community Forest User Groups;
 - b. Village Forest Committees,
 - c. Joint Forest Management groups
- v. Institutions representing vulnerable and minority groups.
- vi. Private sector;
- vii. Research and training institutions;

As the Project is under preparation, there are limited information about specific locations, stakeholder groups, and schedule of activities and the exact community stakeholders cannot yet be identified. During implementation, this will be further refined by the FDA-PIU.



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8.2 Stakeholder engagement during implementation

The project will apply the following principles for stakeholder engagement to ensure effective engagement and meaningful consultations of all relevant stakeholders during the project implementation:

- **Openness and life-cycle approach:** public consultations for the project(s) will be arranged during the project life cycle, carried out in an open manner, free of external manipulation, interference, coercion or intimidation.
- **Informed participation and feedback:** information will be provided to and widely distributed among all stakeholders in an appropriate format; opportunities are provided for communicating stakeholders' feedback, for analysing and addressing comments and concerns.
- **Inclusiveness and sensitivity:** stakeholder identification is undertaken to support better communications and build effective relationships. The participation process for the projects is inclusive. All stakeholders at all times encouraged to be involved in the consultation process. Equal access to information is provided to all stakeholders. Sensitivity to stakeholders' needs is the key principle underlying the selection of engagement methods. Special attention is given to vulnerable groups, especially, women, youth, elderly, Persons with Disabilities, displaced persons, those with underlying health issues, and the cultural sensitivities of diverse ethnic groups.
- **Flexibility:** if social distancing inhibits traditional forms of engagement, the methodology should adapt to other forms of engagement, including various forms of internet communication

Stakeholder engagement under the project will use a variety of engagement techniques depending on the stage of project implementation to build relationships with stakeholders, consult and gather information from them, as well as disseminate project information. In selecting any consultation technique, a number of issues will be taken into consideration including the level of formal education of stakeholders and cultural sensitivities to ensure that consultation is meaningful and accessible.

At each stage of project implementation, the FDA-PIUs will ensure meaningful engagement and consultation and disclosure of project information to all stakeholders. The disclosure and consultation activities will be designed in line with the following key principles:

- Consultations must be widely publicized particularly among the project affected stakeholders/ communities, preferably a week prior to any meeting or engagements
- Ensure non-technical information summary is accessible prior to any event to ensure that people are informed of the assessment and conclusions before scheduled meetings
- Location and timing of meetings must be designed to maximize stakeholder participation and availability
- Information presented must be clear, and non-technical, and presented in all appropriate local languages where necessary
- Consultations must consider accessibility of vulnerable groups (such as the elderly, persons with disabilities, literacy levels, language, language, access to information technology, etc.) and must



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therefore ensure the format and platforms for consultation facilitate inclusive and participatory engagement

- Engagements must be facilitated in ways that allow stakeholders to raise their views and concerns in a way which stakeholders feel safe to freely express their views without fear of reprisal
- Issues raised must be addressed and feedback provided to participants either during the consultation or if further information is needed to be obtained, at a subsequent meeting and communicated to stakeholders when feedback is to be expected

8.3 Stakeholder Engagement Activities during Project Preparation

Stakeholder engagement activities were undertaken during the development of the Process Framework to support the initial design of LSFE Project. Stakeholder engagement activities of the Project started with key meetings held in Monrovia that was undertaken by the Environmental and Social Consultant in January 2026. The FDA team in Monrovia subsequently organized a large workshop involving a wide range of stakeholders. The minutes of this workshop are included in Annexe B Stakeholder Engagement Consultation Minutes of this report. A series of consultations was also conducted by FDA team with local stakeholders at the district and county levels to conclude this phase of stakeholder engagement. Detailed Minutes of these consultations are include in Annexe A: Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

During these initial stages, consultations were undertaken with pre-identified major Project stakeholders. Key feedback a summarised in Table 8-1.

The stakeholder engagement strategy was consulted as follows:

- Interviews
 - Liberia Land Authority;
 - Ministry of internal affairs;
 - Ministry of Mine and Energy;
- Workshop Participants includes representatives from:
 - Liberia National Police (LNP)
 - Liberia Immigration Service (LIS)
 - Ministry of Justice (MoJ)
 - National Bureau of Concessions (NBC)
 - Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA)
 - Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services LISGIS)
 - Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSPP)
 - Ministry of Local Government (Formally Ministry of Internal Affairs-MIA)
 - Ministry of Labor (MoL)
 - Cooperative Development Agency (CDA)
 - Liberia National Fire Service (LNFS)
 - National Investment Commission (NIC)
 - Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI)



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- Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI)
 - Consultations at District and County level

Table 8-1: Summary of Preliminary Stakeholders Engagement Activities during Project Preparation

Stakeholders engaged	Date of consultation	Method of engagement	Key feedback
National level			
Liberia Land Authority	21/01/26	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emphasized the 2018 Land Rights Law grants customary communities full ownership of their land and natural resources, including forests, with the exception of national gazetted forests, which are government property. ▪ Empowering communities through land ownership strengthens forest maintenance, as communities will have responsible leadership (Community Land Development Management Committees - CLDMC) to manage their forests and ensure benefits for dwellers. ▪ While communities own land by occupation, obtaining an ownership certificate (statutory deed) is crucial for legal recognition, defining boundaries, and substantiating claims in court. LLA plays a key role in this formalization process. ▪ The LLA's presence in community engagement is vital because communities feel more secure discussing their rights and security with the LLA, contrasting with potential apprehension towards the FDA (Forestry Development Authority) when discussing conservation that might impact traditional livelihoods like hunting. ▪ Women are proactively involved in land ownership and decision-making within CLDMCs, often holding leadership positions (e.g., chairperson, secretary). Their participation has significantly increased. ▪ Many rural communities depend on hunting and forest products for their livelihood and protein sources. Effective livelihood restoration plans are critical to reduce community dependence on forests. ▪ Offering land ownership certificates (formalization) can be a strong incentive for communities to agree to sustainable forest practices and conservation efforts. The LLA cited a case where offering certificates motivated communities to protect pangolins.
Ministry of internal	21/01/26	Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The project should focus on generating economic



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affairs			<p>benefits for communities that have historically protected forests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examples of successful community-led initiatives include guest houses, bee farms, village savings groups, and mini sawmills. ▪ Direct engagement with communities is vital to identify their specific needs for livelihood support, rather than imposing projects from above. ▪ Addressing critical issues like market access and storage for community produce is crucial for economic sustainability. ▪ The project, with its eight-year timeline, must be institutionalized and locally driven to ensure continued impact beyond its funding period, avoiding the common failure of projects that cease once external support ends. ▪ Conflict Over Land: The primary conflict stems from overlapping land rights, particularly when mineral deposits are discovered. Mining laws (which vest mineral ownership in the government) can override community forest conservation efforts, leading to environmental destruction and local grievances. ▪ There is an urgent need to harmonize the Land Rights Law, Community Forest Law, and Mining Law to resolve these inherent contradictions. ▪ Capacity Building: There is a critical need to provide capacity building for all levels of local government to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities in managing project impacts and resolving local issues autonomously.
Ministry of Mine and Energy (MME)	22/01/26	Interview	<p>Considering that artisanal mining is one of the factors threatening community forests, MME provided key recommendations on roles and responsibilities the Ministry can play to develop frameworks aiming to support the project in relation to community forests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inter-Agency Coordination with FDA - MME shall establish formal coordination mechanisms with the Forestry Development Authority (FDA), including joint land-use screening, shared GIS and cadastral data systems, and joint inspections in forested mining zones. ▪ Environmental and Social Safeguards - MME shall require forest-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs), including rehabilitation



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			<p>and mine closure plans that address forest restoration, and coordinate with EPA and FDA on cumulative impact management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Engagement and Capacity Building - MME shall support legal literacy for communities, facilitate dialogue among stakeholders, and strengthen the capacity of county and district mining officers to monitor mining activities affecting community forests. ▪ Monitoring, Enforcement, and Accountability - MME shall strengthen inspection and enforcement mechanisms, apply penalties for non-compliance, and establish grievance redress systems for communities affected by mining-related forest impacts. ▪ Strategic Planning and Project Support - MME shall integrate community forest safeguards into project frameworks, align mining interventions with national land, forest, and climate policies, and report on mining–forest interactions as part of national sustainability indicators.
PADEV NGO		Questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PADEV applied FPIC principle in a context that supports community understanding of their rights to make informed judgement and to participate in decisions that affects their lives and their resources ▪ Key vulnerable groups that may face disproportionate impacts are Forest users including farmers, single mothers, widows, elders, physically challenged people and marginalized groups; ▪ Social tensions or conflicts that could arise due to new restrictions or enforcement changes include Agitation for resettlement, opportunistic farmers or forest users seeking payment for damaged crops, farmland, etc. Others could be agitation for lack of transparency, accountability and inequality related to benefits ▪ PADEV is adept in livelihood and enterprise development activities. Its livelihood and enterprise development programs are premised on principles that reduce threat to biodiversity, mitigate climate change and rollback deforestation. Since 2017, PADEV has provided onsite livelihood capacity support rooted in integrative cultivation approach covering agroforestry and regenerative climate-smart/low emission agriculture. This practice has given farmers enhanced access to planting materials and reduced their overreliance on imported seeds for crop production. Its conservation green enterprise program



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			<p>focuses on activities such as beekeeping which promote conservation efforts and maximizes socioeconomic benefits for local communities. Other livelihood services we offer include inland-aquaculture and support to mitigate the adverse impact of climate change for coastal communities. Its VSLA program is modelled to guarantee the security of group’s funds, sustained liquidity, enable access to early loan, promote social enterprise and serve as a financial SafetyNet for local businesses.</p>
<p>A workshop organized in Monrovia by the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) and attended by numerous stakeholders, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Liberia National Police (LNP) ▪ Liberia Immigration Service (LIS) ▪ Ministry of Justice (MoJ) ▪ National Bureau of Concessions (NBC) ▪ Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA) ▪ Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services LISGIS) ▪ Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) 	24/03/2026	Workshop	<p>Key Cross-Cutting Issues raised by participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land tenure and conflict resolution for clear land-use planning and dispute resolution systems. ▪ Security risks management for illegal mining and logging activities with relevant agencies. ▪ Gender and social inclusion on SEA/SH/GBV risk mitigation and women’s participation. ▪ Data and Monitoring of important integrated data systems. ▪ Sustainability for ensuring long-term viability of interventions beyond project life. <p>Responses to relevant questions pertaining to security management aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Land disputes will be managed through participatory land-use planning, legal alignment, and GM systems. ▪ Illegal activities will be addressed through strengthened enforcement and inter-agency collaboration ▪ Safeguards for vulnerable groups will include: Inclusion measures, targeted livelihood support, and SEA/SH/GBV Action Plans <p>The consultation demonstrated strong inter-agency commitment to the Liberia Forest Economy Project. Stakeholders endorsed the project’s integrated approach combining commercial forestry, community development, and conservation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Key recommendations focused on strengthening coordination, ensuring ESF compliance, addressing land and security risks, and promoting inclusive participation.



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ministry of Local Government (Formally Ministry of Internal Affairs-MIA) ▪ Ministry of Labor (MoL) ▪ Cooperative Development Agency (CDA) ▪ Liberia National Fire Service (LNFS) ▪ National Investment Commission (NIC) ▪ Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) <p>Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI)</p>			
Regional and County level			
Community Extension Officer		Questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The relationship between the Community Relations Team and the Security Manager/Security Team is cordial and operationally interdependent, particularly in contexts where maintaining community trust and mitigating risk are central to project continuity. The teams collaborate closely, with community relations personnel providing insights into local concerns, grievances, social dynamics, and stakeholder expectations that inform risk assessment and security management strategies. Through structured information flow, community relations staff serve as an early warning mechanism by identifying and escalating potential conflict triggers, emerging tensions, or reputational risks. In turn, established feedback loops enable the security team to recalibrate protocols, deployment patterns, and response measures in alignment with evolving community



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			<p>realities, while supporting the community relations team in communicating transparently, consistently, and proactively with stakeholders to sustain confidence and prevent escalation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The interactions between the community and security team are shaped by the need to balance asset protection with preservation of trust to operate among local stakeholders. These interactions span several key dimensions, including; preventive engagement, where security personnel consult community relations staff and design proportionate measures. ▪ Non-escalatory measures; coordinated incident response, ensuring that when conflicts or breaches occur, actions are firm yet respectful of community rights and consistent with due process. And grievance handling, where security contributes to establishing grievance mechanisms by addressing complaints related to safety concerns or alleged misconduct in a transparent and accountable manner. Engagement is most effective when proactive rather than reactive, as early dialogue reduces tensions and reinforces liability. Communities are more receptive when security presence is perceived as protective and community-oriented rather than restrictive or coercive
Regional Forester FDA, Region One	8/3/2026	Questionnaire	<p>Institutional Coordination is a key to manage security risks and needs to take into account aspects including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training (capacity building) in the area of legal, customary, institutional framework, conflict mediation or resolution and cultural sensitivity is crucial. ▪ Involvement of local authorities/ indigenous people in activities of park management and through the sharing of information with relevant stakeholders' levels. ▪ Dissemination/ sharing of collected environmental and social data to relevant stakeholders/ partners. ▪
Regional Forester FDA, Region two	8/3/2026	Questionnaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rangers conduct monitoring patrol in collaboration with the community liaison officers and community axillary to ensure that the parks are protected from all illegal activities. ▪ Law enforcement affects the indigenous communities in two (2) ways, positive or negative: Positive effects: a. livelihood protection, Negative effects: b. Access



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			<p>restrictions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ It is important to implement MoU with local communities to obtain their customary land for their community forest, provide livelihood assistance, recruit community axillaries and train them how to protect their forests and it biodiversity's and ensure that no illegal activities goes on in the park. Educate the local about the importance of their forests resources, direct and indirect benefits.▪ Restrictions of access to resource will lead to conflicts over access and benefit which will lead to stressing out enforcement Rangers.▪ Joint patrols, Indigenous scouts, advance notices are key mechanisms to avoid confrontation with rangers during patrols. Organising more educational programs for them is also an important aspect to consider.▪ Mechanisms are used to notify communities of enforcement activities or new restrictions comprise regular community meetings, announcement on local radio station, jingo programs, SMS or mobile alerts and community liaison officers to inform the public.▪ Rangers need specific training on communication skill, learning mediation technique, managing high stress situation, conflicts certificate training programs, recognizing and addressing unconscious biases training programs.▪ Park stations or ranger posts act as grievance-submission points. The GM is accessible to non-literate users and remote Indigenous groups. Complaints related to ranger behavior are tracked and resolved. Traditional conflict resolution bodies are recognized within the GM.▪ To implement FPIC process, the key resources needs are translators to be hired for the local languages and documentation support.▪ Survey and mapping equipment needed are: Drones, GPS devices and GIS software for land survey and mapping.▪ Equipment needs for Community engagement: Printing materials, transportation for stakeholders, consultation meetings, and audio visual, financial support for DSA and feeling. E▪ Equipment needs for Environmental monitoring patrol: water testing kits, noise level meters, rain gears, rain booths, head gears and reflector jackets.
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Livelihood support tools needed: agriculture inputs or vocational training materials. Transportation: Vehicles for field visits, survey, training from one community to another and stakeholder’s engagement. Accommodation: lodging, and food project staff and stakeholders. Communication: mobile phones, internet connectivity and printing services. Grievance mechanism: complain boxes, phones, online platform for reporting grievances.
Women (Sehbehum town) in Grand Cape Mount County		Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Issues with SEA/SH/GBV are at a low risk in the town. ▪ Women participation in the project will be of good support for empowerment and developmental initiatives
Youth in Grand Cape Mount County		Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expressed willingness to cooperate with FDA as they have always done. And would appreciate the opportunities that the LiFE – Project will contribute to their livelihoods.
National Union of Community Forest Management Body in Gbarpolu County		Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emphasized the need for strengthen coordination with the FDA and its partners before initiation of the project the region. ▪ The illegal mining activities in the county is causing significant degradation in most forest areas and requires attention and continuous monitoring from relevant institutions governing forest resources.
Park Warden/Rangers of Gola National Forest in Gbarpolu County		Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acknowledged the presence of the LiFE-Project team idea of the Project. ▪ Expressed challenges in manning the Forest especially with limited logistics availability and manpower increase. Patrols in the Forest areas require a significant number of rangers and a definite provision of materials needed to keep the patrol persistent. ▪ Patrols are often supported by NGOs through Ecoguards they hire and also provide logistics for the FDA Rangers to initiative and monitor the patrol activities in the forest. ▪
Superintendent (Local Government) in Lofa county		Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The superintendent welcomes the LiFE-Project team into the county and applauded the idea of the project. ▪ The local government office acknowledged the presence of FDA in the county and their activities with other partners in the county ▪ Provision for livelihood alternatives is of serious



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			<p>concern for conservation activities in the county</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ FDA should enhance demarcation concerns arising in PA and PPs in the county so as to avoid near future challenges. ▪ There is a need for strengthened collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government (MLG) and other relevant stakeholders for proactive engagements in the forest areas.
National Union of Community Forest Management Body in Lofa county		Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The CFMB continue to experience high disadvantage often rising from non-negotiation between Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and the FDA before issuance of mining licenses after expressing interest in conservation of the Community Forest (CF). ▪ Complaints are not being formally addressed and sometimes ignored. The Multi-Stakeholder Forest Governance and Accountability Project (MFGAP) have been instrumental in addressing some of these concerns.
Community Forest Development Council (CFDC) Forest Management Concession (FMC) – F in River Gee County		Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The FMC-F might possibly be a benefactor of the LiFE-Project, owing to the fact that the county is a part of the project counties. ▪ Challenges of local communities hiring foreigners in forest areas is causing encroachments by illegal hunters, farmers, and miners, thereby leading to land conflict in most parts of the forested communities. These activities are causing serious depletion to the forest. This requires awareness on forest management for forest-fringe communities ▪ The CFDC encourage grievances to be address through community members-FDA-LNP at the district level before it is further escalated to other authorities, if require.
Local Government Superintendent Office in Rivercess County		Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Acknowledged the idea of the LiFE-Project and the importance of the E&S framework instruments. ▪ The County Development Steering Committee (CDSC) is working with the CFMB to management the forest resources in the communities. And the need for more agriculture/alternative livelihood activities needs to be considerate during the LiFE-Project preparations and implementations for the benefit of communities. ▪ There is the presence of Conservation International (CI) currently working in the county through mangrove management programs as alternative livelihood (cassava, village saving loan scheme) actions as



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			conservational benefits for forest-fringe communities.
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9 Settlement of disputes and conflicts

Disputes and conflicts can arise from number of aspects. These will be localized to each specific area. One common source of dispute in the context of forestry project concerns conflicts between par authorities and forest-dependent communities. Historically, conflicts with park authorities in Liberia have primarily involved forest-dependent households, Indigenous clans, pastoralists, and cross-border resource users. Forest-dependent communities have clashed with enforcement teams when restrictions limit subsistence activities such as bushmeat hunting, fuelwood collection, and non-timber forest product harvesting. Indigenous clans have raised disputes where sacred forests, ceremonial sites, or cultural corridors were restricted without adequate safeguards. Grazing limitations in buffer zones have generated tensions with pastoralists reliant on forest-edge resources, while cross-border users from neighboring countries have contributed to enforcement disputes through unauthorized hunting, farming, or logging activities.

Disputes and conflicts can arise from a variety of factors. Mechanisms for resolving these disputes and conflicts can take many forms. The most important thing is to use dispute and conflict resolution mechanisms that are tailored to the local context and acceptable to all parties involved. Such mechanisms will need to involve local influential opinion leaders such as religious leaders, cultural/traditional leaders, elders, civil society organisations, political leaders and government agencies to manage disputes.

Grievance resolution mechanisms should be based on the following principles:

- All users must be aware of the mechanism and have access to it. This requires a broad communication campaign regarding the terms, conditions, and procedures. Furthermore, the procedure must take into account the practical capabilities of potential complainants, particularly with regard to the written formulation of the complaint. Consistent assistance, aimed specifically at supporting vulnerable individuals and groups, is an absolutely essential requirement.
- The mechanism must ensure that all complaints are considered and addressed in an objective, formal, and transparent manner, regardless of their subject matter.
- The mechanism should ensure that every complaint is followed by a response.
- The mechanism must necessarily focus on seeking out amicable solutions. Only in cases where solutions are not found will the administrative arbitration authorities be involved.

9.1 Structure of the General Grievance Management

At the local level, a program facilitator will be appointed by the PIU to formally address grievances raised by individuals and groups within the community. Local Grievance Management Committees (LGMCs) made up of various members selected at the local level will be established to help address complaints raised under the program. Protected Area Directorates, counties, etc., will co-opt individuals to strengthen the objectivity of the mechanism.

An established representative organization (hunting associations, fishing associations, farmers' associations, women's associations, youth associations, village councils) may join the complaint of any community member to help bring the matter before the mechanism. The local program facilitator may also seek to involve these representative organizations in addressing the grievances raised. Grievances



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may be submitted orally or in writing, in person or via information and communication technologies (telephone or email). When submitted verbally, the local facilitator must ensure that the grievance is documented in writing. This is discussed in greater detail in the procedures section below.

9.1.1 Procedure for the Grievance Mechanism

In order to resolve potential conflicts, a mechanism must be established to address any disputes that may arise during the program's implementation. The following outlines simple and appropriate appeal mechanisms that may be triggered by access restrictions, at three levels: (i) Local management body (LMB), (ii) County Management Body (CMB), and (iii) the courts.

The first two levels LMB and CLGP) are methods of amicable settlement

For this informal resolution method, the local management body (CDL) will initiate mediation to attempt to reach a consensus that would facilitate the successful implementation of the subproject. In the event that the amicable resolution attempt fails, or if one of the parties is dissatisfied with the decision of the LMB, the complainant will refer the matter to the CMB, chaired by the Administrative Authority, for a second attempt.

Recourse (whether amicable or through arbitration) should be strongly encouraged and supported. If all these efforts fail, legal recourse is considered a last resort.

Legal Action

If the complainant is not satisfied with the amicable measures, they may bring the matter before the courts. However, this is a last resort and is not recommended for the project, as it may serve as a means of blocking and delaying activities.

This general GM will be adapted to accommodate complaints arising specifically from forest area management and natural resource use restrictions," with dedicated tracking and escalation procedures for this category of complaint. This topic is addressed in the next sub-section.

9.2 Grievance mechanism for Forest Area Management and Resource Use Restrictions

In accordance with World Bank ESS5, the LiFE project will establish this specialized Grievance mechanism (GM). While the project will maintain a general GM for all social and environmental concerns, this specialized track is specifically adapted to accommodate and resolve complaints arising from forest area management and natural resource use restrictions. Creating a dedicated track for forest-related complaints and enforcing strict resolution timelines with clear accountability will allow the project to minimize the risk of local conflict and ensure that the transition to sustainable forest management is fair and inclusive. The structure of the specific GM is documented below.

9.2.1 Dedicated Tracking and Categorization

The FDA PIU will assign a unique "Forest-Specific" (FS) tracking code to all grievances related to access restrictions or forest management. This allows for dedicated monitoring and the identification of trends specific to conservation and community forest interventions. Sub-categories for tracking include:

- **Eligibility Disputes:** The eligibility disputes will comprise all complaints regarding exclusion from the PAP registry or the Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP).



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- **Resource Access Conflicts:** Disputes over boundary demarcations or the enforcement of managed access permits.
- **Livelihood Sufficiency:** Complaints that the alternative livelihood measures provided are inadequate or inaccessible.
- **Enforcement Conduct:** Allegations of inappropriate behavior by forest rangers or project enforcement personnel.

9.2.2 Multi-Tier Resolution Structure and Timelines

The GM will need to operate on a three-tier system to ensure rapid resolution and appropriate escalation.

Tier 1: Community Level:

At the community level, the main entity for resolving the main grievances responsible body will be Community Verification Committee (CVC) / CFMB within a proposed timeline of 7 working days. An automatic escalation to Tier 2 will be necessary if no response or resolution is provided within this timeline

Tier 2: Project Level:

A Grievance Committee will be established at FDA PIU. The committee will be responsible for handling the grievances within a timeline of 14 working days. In case of a non-response within the 14-day window is established, a Mandatory disciplinary review of the responsible Social Safeguards Officer is missed without a valid extension.

Tier 3: Appellate Level

An Independent Review Panel will be implemented to serve as a sort of appeals panel. The timeline for addressing the request for appeal is 30 working days. A formal report will be submitted to the World Bank Task Team explaining the delay and the proposed corrective action.

9.2.3 Escalation Procedures

Cases of immediate escalation comprise any grievance involving physical harm, sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), or harassment by project personnel to be escalated immediately to Tier 2 and reported to the World Bank within 24 hours. Additionally, for cases where a PAP is dissatisfied with a Tier 1 resolution, they have the right to appeal to Tier 2 within 5 working days of the decision. With regards to judicial recourse, it will be established that the PAP reserves the right at any time to bring legal action before the Liberian courts, even though the GM is designed to offer a faster and free alternative.

9.2.4 Accessibility of the specific Grievance mechanism

FDA PIU will conduct a monthly audit of the complaints register to ensure that no complaints are “pending”; if any are found to be pending, they will be reported in the monthly project report submitted to the World Bank. Key performance indicators (KPIs) will focus on the “average resolution time” and the “resolution rate” for the annual performance evaluations of the team responsible for social protection measures. Lastly, a report detailing a summary of the grievances (anonymized) and the status of their resolution will be presented at quarterly public meetings with the community to ensure transparency.



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In terms of accessibility and awareness-raising, the project will ensure that the GM is accessible to all, including vulnerable groups. The GM will be structured to accommodate non-literate users and remote Indigenous communities in alignment with ESS5 safeguards. Complaints may be submitted orally at park stations, ranger posts, or through customary leaders, with designated staff responsible for formally recording them in grievance logs. Chiefs, elderly, and women’s groups often serve as intermediaries, conveying concerns from remote households to authorities, while community meetings provide collective platforms for raising issues. In some areas, mobile channels such as SMS hotlines and radio call-in programs expand access, and participatory mapping or pictorial tools support non-literate users in articulating grievances. All oral submissions are documented, including language used and leaders present, to ensure transparency and accountability.

9.2.5 Collaborative resource management approaches

Liberia’s conservation framework integrates multiple measures to minimize confrontation during patrols and enforcement operations. These include joint patrols involving rangers and community representatives to strengthen trust and reduce perceptions of external control, the use of Indigenous or community-designated scouts to provide traditional ecological knowledge and mediate interactions, and advance public notices or briefings prior to patrols or seasonal restrictions to enhance transparency. Enforcement activities are also aligned with Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) processes to ensure communities understand the purpose and scope of actions, while ranger training increasingly incorporates conflict-sensitive communication and culturally appropriate.

In the other hand, Ranger training in Liberia increasingly incorporates modules on culturally appropriate engagement, conflict-sensitive communication, and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), although practical implementation remains gradual. The Forestry Training Institute conducts regular refresher courses for Forestry Development Authority rangers, covering forest protection, habitat monitoring, and law enforcement with growing emphasis on community relations. National FPIC Guidelines (2019) and the Liberia National FPIC Communication Strategy (2022) provide structured frameworks for culturally sensitive consultation, while civil society organizations have developed community-focused FPIC training tools that further influence ranger–community engagement by strengthening awareness of rights and participatory processes.

9.3 Grievance Mechanism for GBV/SEA/SH

The project will implement additional measures for handling sensitive and confidential complaints, including those related to sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment, in accordance with the World Bank’s ESF Good Practice Note on Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment.

Given the sensitive nature of GBV/SEA/SH issues within communities and the social norms that may lead to the blaming of survivors, traditional conflict resolution procedures are not applicable to GBV/SEA/SH complaints. Specific procedures will be developed under the project SEA/SH action plan.

It will be important to implement a GBV Complaints Committee. The GBV committee will be adapted to handle complaints related to SEA/SH. The focal points responsible for maintaining records will receive specialized training on procedures for data collection, confidentiality, and referral of survivors.

Specific procedures will be developed through the GBV Complaints Committee. A complaint of a sensitive nature typically involves cases of corruption, sexual exploitation or abuse, sexual harassment,



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retaliation, gross misconduct, or professional negligence resulting in serious injury or death. Given the risks associated with raising sensitive issues, it is crucial to design a GM that reassures complainants that they can do so safely. The World Bank advocates a “survivor-based approach.” By making sure users know that sensitive complaints will be handled confidentially and without retaliation from the organization, it is possible to guarantee complainants a certain level of protection.

Regulations governing how incidents of SEA/SH involving children must be reported and handled. There may be certain individuals authorized to make decisions regarding the best interests of the child, such as a judge or a social worker, and specific procedures may be required in this regard. The inventory of service providers addressing gender-based violence should help determine whether the proposed protocols take into account the needs of child survivors and assess the extent to which services best suited to caring for children—and those mandated to determine the best interests of children, particularly through an EIS or DIS—are available.



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10 Institutional and Implementation Arrangements for Process Framework implementation

Establishing institutional roles and responsibilities related to implementation arrangement of the PF is important to ensure that activities are carried out adequately. Key institutions and their responsibilities are presented in Table 11-1

Table 10-1: Institutional responsibilities for implementation of the Process Framework

Institution	Responsibility - Implementation
Project Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide strategic guidance, strengthen inter-ministerial coordination, address implementation bottlenecks, and monitor performance
PIU-FDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for the national supervision (oversight) of the Process Framework Engagement/Restoration/Livelihood Restoration Plans. Providing funds for Livelihood restoration activities Recruitment of Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists (ESSS) within the PIU Recruitment of focal points (FPs) for regional activities Information and dissemination (Process Framework, LRP, social studies, etc.) To assist in resolving issues referred to it by the Regional/County FDA or County administrative authorities
Regional/ County PIU-FDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional/ County supervision of Plan and reporting to head office To assist in resolving issues referred to it by the District administrative authorities
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and monitor Social Impact Assessment
Liberia Land Authority (LLA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assist in the valuation and Livelihood restoration process and reporting; To assist in re-valuing disputed values of communal properties
County and District Administrative authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To oversee implementation of plans; To assist in resolving issues received directly or referred to it by the communities
Clan/ Community leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To represent community and assist in inventory of affected persons; To receive complaints from community or affected individuals and liaise with District and regional/ county



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	FDA to resolve issues
Social and environmental Consultant, if required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare plans and assist with implementation and capacity building
Community Forest and Land Management Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Will serve as the primary institution for community-level implementation under Component 2. CFMBs will be responsible for implementing Community Forest Management Plans (CFMPs) and supporting community-based monitoring activities.

The Project will establish and operationalize a Project Steering Committee (PSC) with clear Terms of Reference and a mandate to meet regularly (at least quarterly). The PSC will include representatives from the public sector (FDA, EPA, MoA, LLA, LRA, MoJ, MoFDP, MoL, MoCI), private sector organizations, NGOs, and the National Union of Community Forestry Development Committees (NUCFDC). The PSC will provide strategic guidance, strengthen inter-ministerial coordination, address implementation bottlenecks and monitor performance.

FDA will serve as the lead implementing agency for the overall project. Building on experience from the closed Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP), FDA has established foundational systems including a functional MRV framework, REDD+ safeguards information system, Project-level grievance mechanisms, and piloted regional/community forestry structures.

A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will be established within FDA, reporting to the FDA Managing Director. The PIU will be staffed with:

- i. Project Coordinator;
- ii. Fiduciary experts (Procurement Specialist and Financial Management Specialist);
- iii. Environmental, Social, and Gender Specialist(s);
- iv. Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist; and
- v. Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Expert. Clear roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines will be defined through standardized operating procedures (SOPs), with periodic joint supervision to maintain feedback loops from field to center.

As the PIU, the Forestry Development Authority has the overall responsibility for preparing and implementing the PF with World Bank approval. It will ensure that all engagement, Livelihood restoration activities are fully discussed with affected persons in a participatory manner and carried out satisfactorily.

The Regional and County FDA will organize the county and district orientation and training for the various government agencies at the county level likely to be involved in the process, to be ready to implement alternative livelihood schemes and other related activities in a timely manner. The regional/county FDA will ensure that progress reports reach the head office regularly. The project administration and restoration planning will run concurrently.



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Much of the work will be done at the county and district levels. The County FDA through the County and District offices which are the local administrative authority, and also following the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, will ensure that

- Communities are properly and adequately informed (timely, and also their rights and options relating to their properties that may be affected by the project)
- Coordinate activities between different communities implementing the community support or Livelihood restoration plans
- Ensure timely implementation of Livelihood restoration plans
- Attend to any grievances submitted by the affected persons/ communities

The County FDA through the clan/community leaders will engage and involve all sections of the community in discussions on the Livelihood restoration plans. They will

- Schedule open meetings to ensure that all community members are informed and they are fully aware of their rights and options regarding the restoration activity
- Identify impacts on lands and assets and the members of the community to be affected and to what extent they will be affected

10.1 Capacity Assessment and Building for Community Forest and Land Management Bodies

For the LiFE project, CFMBs and CLDMCs are the "frontline" of safeguard implementation. They will serve as the primary institution for community-level implementation under Component 2. CFMBs will be responsible for implementing Community Forest Management Plans (CFMPs) and supporting community-based monitoring activities. While they possess significant local legitimacy, their technical and governance gaps are substantial. By assessing challenges, they face and adapting capacity building to the specific legal frameworks (CRL 2009 and LRA 2018) and the socio-political context of rural Liberia, the project can transform these bodies into effective guardians of both biodiversity and community rights. Table 10-2 and Table 10-3 capacity assessment and support needed for both entities.

Table 10-2: Capacity assessment and Support for Community Forest Management Bodies

Component	Contextual weakness and challenges	Capacity building support needed
Community Forest Management Body (NUCFMB)	Elite Capture which is reflected in vulnerability to influence by local elites or commercial logging interests, which can marginalize the interests of the poor and women during eligibility verification.	Governance Coaching: Training on transparent decision-making, public disclosure of PAP lists, and the inclusion of marginalized groups (women, youth, and the landless) in verification processes.
	Heavy reliance on the FDA for technical guidance, which can be a bottleneck if the FDA's own capacity is stretched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contracting local NGOs and civil society organizations to provide specialized training in forest inventory, management planning, and safeguard compliance. ▪ Developing "Community Manuals" and digital toolkits (offline-capable) that provide step-by-step instructions for



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		forest management tasks, reducing the need for external consultation.
	Limited capacity to manage complex livelihood restoration grants.	Financial Management Training: Basic bookkeeping, budget tracking, and financial reporting for community-level livelihood funds.
	Limited Enforcement in terms of lacking formal enforcement power to manage access restrictions without causing local conflict.	Conflict Mediation Training: Workshops on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and community-based patrolling techniques that emphasize dialogue over coercion.
	The proliferation of illegal mining activities has led to significant degradation of most forested areas and requires special attention and constant monitoring by the relevant agencies responsible for forest resource management.	The LIFE-P seeks support efficient stakeholder collaboration, promote integrated monitoring approaches, and reinforce environmental redress mechanisms to help mitigate such risks in project areas.
	A lack of coordination among government agencies (EPA, FDA, Ministry of Mines and Energy, MoA) and failure to comply with forest governance rules ultimately pose a major challenge to the management of community forests in most regions of the country. This includes, in particular, the granting of mining licenses to mining companies to operate in protected areas, especially in community forests that are conservation areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organise Legal Rights Workshops: Intensive training on the hierarchy of laws in Liberia, focusing on the 2009 Community Rights Law and the 2018 Land Rights Act and how they relate to the Mining Law. The objective is to empower CFMBs to identify when mining licenses are issued in violation of community forest rights. ▪ Implement multi-Stakeholder Forums: Establishing county-level platforms where CFMBs can meet regularly with representatives from the FDA, MME, EPA, and MoA to discuss land use conflicts.
	Weaknesses of the grievance management mechanism. Complaints are often not being formally addressed and sometimes ignored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementing a community-led scorecard system to rate the performance of the CFMB/CLDMC in resolving grievances
	Preparation and development of a land-use plan for community forests, along with a cost-benefit analysis to inform the drafting of the plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participatory Land-Use Planning (PLUP): Training CFMBs in PLUP techniques to categorize forest areas for conservation, commercial use, and subsistence. ▪ Providing simplified Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) tools and training to evaluate the economic trade-offs between



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		different forest uses (e.g., logging vs. carbon credits vs. NTFPs).
	Challenges in raising public awareness about the delineation of Community-Based Fisheries Management Areas (CFMAs).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Awareness Campaigns through developing and deploying highly visual awareness materials (e.g., color-coded maps, physical markers/buoys) to clearly communicate CFMA boundaries. ▪ Producing and broadcasting radio programs in local dialects that explain the benefits of CFMAs for long-term food security and sustainable catch.
	Weaknesses in community land regulations designed to protect protected areas (PAs), priority protection areas (PPAs), and natural reserves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training for community-selected "Eco-Guards" in patrolling techniques, incident reporting, and the legal limits of their enforcement authority. ▪ Workshops on the National Wildlife Conservation and Protected Area Management Law (2016) and how it integrates with community-level land governance.

Table 10-3: Capacity assessment and Support for Community Land Development Management Committees

Component	Contextual weakness and challenges	Capacity building support needed
Community Land Development Management Committees	Many communities are still in the process of "Self-Identification" and have not yet fully established or trained their CLDMCs.	Legal Formalization Support: Technical and financial assistance to complete the Liberia Land Authority (LLA) self-identification and formalization process.
	Inexperience in managing customary land titles and formal registration.	Land Rights Training: Detailed training on the 2018 Land Rights Act, focusing on the rights of customary owners and the process for formalizing community land titles.
	Significant time and resources are often consumed by inter-community boundary disputes, delaying the implementation of land-based restoration measures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Boundary Harmonization Workshops: Facilitated sessions using LLA-approved ADR mechanisms to resolve boundary disputes and reach formal agreements with neighbouring communities. ▪ Training on Conflict Mediation



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		utilizing the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms recognized by the LLA to resolve boundary and inheritance disputes.
	Lack of tools and skills for Participatory Mapping.	GIS & Mapping Support: Provision of handheld GPS units and training on participatory mapping techniques to demarcate restricted areas and identify replacement lands.
	Historical exclusion of women and widows from land inheritance.	Targeted training on Gender-Responsive Land Management to ensure widows and women in customary marriages are not excluded as part of a inclusive governance approach
	Limited understanding of the formal land registration process and the technical requirements for participatory mapping under the Liberia Land Authority (LLA) guidelines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hands-on Mapping Training: Intensive field training for CLDMC members on the use of GPS units and the technical requirements for LLA-compliant boundary surveys. ▪ Land Registration Roadshows: Joint LLA-Project workshops to explain the 4-step process for customary land formalization (Self-ID, Mapping, Governance, Deed) ▪ Training in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) specifically focused on resolving boundary overlaps identified during the mapping process.



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11 Budget for implementing the Process Framework

Funding for the implementation of the Process Framework will include the following components:

- Community Consultations;
- Eligibility Surveys & Census;
- Registry Preparation;
- Livelihood Support (Grants/Assets)
- Capacity Building (CFMBs/CLDMCs)
- GM Operations;
- Independent Monitoring (Mid-term/Closing);
- Internal Monitoring & Reporting

The budget in Table 11-1 provides an estimate of the financial resources required to implement the Process Framework effectively. The largest allocation is for direct livelihood support, ensuring that affected households have the resources they need to transition to sustainable livelihoods. Adequate funding for capacity building and monitoring ensures that the project remains compliant with ESS5 and responsive to community needs.

Table 11-1: Proposed disaggregated budget Estimates for Process Framework Activities

Activity Component	Unit Cost	Quantity (Est.)	Total cost (USD)
Community Consultations	\$1,500 / meeting	21 meetings	31 500
Eligibility Surveys & Census	\$50 / household	25,000 households	1 250 000
Registry Preparation	\$5,000 / site	5 sites (PA/CFMA)	25 000
Livelihood Support (Grants/Assets)	\$1,200 / household	25,000 households	30 000 000
Capacity Building (CFMBs/CLDMCs)	\$10,000 / body	20 bodies	200 000
GM Operations	\$2,000 / month	36 months	72 000
Independent Monitoring (Mid-term/Closing)	\$40,000 / audit	2 audits	80 000
Internal Monitoring & Reporting	\$1,500 / month	36 months	54 000
TOTAL			31 658 500

The estimated budget for implementing the PF is **\$31 658 500**, excluding the provision for compensation for access restriction.



12 Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangement

Monitoring is key in the Process Framework implementation. It feeds the management with the required information whenever needed throughout the implementation of the project. The monitoring plans need to be put in place for the project and each sub-project.

The monitoring programme will provide regular feedback on the implementation of the Process Framework. Monitoring teams at the County FDA level will be constituted and led by appointed Focal Points, who will report regularly at the national level through the national Focal Point at the FDA. The County team will comprise the County official, County FDA, District representative, community groups while the district team will be constituted by the County FDA, District representative, and County representative. CSOs will also be involved in the monitoring and will require training on sector activities including information systems.

The monitoring indicators should cover areas such as (1) basic information on affected persons' households, (2) restoration of living standards and livelihoods, (3) levels of affected persons' satisfaction determined by number of grievances registered, and (4) effectiveness of restoration planning.

Some indicators are suggested as follows which are consistent with provisions within the ESMF for the project.

Land Tenure and Ownership issues: The key indicators may include (1) availability of documentation; (2) disputes registered; and (3) grievances resolved and recorded.

Livelihoods: Key indicators may include (1) alternatives provided; (2) support and incentives available; and (3) results documented *Cultural heritage:* Key indicators will include (1) cultural rites agreed, performed and documented

These indicators may be verified from various sources such as field inspections, site reports, special project audits, annual monitoring and so on.

An evaluation programme will be implemented periodically to also check on compliance with policy and provide lessons to amend strategies, especially in the longer term. The evaluation will be based on current WB procedures and also national provisions on access restriction /Livelihood restoration. It will identify actions which will improve policy and offer higher guarantees of implementation success. The process will be incorporated in the general assessment and review usually undertaken for the project.

12.1 Independent monitoring

To ensure the integrity of the Process Framework and its compliance with World Bank ESS5, the project will need to incorporate rigorous independent monitoring and a proactive adaptive management approach. These mechanisms ensure that the project remains responsive to the actual needs of affected communities and that any shortcomings in livelihood restoration are promptly addressed.

The project will engage an independent third-party monitor that could be a specialized social audit firm or a qualified NGO to evaluate the implementation of the Process Framework.

Independent monitoring will be conducted at two critical junctures:



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- **Mid-Term Audit:** This must be carried out between 18-24 months after the start of livelihood restoration activities. This audit focuses on the effectiveness of the delivery mechanisms and early signs of livelihood recovery.
- **Closing Audit (Completion Audit):** To be conducted 6-12 months before project closure. This audit evaluates whether the "Sufficiency Standard" has been met for all Project Affected Persons (PAPs) and provides the basis for formal project sign-off.

The mid-term and final audit findings should be documented in an accessible format (e.g. posters in the local language, radio broadcasts or community meetings) and communicated to the communities concerned. Subsequently, the full monitoring reports will be published on the project website and on the World Bank's external portal.

Adaptive Management Clause

The project recognizes that social and economic conditions can change, and initial livelihood restoration measures may not always yield the expected results.

If independent monitoring, internal tracking, or the Grievance mechanism (GM) indicates that the livelihood restoration measures are insufficient to restore or improve the well-being of affected households, the Project Management Unit (PMU) is mandated to initiate a formal review and revision of the Livelihood Restoration Plans (LRPs). This review will involve direct consultation with the affected households and the Community Verification Committee (CVC) to identify the gaps and co-design corrective actions.

The adaptive management process will be triggered if the results of the mid-term review show that more than 20% of households benefiting from the programme (PAP) fall below the reference level for income or food security. Furthermore, it will also be triggered if it is established that a significant number of grievances (for example, > 10% of PAPs) relate to the inadequacy of the livelihoods or training provided. Finally, a further condition for triggering the process will be if external shocks (e.g. a poor harvest, market collapse) make the initially planned alternative livelihood options unviable.

12.2 Socioeconomic monitoring

This will focus on the following changes and happenings to income levels and standards of living of PAPs/community. For areas in the vicinity of project-supported forests, national parks and wildlife reserves, a baseline socio-economic information is included in the area management plans. The data available will be used as the basis for determining the eligibility of communities, individual for assistance and base for measuring changes. It will also be used for designing measures to assist the affected persons in their efforts to improve their livelihoods. The baseline assessment will include detailed information on demographic characteristics and income sources. With this baseline, the Project Technical Team will monitor the success of mitigation measures over time.

Follow-up assessments will update these data for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation of the implementation and impacts of the protected area management plans, community CFM agreements, community wildlife management and revenue sharing agreements and other sub project specific Action Plans. The specific monitoring indicators will be outlined in the Action Plan. Possible indicators include: numbers of eligible communities and households; the potential livelihood impacts to these communities and households of new or more strictly enforced restrictions on use of resources in the protected areas;



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livelihood benefits of measures to assist the affected persons; numbers of communities, households, groups and individuals participating in financial schemes and grants; and funds disbursed to the eligible communities, groups, individual and households. Independent monitoring of the activities can be done by NGOs, private consultants where appropriate. Carrying out such independent monitoring will enhance the openness and transparency of the implementation of mitigation measures. The Project Steering Committee will have to approve participation of NGOs in independent monitoring activities, depending on their requirements. The NGOs' participation will be funded by the NGOs themselves, using their own resources unless special funding and participation arrangements are approved by the Project Steering Committee.

12.3 Park authorities monitoring

Monitoring indicators for Liberia's protected areas should integrate ecological, social, and governance dimensions to ensure alignment with ESS5 safeguards. Access indicators may include the number of controlled access permits issued, frequency of seasonal or buffer zone agreements, and reported cases of denied access. Community interaction indicators should track FPIC consultations conducted in Indigenous languages, participation rates in co-management forums, and grievances submitted and resolved through culturally appropriate mechanisms. Enforcement impact indicators can measure complaints related to ranger conduct, frequency of joint patrols, and instances of mediation versus confrontation. Benefit-sharing indicators should capture local employment in ecotourism or restoration, and distribution of conservation-related revenues. Finally, data system indicators will assess the functionality of grievance tracking tools, completeness of participatory mapping records, and consistency of donor safeguard reporting.

Biodiversity and habitat monitoring data directly underpin Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) evaluations, as ecological performance is closely linked to compliance with ESS5 safeguards. Habitat condition indicators derived from remote sensing and field surveys—such as forest cover, species richness, and ecosystem integrity—inform decisions on community access and zoning. Monitoring of key wildlife and fish species guides sustainable limits on hunting, grazing, and fishing to balance livelihoods with conservation objectives. Forest carbon and REDD+ data further connect ecological outcomes to benefit-sharing arrangements. Participatory monitoring involving Indigenous observers embeds traditional knowledge into reporting, while biodiversity trends are cross-referenced with enforcement records to assess both effectiveness and social acceptability. Integrated national and donor-supported monitoring platforms consolidate ecological and social data, enabling comprehensive ESF assessment.

13 Annexe A: Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes



Forestry Development Authority (FDA)
Liberia Forest Economy Project (LiFE-P)
 Republic of Liberia

Grand Cape Mount County
Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
Ministry of Local Government (Superintendent Office) (Land of Endless Opportunities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome the E&S team for the presentation of the project. • Emphasize the need for coordinated forest management activities with the local government leadership. • Stressed the need for women participation in forest related project activities • 10,500 trees planted in Sehbehum on the 50 ha of land for restoration. 	The project team appreciated the Superintendent for welcoming them at his county office and assured him of providing updates on the project, as it is still in its preparatory phase. The team further commended the local government for its support to the FDA staff (Rangers) assigned in the county at the Protected Areas (Lake Piso Multiple Use Reserve, Warkolor).	Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related activities and the E&S framework implementation processes
Town Chief – (Sehbehum town)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The town chief acknowledged the presence of FDA in their community, and expressed good working relationship. • Maintaining forest 	The Project team acknowledged Sehbehum town leadership idea of the project and their workings and understanding of project activities. Participation of vulnerable groups (women and children) were emphasized, and their rights to information concerning LiFE–Project.	Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.

	<p>regulations and executing recommendations from the FDA staffs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our people often depend on charcoal production, fishing (hopeful of expansion). • We are also involved in village savings loan schemes. 		
Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressed willingness to cooperate with FDA as they have always done. And would appreciate the opportunities that the LiFE – Project will contribute to their livelihoods. 	<p>Informed the youth of their roles and responsibilities during project implementation. Process that leads to youth participation is of high priority for the project, as contribution toward the livelihood of the town will be done through youth involvement</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>
Women (Sehbehum town)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information about the LiFE – Project is so good and we wholeheartedly • Issues with SEA/SH/GBV are at a low risk in the town. • Women participation in the project will be of good support for empowerment and developmental initiatives 	<p>The LiFE Project acknowledges the assessment that SEA/SH/GBV risks are currently low in the town. The project will, however, maintain a proactive approach by strengthening awareness, prevention measures, and accessible grievance mechanisms to ensure risks remain minimized.</p> <p>We also consent on the importance of women’s participation. LiFE-Project will promote inclusive engagement and ensure that women are actively involved in project activities, decision-making processes, and livelihood opportunities, in order to support empowerment and sustainable development outcomes.</p> <p>The project remains committed to advancing gender inclusion and maintaining robust E&S safeguards in line with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

Gbarpolu County
Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
<p>Local Government</p> <p>Superintendent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea of the LiFE-Project was welcomed by the Superintendent and his staff. • He emphasized the need for collaborative efforts from the FDA in tackling illegal activities in forested areas in the county. • Coordinated strengthening of the local government in monitoring projects in the county. • There is high level of chainsaw milling and illegal mining activities ongoing in the county's Protected Areas • Human-wildlife conflicts need more attention and a resolution in handling those conflicts • Alternative livelihood should be of high priority so that benefits can be felt by everyone in the project 	<p>Thank you, Superintendent, for the warm welcome and for your valuable observations. The LiFE-Project E&S team appreciates the support of the local government and the ongoing efforts of the FDA and its partners in the county.</p> <p>We acknowledge that limited livelihood alternatives remain a key challenge affecting conservation outcomes. And the need to prioritize support for sustainable, community-based livelihood options to reduce pressure on forest resources and enhance local benefits.</p> <p>We also note the concerns related to demarcation of Protected Areas and Proposed Protected Areas. And that strengthening clarity and awareness around boundaries will be important to minimize future conflicts, and the project will work with relevant stakeholders to support improved processes and communication.</p> <p>The need for stronger collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government and other institutions to promote inclusive and coordinated engagement mechanisms to ensure effective implementation and alignment with national and local priorities, in line with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework is very significant.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related activities and the E&S framework implementation processes</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> area Benefit-sharing in the county at most levels is not affecting the livelihood of communities in the most positive manner. We would like to know more about the project to understand the community aspect Interagency (FDA,EPA, MME, MLG) coordination requires strong coordination to curb overlaps in concession areas 		
Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The county CAO commended the LiFE-Project E&S Team for the engagement and expressed interest in working with the project team at the county level during the implementation of the project. 	<p>Appreciates the County Administration’s support and commitment to engage with the project during implementation.</p> <p>Recognizing the critical role of the County Administration, particularly the CAO, in facilitating coordination, stakeholder engagement, and oversight at the local level. The project will work closely with county authorities to ensure that E&S measures are effectively integrated, and that implementation is aligned with local priorities and institutional frameworks.</p> <p>LIFE-Project ESF will focus on fostering strong partnerships at the county level to support inclusive and sustainable project outcomes in line with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework.</p>	Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.
National Union of Community Forest Management Body (NUCFMB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasized the need for strengthen coordination with the FDA and its partners before initiation of the project the region. 	It is significant to have strengthened coordination with the FDA and its partners prior to and during project implementation. As effective collaboration will be essential to ensure alignment with existing forest management efforts and to support coherent	Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The illegal mining activities in the county is causing significant degradation in most forest areas and requires attention and continuous monitoring from relevant institutions governing forest resources. 	<p>planning and execution at the regional level.</p> <p>We also acknowledge the significant impact of illegal mining activities on forest degradation. Addressing these risks will require enhanced monitoring, enforcement, and interagency coordination among institutions responsible for forest governance.</p> <p>The LIFE-P seeks support efficient stakeholder collaboration, promote integrated monitoring approaches, and reinforce environmental redress mechanisms to help mitigate such risks in project areas.</p>	
<p>Park Warden/Rangers of Gola National Forest</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledged the presence of the LiFE-Project team idea of the Project. • Expressed challenges in manning the Forest especially with limited logistics availability and manpower increase. Patrols in the Forest areas require a significant number of rangers and a definite provision of materials needed to keep the patrol persistent. • Patrols are often supported by NGOs through Ecoguards they hire and also provide logistics for the FDA Rangers to initiative and monitor the patrol activities in the forest. 	<p>Operational challenges related to limited manpower and logistical constraints in effectively managing and patrolling forest areas is of concern. We recognize that sustained patrol efforts require adequate ranger capacity and consistent provision of essential materials. The current support from NGOs, including the deployment of ecoguards and logistical assistance, is noted and appreciated as a critical contribution to ongoing monitoring efforts.</p> <p>LIFE-Project will work with relevant stakeholders to explore opportunities for strengthening capacity, improving coordination, and supporting sustainable approaches to forest monitoring and protection, in line with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

<p>Teamah Town (forest-fringe community)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appreciate the presence of FDA Rangers in the community and the orderly coordination and mutual working engagements. • Residence of Teamah town mentioned that the ideas previously shared with them about the management of the forest through restricted farming, mining and other activities felt like a threat to their livelihoods. But nowadays, they realized that it is for their general good. • The town chief emphasized the need for clearer demarcation so as to identified areas that are around the community to be used for gardening, fishing and lowland farming for alternative livelihood support. • Ecoguards recruitment by conservational NGOs working around the Gola National Forest serves as a boost for jobs creation. • There is a need that the Rangers manning the forest be effectively supported to strengthen 	<p>The LIFE-Project team appreciates the community's evolving understanding of forest management measures and their long-term benefits for livelihoods and environmental sustainability. We acknowledge the concerns raised regarding clear demarcation of land for community use. Ensuring clarity on boundaries is essential to reduce conflicts and support planning for alternative livelihoods such as gardening, fishing, and lowland farming.</p> <p>The project will work with relevant stakeholders to strengthen awareness and communication around demarcation processes.</p> <p>We also recognize the positive role of ecoguard recruitment in creating employment opportunities and supporting conservation efforts around Gola National Forest. In addition, we note the need to further support rangers responsible for forest protection. The project will engage stakeholders to explore opportunities for strengthening capacity, logistics, and coordination to enhance effective forest management.</p> <p>The project aims at balancing conservation objectives with sustainable livelihood opportunities for communities, in line with the World Bank Environmental and Social Standards (ESS).</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>
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	the protection of the forest.		
Teamah Town Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a lot of information about development projects around the forest areas, but during the implementation of these projects, benefits are not reflected in the lives of the community dwellers. • Access to road remains a major challenge for our community. Rehabilitation of pliable roads is of concern for our communities. • Youth in the communities are willing to work with FDA as Ecoguards to help managed the Gola Forest. Thus serving as a livelihood alternative for youth empowerment • Society for the Conservation of Nature (SCNL) provided cocoa seedling for the town. Also, Welt Hunger (WHH) provided grant to the town for small skill farming 	<p>The Project team acknowledges that, in many cases, development projects have not delivered visible benefits to local communities, and we acknowledge the need to improve how project outcomes translate into real livelihood gains.</p> <p>We note the challenge of poor road access, which limits movement, trade, and service delivery. While road rehabilitation is not a component focus of the project, LIFE-Project will coordinate with relevant authorities to ensure such issues are considered within broader development efforts in project areas.</p> <p>We also welcome the willingness of youth to engage as ecoguards in support of forest protection. This presents a valuable opportunity for employment and community participation in conservation.</p> <p>Furthermore, we recognize the contributions of SCNL and WHH in supporting cocoa production and small-scale farming. The project will aim to build on these efforts by strengthening sustainable livelihood options and improving coordination among partners.</p>	Continue engagements with the county leadership on LIFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.
Religious Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After posing the restriction 	Restrictions on access to forest resources,	Continue engagements with the county

	<p>on the forested areas believed to be inherited from our forefathers, there are no sustainable livelihood alternatives mechanisms put in place and monitored to have forest-fringe community dwellers managing forest surroundings. Including schools and hospitals</p>	<p>particularly in areas with strong customary ties can have significant implications for livelihoods and social services if not adequately accompanied by sustainable alternatives.</p> <p>We acknowledge the need for sustainable livelihood options that are both accessible and effectively monitored to support forest-fringe communities in managing their surroundings. And the need to prioritize the development of community-based livelihood interventions, alongside capacity building and support systems to ensure their sustainability over time.</p> <p>We also note the broader concerns related to access to essential services such as education and healthcare. While these may extend beyond the direct scope of the project, inclusive interventions and coordinated efforts with relevant authorities and partners to contribute to improved community well-being.</p> <p>In keeping with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework, the project encourages promoting a balanced approach that supports conservation objectives while safeguarding livelihoods and social outcomes.</p>	<p>leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>
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Lofa County

Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
<p>Superintendent (Local Government)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The superintendent welcomed the LiFE-Project team into the county and applauded 	<p>Thank you, Superintendent, for the warm welcome and for your constructive feedback. The LiFE-Project team appreciates the support of the local government and acknowledges the ongoing efforts</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related activities and the E&S framework</p>

	<p>the idea of the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local government office acknowledged the presence of FDA in the county and their activities with other partners in the county • Provision for livelihood alternatives is of serious concern for conservation activities in the county • FDA should enhance demarcation concerns arising in PA and PPs in the county so as to avoid near future challenges. • There is a need for strengthened collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government (MLG) and other relevant stakeholders for proactive engagements in the forest areas. 	<p>of the FDA and its partners in the county. Limited livelihood alternatives remain a key constraint to effective conservation. And it is important to prioritize the development of sustainable, community-based livelihood options to reduce pressure on forest resources while enhancing local economic opportunities.</p> <p>We also note the concerns related to demarcation of Protected Areas and Proposed Protected Areas. Strengthening stakeholder engagement around boundary setting is essential to minimizing potential conflicts.</p> <p>There is a need for collaboration with the Ministry of Local Government and other stakeholders. The project will promote inclusive coordination mechanisms to ensure proactive engagement and alignment with local and national priorities.</p>	<p>implementation processes</p>
<p>Foya Reforestation Area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs support reforestation activities and other programs focus on planting diverse, native tree species on degraded landscapes. • There are current nurseries breeding ongoing in the area for planting. • SCNL conduct stakeholders meetings 	<p>Thank you for these inputs. The project team acknowledges and supports ongoing NGO-led reforestation efforts, including the use of diverse native species and active nursery development.</p> <p>We also recognize SCNL’s stakeholder trainings and clustered approach in addressing deforestation in the palm oil and cocoa value chains, as well as the establishment of nursery sites. We will continue to collaborate with partners to strengthen coordination and scale up impact.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

	and trainings for farmers in reducing deforestation from palm oil and cocoa value chain. And established nursery site for palm oil. The training is conducted in clustered segments to facilitate the initiatives		
NUCFMB (Lofa)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CFMB continue to experience high disadvantage often rising from non-negotiation between Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and the FDA before issuance of mining licenses after expressing interest in conservation of the Community Forest (CF). • Complaints are not being formally addressed and sometimes ignored. The Multi-Stakeholder Forest Governance and Accountability Project (MFGAP) have been instrumental in addressing some of these concerns. 	<p>Thank you for raising these concerns. The project team recognizes the challenges faced by CFMBs, particularly limited coordination between MME and FDA in issuing mining licenses affecting community forests.</p> <p>We also acknowledge gaps in addressing complaints and will work to strengthen grievance redress and ensure issues are formally handled.</p> <p>We appreciate MFGAP's role and will continue engaging partners to improve coordination, transparency, and accountability.</p>	Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.

Nimba County

Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project E&S Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
<p>Ministry of Local Government</p> <p>Superintendent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomed the LiFE-P team into the county and appreciate the idea of the project being share with relevant stakeholders before the implementation. • The coordination of FDA in the county is only with the CFMBs, and not cordial with the Ministry of Local Government. 	<p>Thank the superintendent for the feedback. The project E&S team appreciates the importance of early engagement and will continue to ensure that project information is shared with all relevant stakeholders prior to implementation.</p> <p>We also take note of the coordination concerns involving the FDA and the Ministry of Local Government. Strengthening inter-agency collaboration at the county level is essential, and we will engage the respective institutions to promote more inclusive and effective coordination moving forward.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related activities and the E&S framework implementation processes</p>
<p>NUCFMB</p> <p>National President</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Union of Community Forest Management Bodies expressed gratitude to the LiFE-Project team for the regional stakeholder engagement. • Interagency (EPA, FDA, MME, MoA) and non-compliance of forest governance coordination has been a serious challenge for CF management in most parts of the country. Including issuance of mining licenses to miners to operate in Protected Areas. Especially 	<p>Thank you to NUCFMB for the engagement and partnership. As the E&S team, we recognize the challenges with weak interagency coordination (EPA, FDA, MME, MoA), including non-compliance and mining activities in protected and community conservation areas. We will continue engaging institutions to strengthen coordination and safeguards.</p> <p>We acknowledge the proposal for a National Land-Use Plan for Community Forests and support the use of cost-benefit analysis for informed planning. We also note the need to improve awareness on CFMA demarcation and enforce community land regulations to protect PAs, PPAs, and reserves.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

	<p>Community Forest that are conservational areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NUCFMB has proposed a National Land-Use Plan for CF, with cost-benefit analysis to inform the Plan development. • There is a need for strengthened awareness for demarcation of CFMAs. • There is a need for enforced community land regulations for the protection of PAs and PPAs and Natural Reserves. • Considerably, the East Nimba Nature Reserves (ENNR) merged and forms a co-management body with the Blei CF in Nimba County. They have 100 Ecoguards, and the CF has 12 Forest Guards. 		
<p>Ministry of Health Community Health Assistant (CHA) SEA/SH/GBV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trained to treat malaria, fever, and support midwifery in the region. • There is a challenge of awareness creation in the region on maternal care, primarily due to lack of mobility and limited staffing. • In 2025, there were cases of GBV in parts of the county. • Rape case was reported in 2024 in Gbapa town, 	<p>As the E&S team, we recognize the efforts in healthcare delivery despite mobility and staffing constraints, and the project will support increased awareness.</p> <p>We are concerned about SGBV, and also strengthening prevention, reporting, and survivor-centered response systems.</p> <p>We also note that grievances are mainly handled at the community level and will work to improve formal GM systems to ensure timely and appropriate responses in project areas.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

	<p>Nimba County, and the perpetrator was investigated and turned over to the relevant authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual Harassment occurred at a substantial level in the region. • Grievances are mostly handled at the community leadership level. • It is of high importance that responses to SEA/SH/GBV be prompt and timely 		
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Grand Gedeh County

Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project E&S Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
<p>Ministry of Local Government (Superintendent)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge the presence of the LiFE-Project team in the county, and the idea of the project E&S activities. • Community Rights Laws, 2018 is compromised in most of the forested communities in the county. • And the National Benefit-Sharing Trust (NBST) Board that manages and distributes forest land rental fees to communities affected by logging, 	<p>Thank the superintendent for the warm acknowledgment and for sharing these concerns. As the project E&S team, we appreciate the importance of inclusive engagement and the role of E&S measures in project implementation.</p> <p>We recognize the reported gaps in the application of the Community Rights Law (2018) and concerns regarding the effectiveness of the NBST Board and CFDCs in representing community interests. We will continue to engage relevant institutions and stakeholders to promote transparency, accountability, and adherence to established</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related activities and the E&S framework implementation processes</p>

	<p>specifically through Community Forestry Development Committees (CFDCs), is not completely working in the interest of the communities they represent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for a strong coordination of Liberia Immigration Services (LIS), Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC), Ministry of State (MoS) and the FDA. • Legal agreement should be for foreigners migrating into bordered counties in the region. • There is cordial relationship with other national, yet the CFDC leadership is not working with the local government in the county. 	<p>legal frameworks. We also note the need for stronger coordination among LIS, LRRRC, MoS, and FDA, particularly in managing cross-border dynamics and migration. Strengthening institutional collaboration and clarifying legal arrangements for migrants in border counties will be important areas of engagement.</p>	
<p>Regional Forester</p> <p>Region Four (4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to the management of the FDA for the LiFE-Project preparations and E&S stakeholder engagements in the region. • Currently, there are 2 protected areas and one proposed protected area. Eight CF and 3 FMCs. • The PAs and PPA are under-staff with limited logistics. • Encroachments (illegal mining, poaching) in these 	<p>As the project E&S team, we acknowledge the current landscape, including the presence of Protected Areas, Proposed Protected Areas, Community Forests, and FMCs in the region. We recognize the challenges of understaffing and limited logistics affecting effective management, as well as ongoing encroachments such as illegal mining and poaching. These pose significant risks to conservation efforts. We also appreciate the role of partners like WCF and FF in supporting patrols and joint security initiatives, particularly around Sapo</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

	<p>CF remains a major challenge in most parts of the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most patrols in the protected areas are supported by partners (WCF, FF) through joint security initiatives for monitoring of Sapo National Park. 	<p>National Park. Working with relevant stakeholders to strengthen capacity, improve coordination, and support measures that enhance protection and monitoring across these areas are priorities for consideration</p>	
<p>Park Warden Grebo-Krahn PA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grebo-Krahn National Park which currently covers approximately 96,000 plus hectares is challenge with manpower. There is low manpower to staff the PA. This has led to continuous poaching, illegal mining and farming in the PA. 	<p>Thank you for raising this concern. As the project E&S team, we recognize the significant staffing constraints in Grebo-Krahn National Park, given its large size, and the implications for effective protection. Acknowledging that limited manpower contributes to ongoing challenges such as poaching, illegal mining, and encroachment for farming. There is a need to explore opportunities for strengthening ranger capacity, improving logistics, and supporting community-based monitoring approaches.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>Park Warden KWA PPA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently four hotspots in the PPA with approximately 173 thousand hectares. Monthly joint patrol consisting of Arm Forces of Liberia (AFL), Liberia Immigration Services, Liberia National Police (LNP) and FDA. • For patrols support, NGOs usually provide ration for 	<p>The LiFE -Project E&S team recognize the significance of the identified hotspots within the PPA and commend the ongoing joint patrol efforts involving the AFL, LIS, LNP, and FDA. And also acknowledge the critical support provided by NGOs in sustaining patrol operations through rations and logistics; particularly beyond the initial SUSTAIN project timeframe. This reflects the effectiveness and importance of these coordinated efforts.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

	<p>patrolmen including for, Ecoguards, Rangers, and national security apparatuses who join the operations. This initiative was initially agreed for a period of three months through EU funded project SUSTAIN. However, due the effective work being carried on by these forest guards, it has since continued from October 2025, to present.</p>		
SEA/SH/GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several substantial concerns were raised on the SEA/SH/GBV including possible SGBV actions due to influx of foreigners in the region. 	<p>Thank you for raising these concerns. The project team takes SEA/SH/GBV risks seriously, including potential SGBV linked to the influx of foreign workers.</p> <p>The project will enforce a strict Code of Conduct, conduct trainings, and strengthen community awareness and reporting mechanisms. We will also work with local partners to ensure confidential, survivor-centered response services. Monitoring and addressing these risks will continue throughout project implementation.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

River Gee County

Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
<p>Ministry of Local Government</p> <p>Superintendent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Local Government acknowledges the presence of LiFE-Project team in the county, and 	<p>Thank you for the feedback and continued collaboration. The project E&S team acknowledges the cordial coordination between the Ministry of Local Government and FDA, while recognizing that limited FDA staffing affects presence in forest</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related activities and the E&S framework implementation processes</p>

	<p>coordination with the FDA regional team in the county is cordial. Limited staffing of FDA personnel in the region remains a challenge; thus causing the absence of personnel in the forest communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications need to be enhance at all level (companies, NGOs) involve in forest related operations in the county. Especially companies meeting their social corporate responsibilities. • The active NGO (WCF) in the county engaged with forest related activities is working cordially with the communities. Including the hosting of workshops and rehabilitation of community road. • The local government through the communities is sometimes dissatisfied with demarcation processes due to lack of sufficient awareness in land matters in forested communities. • FDA staff in various parts of the county especially to checkpoints oftentimes initiative arrest of illegal hunters in the protected 	<p>communities.</p> <p>We note the need to strengthen communication among all actors, including companies and NGOs, particularly in meeting corporate social responsibilities. We also appreciate the positive role of WCF in supporting community engagement and infrastructure.</p> <p>Concerns around demarcation and limited awareness on land matters are well noted, and support to enhanced sensitization and stakeholder engagement is of high importance. We further recognize enforcement efforts by FDA staff in addressing illegal activities, and the need for sustainable alternative livelihoods for communities around Grebo-Krahn PA.</p>	
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	<p>areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challengingly, sustained alternative livelihood for communities around Grebo-Krahn PA is an issue of concern to be addressed 		
<p>Community Forest Development Council (CFDC)</p> <p>Forest Management Concession (FMC) – F</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The FMC-F might possibly be a benefactor of the LiFE-Project, owing to the fact that the county is a part of the project counties. Challenges of local communities hiring foreigners in forest areas is causing encroachments by illegal hunters, farmers, and miners, thereby leading to land conflict in most parts of the forested communities. These activities are causing serious depletion to the forest. This requires awareness on forest management for forest-fringe communities The CFDC encourage grievances to be address through community members-FDA-LNP at the district level before it is further escalated to other authorities, if require. 	<p>Thank you for sharing these points. From the project E&S perspective, we see clear potential for FMC-F to benefit from the LiFE Project, given its location within the project areas.</p> <p>We understand the concerns around the hiring of foreigners in forest communities, which is contributing to encroachment, illegal activities, and land conflicts. Strengthening awareness on sustainable forest management for forest-fringe communities is a key focus to minimize these activities.</p> <p>We also appreciate the existing approach to handling grievances at the community and district levels through CFDCs. There is a need to strengthen and better link these processes with formal grievance mechanisms to ensure issues are addressed in a timely, transparent, and effective manner.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>Regional Forester</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The region is calm and the LiFE-Project 	<p>The project E&S team is encouraged by the stable conditions in the region and the progress toward</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related</p>

Region Five (5)	<p>implementation will boost activities in the region. Kulaway CF, in Maryland County is in the process of signing a contract. Currently, there are four CF in the region and 1 FMC (FMC-P). With 4 partners working in forested communities for livelihood alternatives measures.</p>	<p>LiFE Project implementation.</p> <p>We note the ongoing process with Kulaway CF and the presence of multiple community forests and FMC-P, together with partners supporting alternative livelihoods. These provide a strong foundation for integrated interventions.</p> <p>There is a need complement existing efforts; strengthen coordination among partners, and support sustainable livelihood alternatives while maintaining sustainable environmental and social safeguards.</p>	activities with relevant stakeholders.
SEA/SH/GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are cases of SGBV in the counties due to insensitivity of gender rights. Amidst these acts, police often creates awareness to inform communities about the impact of SEA/SH/GBV in the region 	<p>The project E&S team acknowledges the SGBV cases in the counties, which are often driven by low awareness of gender rights.</p> <p>We appreciate the role of the police in raising awareness on SEA/SH/GBV and their impacts. There is a need to build on these efforts by strengthening community sensitization, promoting gender-responsive practices, and supporting prevention initiatives. And to improve safe and confidential reporting channels, while ensuring timely and survivor-centered responses in coordination with relevant institutions and service providers.</p>	Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.

Maryland County

Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The local government of Maryland County through its 	Thank the Superintendent, and also for sharing important concerns. E&S impact is concern about sustainability and long-term benefits after project	Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related

<p>County Development Superintendent</p>	<p>Superintendent appreciates and welcomes the LiFE-Project team in the county. These initiatives are good to better the lives of our people. Nevertheless, the triggered down effects through sustainable development practices and seldom seen after these projects are completed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It also important to consider the usage of savanna areas in Maryland County for LiFE-Project activities. As this will help to create jobs for residence of the county. 	<p>completion. The LiFE Project is interested in strengthening local capacity, promoting community ownership, including livelihood support and redress mechanisms. The use of savanna areas are sustainable, ensuring that activities align with Environmental and Social Safeguards practices. And working with the county leadership to ensure project activities are inclusive, with local priorities.</p>	<p>activities and the E&S framework implementation processes</p>
<p>Human Rights Commission (HRC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership and sustainability is important for communities during and after the implementation the project. 	<p>E&S team acknowledge that community ownership and sustainability are important for long-term impact. Including communities’ involvement in planning implementation, and build sustainable capacities.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>Environmental Protection Agency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ESF is important for 	<p>The LiFE-Project ESF is to guide sustainable forest</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county</p>

<p>(EPA)</p>	<p>the management of the forest in connection with the EPA Act, considering the proposed activities that will be implemented,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deforestation remains a national challenge and even at the county level, as reclamation is of serious concern • There is a need for a well-coordinated system between the FDA and other relevant institutions working in the region to strengthen monitoring of the forest and its resources. 	<p>management in project areas, in keeping with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations and national requirements. Deforestation remains a major challenge at both national and county levels, and there are efforts for restoration and reclamation. And the project will support practical actions that promote restoration and sustainable land use. Concerns about coordination among FDA and other institutions. And strengthening monitoring systems to improve forest governance. In keeping with environmental and social standards.</p>	<p>leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>Tubman University (TU)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea of the LiFE Project is unique, and it also considerate that the project develop a hub at the Tubman University Campus situated on 270 acres of land in Harper, Maryland County with over 3000 students enrolled. Currently, there is an established lab for MRV through NGO (NOVASPHERE). • As Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) requires relevant national data, establishing a lab at the TU is keen for sustainable forest 	<p>The LiFE-Project E&S team acknowledges the strategic value of Tubman University, including the existing MRV lab supported by NOVASPHERE, in contributing to NDC-related data and sustainable forest management</p> <p>Noting the importance of internships in building local capacity and opportunities to strengthen collaboration with the university and partners. Acknowledging the need for a sustainable capacity building program.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

	<p>management purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internship for students at the TU is often provided by NGOs that are involved with forest management activities in the county. 		
SEA/SH/GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Liberia National Police Crime Service Division (CSD) and the Human Rights Commission acknowledged cases of SGBV in the County. Confirming that these activities are substantially occurring. There is a joint service-provider approach that is often used in handling such issues. • Confidentiality remains a challenge especially from staffs that are assigned to healthcare facilities. As there is some level of cordiality amongst the LNP and HRC and the communities. For complaints, they are channel through the LNP and Ministry of Justice. • For safe home, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP) needs a safe home in the 	<p>The LIFE-Project E&S team acknowledges the reported prevalence of SGBV cases in the county, as well as the coordinated efforts by the Liberia National Police, Human Rights Commission, and other service providers in responding to cases. Challenges related to confidentiality in case management within service delivery points, and the implications this has for survivor trust and reporting is a national concern. Strengthening confidential, survivor-centered approaches is a priority under the project’s SEA/SH/GBV risk mitigation measures.</p> <p>We also note the gap in safe homes and the reliance on community-based arrangements. The need for a dedicated safe home, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and other partners to support strengthened referral pathways and service provision.</p> <p>LIFE-Project SEA/SH/GBV plan will support awareness, prevention, and response systems, and support coordination among service providers for handling of SGBV cases in line with World Bank Environmental and Social Framework standards.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LIFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

	<p>county for victims as there is no safe home in the entire county. In most cases, it is the community dwellers that provide safe home for victims voluntarily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the Human Rights Commission representative, eight cases were reported between March and April of 2026. 		
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Grand Kru County

Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
<p>Ministry of Local Government (Commissioner, City Mayor)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation on the E&S idea of the LiFE-Project through the FDA was welcomed by the local government representatives. • Alternative livelihood remains a high challenge in the county as community dwellers often survive on forest products through trade. In the county, NTFPs are 	<p>The LiFE-Project E&S team appreciates the engagement of local government representatives and the opportunity to introduce the project’s Environmental and Social Framework approach.</p> <p>We recognize that a limited alternative livelihood option is a challenge, with many communities relying on forest products, including NTFPs, often through informal and unregulated markets. The project will prioritize support for sustainable and diversified livelihood options, alongside improved value chains and governance to reduce pressure on forest resources.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related activities and the E&S framework implementation processes</p>

	<p>mostly used for marketing through unregulated procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently, there are no logging activities ongoing in the county and this is the first time FDA is discussing development initiative with us. But there is an active company (Golden Veroleum Liberia) presence in the county involved with palm cultivation. 	<p>The project E&S team will work closely with local authorities and communities to strengthen environmental and social safeguards guided by the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework.</p>	
<p>Joint Security LIS, LNP, LDEA, NSA, LNFS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a cordial relationship with other national institutions in the county, and coordinated information sharing is prevalent amongst security personnel and FDA staffs. • Activities within forest-fringe communities and stalled at the moment, considering the absence of active NGOs and companies involved with sustainable natural resource management. 	<p>The LIFE-Project E&S team welcomes the reported strong coordination and information sharing among national institutions, including security agencies and the FDA, as this provides a foundation for effective project implementation.</p> <p>The team acknowledges the current slowdown of activities in forest-fringe communities due to the limited presence of NGOs and private sector actors engaged in sustainable natural resource management and the need for reactivation of community-level interventions.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

Sinoe County

Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
<p>Local Government Superintendent Office</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appreciates the idea of LiFE-Project and the relevance of the E&S of the project. As deforestation is on the rise, alternative livelihoods models would be a boost to enhance job creation for communities in the county. Emphasizing the need for forest management that benefits people in forest-fringe communities through concessionaires companies meeting their social corporate responsibilities in the region. By implementing agreements. Currently, there are illegal activities (mining, farming, poaching) in the Sapo National Park (SNP) that requires strengthening the joint security (LNP, LIS, AFL, FDA, LDEA) efforts and create more awareness through community engagements. 	<p>The LiFE-Project E&S team appreciates the feedback recognition of the project’s relevance and its environmental and social stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Highlighting deforestation and limited livelihood opportunities remains a challenge. As support for alternative livelihood models aimed at reducing pressure on forest resources, while promoting inclusive benefits for forest-fringe communities. We also recognize the importance of ensuring that concessionaires meet their social corporate responsibilities, to encourage strengthened accountability and implementation of agreed commitments.</p> <p>We further note the concerns regarding illegal activities in Sapo National Park. Strengthening joint security collaboration among LNP, LIS, AFL, FDA, and LDEA, alongside enhanced community awareness and engagement, is important. LiFE-Project will support coordinated efforts that reinforce monitoring, compliance, and community participation in forest protection.</p> <p>The project ESF is for advancing sustainable forest management and improving environmental and social outcomes in line with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related activities and the E&S framework implementation processes</p>
<p>SEA/SH/GBV</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the county, the issue of SGBV is substantial. There are concerns 	<p>SGBV remains a significant issue in the county and requires targeted and sustained attention. There is a need to prioritize strengthening</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related</p>

	<p>about improving the community awareness on SEA/SH/GBV actions and how they can be managed through grievance mechanism channels for vulnerable people.</p>	<p>community awareness on SEA/SH/GBV risks support services, for vulnerable groups. To include local sensitization activities in local languages and engagement with community structures and service providers.</p> <p>The SEA/SH/GBV action plan is develop to reinforce accessible and safe confidential grievance mechanisms and strengthening referral pathways and coordination with relevant institutions for timely and appropriate responses.</p> <p>This is to address SEA/SH/GBV risks in line with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework and international best practice.</p>	<p>activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>LVD County Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) measures are keen for the E&S framework for the LiFE-Project, it is of importance that logistical (PPEs, field equipment) supplies be time-bound to enhance regional staff performances. 	<p>Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) implementation relies on the timely provision of essential logistics, including PPEs and field equipment. The LiFE-Project team acknowledged. Recognizing that delays in these supplies can impact staff performance and field operations. Timely distribution of OHS resources can adequately support regional teams.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>Joint Security (LNP, LIS, LDEA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LiFE-Project E&S formalization is a welcoming approach to strengthen coordination amongst stakeholders in the region and support the welfare of CF regulations within forest-fringe communities and the county. With the FDA, there is cordial working 	<p>Thank you for the positive feedback and for recognizing the value of formalizing the E&S stakeholder engagement under the LiFE-Project. It is essential to strengthen coordination among stakeholders, in support of effective implementation of community forestry regulations and improving outcomes for forest-fringe communities.</p> <p>The strong working relationship with the FDA in upholding forest governance frameworks and addressing national security considerations is commendable. We also commend the coordinated patrol efforts in Sapo National Park, including the</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

	<p>relationship in keeping with laws that govern forest management and national security concerns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During patrols in the SNP PA, there is a coordinated guided effort with support from partners through provision of logistics for operations. 	<p>logistical support provided by partners. The project will continue to build on these existing structures by strengthening coordination mechanisms, and supporting sustainable forest management.</p>	
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Rivercess County

Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
<p>Local Government Superintendent Office</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledged the idea of the LiFE-Project and the importance of the E&S framework instruments. • The County Development Steering Committee (CDSC) is working with the CFMB to management the forest resources in the communities. And the need for more agriculture/alternative livelihood activities needs to be considered during the LiFE-Project preparations and 	<p>Appreciates the feedback and the importance of the LIFE-Project Environmental and Social Framework. The role of the County Development Steering Committee (CDSC) and CFMBs in supporting community-level forest governance. And the need to strengthen and scale up agriculture-based and alternative livelihood interventions as part of its approach to reducing pressure on forest resources and enhancing community benefits was acknowledged. We also note the ongoing work of Conservation International in promoting mangrove management and livelihood support initiatives, including cassava production and village savings and loan schemes. These efforts provide a strong foundation for collaboration and learning. LIFE-Project will seek to build on such initiatives by</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related activities and the E&S framework implementation processes</p>

	<p>implementations for the benefit of communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is the presence of Conservation International (CI) currently working in the county through mangrove management programs as alternative livelihood (cassava, village saving loan scheme) actions as conservational benefits for forest-fringe communities. 	<p>promoting integrated, community-driven livelihood models, strengthening coordination among stakeholders, and ensuring that interventions are aligned with environmental sustainability and social inclusion standards in keeping with the World Bank ESF.</p>	
SEA/SH/GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The County has form a SGBV Taskforce working along with the Ministry of Health and other stakeholders to report cases through the proper procedures. These activities are supported through the REALISE Project, implemented by MoGCSP in the county, and other partners. 	<p>The LIFE-Project E&S team appreciates the establishment of the County SGBV Taskforce and its collaboration with the Ministry of Health and other stakeholders to ensure proper reporting and response.</p> <p>We also recognize the contributions of the REALISE Project and partners in strengthening coordination and service delivery.</p> <p>LIFE-Project will build on these efforts and institutional coordination to develop the SEA/SH/GBV action plan in line with the World Bank Environmental and Social Standards.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

Grand Bassa County

Stakeholder Engagement Regional Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the county is currently working on processes 	<p>Thank you for the constructive engagement and for highlighting these important developments. The</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project related</p>

<p>Project Planner (Liberia Special Economy Zone- Focal Person)</p>	<p>leading to investments in the Liberia Special Zone in Grand Bassa County, which covers 210 hectares of land, the local government appreciates the LIFE-Project E&S stakeholder engagements. Especially when there is a need to inform communities about project related environmental and social risks. African Development Bank is leading this initiative through a loan agreement, and compensation was given to fringe communities, with technical support from the Governmental of Liberia.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the county, active livelihood activities include; agriculture, mining and logging. These activities require strong regulatory and monitoring mechanism from relevant stakeholders for sustainable management of the forest resources. As the county CDSC in monitoring developmental affairs for transparent benefit 	<p>LIFE-P Environmental and Social team appreciates the county’s ongoing efforts, including the Liberia Special Zone Authority (LSEZA) initiative, and the value of early and continuous stakeholder engagement to ensure communities are well informed of project-related environmental and social risks.</p> <p>We note the ongoing investments supported by the African Development Bank (AfDB), including compensation to affected communities, and emphasize the importance of maintaining inclusivity, and adherence to national regulations and good international practice throughout implementation.</p> <p>The role of the County Development Steering Committee (CDSC) in promoting transparency and benefit sharing is important, support in coordinated regulation of agriculture, mining, and logging activities in the county, and strengthened regulatory oversight and monitoring by relevant institutions.</p> <p>Regarding grievance handling, we recognize the existing practice of channeling issues through district leadership and the FDA. LIFE-Project will work to strengthen and align these processes with formal GM to ensure timely resolution in line with the World Bank ESS.</p> <p>The project ESF will promote sustainable resource management, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and robust E&S risk management across all interventions in project areas.</p>	<p>activities and the E&S framework implementation processes</p>
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	<p>sharing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grievances requiring interventions in CF is usually channel through the districts local leadership and with FDA on forest related grievance. 		
<p>Regional Forester Region Three (3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental and Social Safeguards is of high importance in this preparatory phase of the LiFE-Project. As there are other forest related activities ongoing in the region, there is a need for more awareness on issues related to the project activities and E&S management. These could be address through logistical support and manpower development. 	<p>Thank you for emphasizing the importance of Environmental and Social safeguards during the preparatory phase of the LiFE-Project.</p> <p>It is important that early integration of safeguards in a context where multiple forest-related activities are ongoing. Strengthening awareness and understanding of project activities, associated risks, and E&S management measures among stakeholders is essential for effective implementation.</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement initiatives, complemented by appropriate logistical support with focus on strengthening institutional and community-level capacity to ensure consistent application of E&S standards is of high importance. LiFE-Project ESF will ensure promoting informed participation, effective risk management, and compliance with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework throughout the project cycle.</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>Joint Security LNP, LIS, FDA, LICSATDUN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LiFE-Project E&S stakeholder engagement is important to have communities and relevant stakeholders inform about the proposed project activities in relations to 	<p>The LiFE-Project team recognizes the value of stakeholder engagement in ensuring that communities and relevant institutions are adequately informed about proposed project activities and the development of required E&S instruments under the Environmental and Social Framework.</p> <p>The coordinated role of security agencies working</p>	<p>Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.</p>

	<p>instruments that are required to develop the Environmental and Social Framework.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All the security apparatuses work jointly in its described operational capacities, along with the FDA at various checkpoints and assigned areas in the region. The convenient channel for grievances is through the Liberia National Police. 	<p>alongside the FDA across checkpoints and operational areas for effective monitoring and enforcement is essential.</p> <p>Regarding grievance handling, we note the role of the Liberia National Police as a key entry point for complaints. A strengthened GM aligning with existing channels with formal project grievance mechanisms to ensure accessible and transparent resolution of concerns.</p>	
SEA/SH/GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is risk of SGBV in the region, spanning from human-trafficking (child trafficking) activities noticed at checkpoints. Continuous information on child-care evaluation is conducted, with the need for logistical support to enhance operations of these activities. 	<p>SGBV in the region, including reported cases linked to human trafficking and child protection issues at checkpoints. The LIFE-Project team acknowledges the risks.</p> <p>The ongoing efforts to monitor and provide information on child-care and protection, and the need to strengthen these interventions, through supported enhanced awareness, prevention, and capacity-building measures, actors engaged in screening and monitoring activities in the project areas.</p> <p>We also note the need for improved logistical support to sustain these operations. And engagement with relevant institutions and partners to strengthen coordination, referral pathways, and survivor-centered response systems, in line with the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework and good international practice.</p> <p>The project SEA/SH/GBV will mitigate risks and support vulnerable groups through strengthened</p>	Continue engagements with the county leadership on LiFE-Project E&S related activities with relevant stakeholders.

		safeguards and institutional collaboration.	
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14 Annexe B Stakeholder Engagement Consultation Minutes

LIBERIA FOREST ECONOMY PROJECT (LiFE-P)
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT CONSULTATION MINUTES
(Government of Liberia Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions – MACs)

Date: March 24, 2026
Venue: Royal Grand Hotel, Monrovia
Convened by: Forestry Development Authority (FDA)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Liberia Forest Economy Project (LiFE-P), to be implemented by the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) with support from the World Bank, convened a stakeholder engagement consultation with relevant Government of Liberia Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions (MACs).

The consultation aimed to present the project design, outline Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) requirements, and introduce the three livelihood components: **Commercial Forest Activities, Community Forest Management Activities, and Conservation Activities.**

Key outcomes included:

- ✓ Strong institutional support for LiFE-P objectives
- ✓ Emphasis on inter-agency coordination for ESF compliance
- ✓ Recommendations to strengthen land governance, SEA/SH/GBV risk mitigation, and enforcement mechanisms
- ✓ Broad endorsement of the three-tier livelihood approach

The consultation provided inputs that will inform the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Environmental and Social instruments, and overall project design.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Liberia Forest Economy Project (LiFE-P) is designed to support sustainable forest management, strengthen forest governance, and improve livelihoods for forest-dependent populations. The project aligns with national development priorities and international commitments on climate change, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land use.

As part of the project preparation, stakeholder consultations are required under the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) to ensure inclusivity, transparency, and risk-informed design.

This report documents the consultation held with Government of Liberia MACs to:

- ✓ Present the project scope and implementation framework

- ✓ Introduce ESF requirements
- ✓ Discuss proposed livelihood pathways
- ✓ Obtain stakeholder feedback and recommendations

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE CONSULTATION

The consultation was guided by the following objectives:

- ✓ To present the Liberia Forest Economy Project components and implementation arrangements
- ✓ To introduce the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and applicable Environmental and Social Standards (ESS)
- ✓ To present the three components relating to livelihood interventions:
 - Commercial Forest Activities
 - Community-Based Activities
 - Conservation Activities
- ✓ To identify institutional roles and coordination mechanisms
- ✓ To collect stakeholder feedback to strengthen project design and safeguard instruments.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Engagement Approach

The consultation adopted a multi-stakeholder participatory approach consistent with ESF requirements on stakeholder engagement.

3.2 Meeting Format

The meeting included:

- ✓ Technical presentations by the project team
- ✓ Plenary discussions and feedback
- ✓ A question and answer segment

3.3 Participation

Participants included representatives from:

- ✚ Liberia National Police (LNP)
- ✚ Liberia Immigration Service (LIS)
- ✚ Ministry of Justice (MoJ)
- ✚ National Bureau of Concessions (NBC)
- ✚ Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA)
- ✚ Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)
- ✚ Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP)
- ✚ Ministry of Local Government (Formally Ministry of Internal Affairs-MIA)

- ✦ Ministry of Labor (MoL)
- ✦ Cooperative Development Agency (CDA)
- ✦ Liberia National Fire Service (LNFS)
- ✦ National Investment Commission (NIC)
- ✦ Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI)
- ✦ Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI)

4. PROJECT PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview of Project Components

The project team presented the overall structure of LiFE-P, highlighting its focus on governance strengthening, sustainable forest management, livelihood enhancement and E&S requirements.

4.2 Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)

The ESF presentation covered key Environmental and Social Standards (ESS), including:

- ✓ ESS1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts
- ✓ ESS2: Labor and Working Conditions
- ✓ ESS3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention
- ✓ ESS4: Community Health and Safety
- ✓ ESS5: Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement
- ✓ ESS6: Biodiversity Conservation
- ✓ ESS7: Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities
- ✓ ESS8: Cultural Heritage
- ✓ ESS9: Financial Intermediaries
- ✓ ESS10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

Key Discussion Points:

- ✓ Need for institutional capacity strengthening for ESF compliance
- ✓ Integration of SEA/SH and GBV risk mitigation measures
- ✓ Importance of functional and accessible Grievance mechanisms (GM)
- ✓ Alignment with national environmental regulations through the Environmental Protection Agency

4.3 Livelihood Intervention Framework

The project will promote three integrated livelihood alternatives in its components:

4.3.1 Commercial Forest Activities

- ✓ Sustainable timber production and value chain development
- ✓ Private sector engagement and investment opportunities
- ✓ Strengthening concession governance

- ✓ Promotion of legal and traceable forest products.

Stakeholder Input:

- ✓ Strengthen monitoring to prevent illegal logging/timber production
- ✓ Enhance revenue transparency

4.3.2 Community-Based Activities

- ✓ Support to community forestry for creation of CFMAs, and local enterprises
- ✓ Development of cooperatives
- ✓ Agroforestry and climate-smart agriculture
- ✓ Skills development for youth and women

Stakeholder Input:

- ✓ Ensure inclusive participation of women and vulnerable groups
- ✓ Strengthen local governance structures through the Ministry of Local Government.

4.3.3 Conservation Activities

- ✓ Protection and restoration of forest ecosystems
- ✓ Biodiversity conservation and protected area management
- ✓ Alternative income streams linked to conservation (e.g., ecotourism, NTFPs)
- ✓ Climate mitigation and carbon initiatives.

Stakeholder Input:

- ✓ Strengthen enforcement through the LNP and MoJ
- ✓ Integrate spatial data for monitoring through LISGIS

4.4 Key Cross-Cutting Issues

- ✓ Land tenure and conflict resolution for clear land-use planning and dispute resolution systems.
- ✓ Security risks management for illegal mining and logging activities with relevant agencies.
- ✓ Gender and social inclusion on SEA/SH/GBV risk mitigation and women’s participation.
- ✓ Data and Monitoring of important integrated data systems.
- ✓ Sustainability for ensuring long-term viability of interventions beyond project life.

5. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question	Response
How will land disputes be managed?	Through participatory land-use planning, legal alignment, and GM systems.

How will ESF compliance be ensured?	Through ESF instruments, monitoring, and collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency and relevant institutions
What role will MACs play?	MACs will participate in coordination platforms, monitoring, and technical support.
How will illegal activities be addressed?	Through strengthened enforcement and inter-agency collaboration.
What safeguards exist for vulnerable groups?	Inclusion measures, targeted livelihood support, and SEA/SH/GBV Action Plans.

6. CONCLUSION

The consultation demonstrated strong inter-agency commitment to the Liberia Forest Economy Project. Stakeholders endorsed the project's integrated approach combining commercial forestry, community development, and conservation.

Key recommendations focused on strengthening coordination, ensuring ESF compliance, addressing land and security risks, and promoting inclusive participation.

7. NEXT STEPS

- ✓ Incorporate stakeholder feedback into project design and ESF instruments
- ✓ Finalize the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)
- ✓ Conduct capacity building on ESF implementation
- ✓ Continue consultations throughout the project lifecycle.

ANNEX: STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK MATRIX

Liberia Forest Economy Project (LiFE-P)

This matrix consolidates stakeholder inputs from Government of Liberia Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions (MACs), including proposed actions and institutional responsibilities aligned with World Bank ESF requirements.

Stakeholder Feedback Matrix

#	Issue / Concern Raised	Institution	Project Response	Proposed Action	Responsible Entity
1	Weak coordination among MACs may affect ESF compliance	Multiple MACs	A coordination framework will be established under LiFE-P	Establish inter-agency coordination platform with defined roles	Forestry Development Authority, All relevant MACs
2	Risk of land tenure conflicts in project areas	Ministry of Internal Affairs	Conflict-sensitive approaches will be applied	Support participatory land-use planning and strengthen GM	FDA, Ministry of Local Government
3	Need for strong enforcement against illegal logging and mining	Liberia National Police, Ministry of Justice	Project will collaborate with enforcement agencies	Strengthen joint enforcement mechanisms and patrol systems	FDA, LNP, Ministry of Justice
4	Limited institutional capacity for ESF implementation	Multiple MACs	Capacity building is embedded in project design	Conduct ESF training and provide technical support	FDA, World Bank
5	Need to integrate GBV/SEA/SH risk mitigation	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection	GBV Action Plan will be developed	Implement awareness, reporting, and survivor support systems	FDA, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
6	Concerns about transparency in revenue	Liberia Revenue	Transparency	Enhance revenue	FDA, LRA, LEITI

	from commercial forestry	Authority, Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative	mechanisms will be strengthened	tracking and public disclosure systems	
7	Risk of exclusion of women and vulnerable groups	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection	Inclusive approaches will be applied	Ensure gender-sensitive targeting and participation measures	FDA, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
8	Need for alignment with agricultural development initiatives	Ministry of Agriculture	Project will integrate agroforestry systems	Promote climate-smart agriculture and agroforestry models	FDA, Ministry of Agriculture
9	Weak data systems for monitoring and planning	Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services	Data integration will be prioritized	Develop centralized data-sharing and monitoring systems	FDA, LISGIS
10	Need to strengthen community cooperatives and enterprises	Cooperative Development Agency	Community-based interventions included in project	Support formation and capacity of cooperatives	FDA, CDA
11	Potential environmental risks from commercial forest activities	Environmental Protection Agency	ESF instruments will guide mitigation	Implement ESMPs and ensure compliance monitoring	FDA, EPA
12	Risk of fire hazards in forest areas	Liberia National Fire Service	Fire management measures will be integrated	Develop forest fire prevention and response systems	FDA, Liberia National Fire Service
13	Need for investment promotion in forest sector	National Investment Commission	Private sector engagement is a key component	Facilitate investment frameworks and incentives	FDA, NIC

14	Labor and working conditions concerns in forestry sector	Ministry of Labor	Labor Management Procedures (LMP) will be developed	Enforce labor standards and occupational safety measures	FDA, Ministry of Labor
15	Need for cross-border control of forest-related activities	Liberia Immigration Service	Collaboration with border agencies will be ensured	Strengthen monitoring of forest product movement	FDA, LIS
16	Need to align forestry trade with commerce regulations	Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Trade systems will be harmonized	Develop standards for legal forest product trade	FDA, Ministry of Commerce and Industry
17	Overlaps between concessions and community land	National Bureau of Concessions	Coordination with concession authorities will be strengthened	Harmonize concession mapping and community land use plans	FDA, NBC
18	Need for integrated planning across sectors	Multiple MACs	Integrated framework will be developed	Establish cross-sector planning and monitoring system	FDA, All MACs

Summary of Key Action Areas

- ✓ Governance and interagency coordination mechanisms
- ✓ Environmental and Social compliance for strengthening ESF implementation capacity
- ✓ Livelihoods alternatives to promote commercial, community, and conservation activities
- ✓ Inclusion of gender and vulnerable group to ensure participation
- ✓ Enforcement to address illegal activities through joint operations
- ✓ Data management systems to improve planning through integrated data platforms.

