

Liberia Rising – Vision 2030:
One people, One Nation, United for Peace and Sustainable Development



**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

Liberia: Voluntary National Review on the
Implementation Status of the 2030 Agenda for
Sustainable Development

2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Liberia's Voluntary National Review commenced alongside the beginnings of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. As the pandemic spread very quickly across nations of the world and of Africa, lockdowns were put in place as a containment measure. It soon became clear that the VNR process will have to be undertaken despite unprecedented challenges. This impacted the VNR process in Liberia by restricting the type and number of consultative processes. Nonetheless, with the leadership of the Ministry of Finance and Planning under the close guidance of the President's office, the government was committed to fulfilling its mandate of completing the review process. Apart from limited virtual participation of stakeholders and detailed inputs from all government ministries, an extensive desk review was undertaken of available official documents, data, and reports. The report presents a critical analysis of institutional and systemic gaps as well as progress so far against the seventeen goals.

Status of SDGs progress

Even though the progress against the seventeen Goals is mixed, the overall direction of the progress has been strategic, ensuring that key levers of change are addressed. This has been ably guided by the farsighted design of the current national plan, the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development 2018 – 2023.

Despite the setbacks of the Ebola outbreak and the fall in global commodity prices just before the commencement of the SDG period, the proportion of the population living below the national poverty line has declined, as has the prevalence of undernourishment. In 2015, the GDP growth rate fell to zero but has now grown to nearly 2% per annum, despite a significant drop in the volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of total GDP. The increase in the unemployment rate is reflected in a marginal decline in manufacturing value-added as a proportion of GDP per capita.

The proportion of parliament seats held by women has increased. Alongside there has been a steady decline in maternal mortality ratio, under 5 and neonatal mortality rates. Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group has also declined. The proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training has also declined.

While the incidence of TB has not declined, though the success rate of TB treatment has gone up. There has been a marginal decline in the incidence of HIV and malaria. However, there has been a marginal increase in mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, or chronic respiratory diseases, to suicides and road traffic accidents.

More people in Liberia are using safely managed drinking water services, and have access to safely managed sanitation services, including a hand-washing facility with soap and water. More people have access to electricity than before.

National Legislature of Liberia ratified the Paris Accord on Climate Change in 2018. There is a marginal increase in the coverage of protected marine areas, while the forest area as a proportion of total land area has remained unchanged.

Liberia's score on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index has dropped as has that the overall bribery rate. Surveys show that more people felt that the government was doing a good job of fighting corruption. The Local Government Act enacted in 2018, provides the legal regulatory framework for decentralization and local governance reform in Liberia. The Land Rights Act was passed in 2018, which presents a unique opportunity for promoting access to land rights, promoting land tenure security,

harmonizing of customary and statutory land tenure systems.

Government's approach to the principle of Leave No One Behind

After 15 years of its peacekeeping mandate, on March 30, 2018, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) completed its mission in Liberia. The Liberian people and government have been acutely aware of the repercussions of inequality and deprivation through the many years of civil strife and conflict. In this context, they approach the principle of leaving no one behind as not merely a slogan, but as central to its prosperity, peace, and growth.

The current national plan connects to the SDGs with sixteen development outcomes and outlines a commitment to achieve 120 national targets until 2023. It has taken an integrated approach, connecting peace and development issues, and recognizing the interconnected nature of the challenges facing the country.

One of the main strategies to incorporate 'leave no one behind' is to ensure that development gains are equitably spread across the country and not just concentrated in a few urban areas. This is being done through a combination of decentralization of government services, putting in place necessary land reforms, involving local communities as stakeholders in environmental protection, improving the network of infrastructure for better connectivity, emphasis on delivery of basic services including justice and security services and most importantly, addressing peace and reconciliation needs of those who feel alienated from the development pathway.

Challenges and next steps

The current national plan (2018-23) is ambitious and is estimated to cost more than \$6 billion, with an anticipated funding gap of \$1 billion. Donor funds account for nearly 50% of the planned budget. To meet the key targets of the SDGs, Liberia needs international support, both technical and financial.

The monitoring of the SDGs and its targets face a data deficit despite a robust statistical system established by the government. The UN, bi-laterals, and international NGOs are seized of this challenge and need to do more to ensure reliable and timely data collection for select SDG indicators. Efforts are underway to strengthen statistical institutions technical capacities and infrastructure to have a place credible, sustain and relevant data and information-gathering systems at both national and sub-national levels as well as the skilled personnel to gather, analyze and report on the country's national development plan and the targets of the 2030 Agenda.

Given the current level of progress against SDG indicators, the likelihood of Liberia being able to meet the targets seem relatively low, especially given the challenges posed by the Covid19 outbreak and the projected decline in foreign aid assistance as a result. Given the above, Liberia will re-assess the SDGs roadmap for the next ten years and prioritize based on the radically changed development landscape globally and at home. Currently, a socio-economic impacts assessment of the COVID-19 on the implementation of the country's national development plan (PAPD), and the 2030 Agenda are underway. The assessment results will inform the reprioritization and implementation of the PAPD, the 2030 Agenda, and the post-COVID-19 Economy Stabilization and Recovery Plan.

Evaluation has played a limited role in public sector management as it relates to improving the design and implementation of national development efforts. However, the government has recognized the need for embedding evaluation into the national development planning processes in terms of helping to ensure that public policies, programs, and processes are informed by sound evidence and lead to effective and

equitable results. Therefore, the government is committed to ensuring that evaluation is an integral part of all efforts by the government, civil society organizations, and the private sector in achieving the goals of the national development plan and the 2030 Agenda.

The Effects COVID-19 effects and government response

Now, the COVID-19 has significantly cause severe downward trends across the economic, social, environmental, and technological sectors. Liberia that is already experiencing absolute poverty, entrenched inequality, widespread infrastructure deficits, and economic deprivation is expected to be one of the hardest affected Sub-Sahara countries. Practically, the targets of the PAPD seems unrealistic and unachievable due to the impacts of COVID-19 on its implementation. This indicates that the goals and targets of the PAPD needs to be reprioritize. The current global and continental and global economic shocks compel government to do so in order for government to be more realistic in addressing the existing socio-economic downturn and continue to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The reprioritization of the PAPD goals and targets will also emphasis the government commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieving the SDGs. Therefore, the post-COVID-19 recovery will play out in tandem with accelerated action to achieve the SDGs. The focus will be on sub-national development, human capital development, protection of children's rights, and reduction of systemic biases against women in the social and political arena with greater emphasis on social cohesion and sustaining the peace. Moreover, Liberia will continue to build a nation based on the principles of inclusion, harnessing its human capital of young people who comprise more than half the population, towards equitable distribution of revenues generated from natural resources, and on a rights-based approach to development. The eradication of extreme poverty, that is central to the SDG agenda, will be most urgent.

Message from the President



On January 22, 2018, the People of Liberia entrusted me with the responsibility of leading the effort to build a capable state that is united in purpose and filled with hope and prosperity. This ushered in the first generational change in national leadership through the popular vote since the introduction of universal suffrage in 1951. I remain eternally grateful for this sacred trust and will, to the best of my ability and with the help of God, strive to change the narrative on Liberia and bring about a more stable, prosperous, and democratic state.

The role Liberia played during the development of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cannot be overemphasized. My immediate predecessor, Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf co-chair the United Nations High Panel of Eminent Persons that set the vision and policy perimeters of the 2030 Development Agenda. In January 2016, we officially launched the Agenda for Sustainable Development in Liberia; the launching set the tone on how SDGs would be mainstreamed into the development plans of Liberia

However, since 2016, we have not taken stock of our progress and challenges encountered during the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Voluntary National Review (VNR) of the SDGs provides the opportunity to track and measure Liberia's performance and share our experiences on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, I take this opportunity to present the country's Voluntary National Review (2020) of the progress we have made so far, towards achieving the Sustainable Development goals.

Liberia's Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development 2018 - 2023 is second in the series of 5-year National Plans under the Liberia Vision 2030 framework and follows the Agenda for Transformation (2012-2017). The PAPD aligns with the African Union Agenda 2063 and SDGs, particularly its three dimensions—economic, social, and environmental with special emphasis on human rights and peace. Established technical groups, with a diverse membership from government, CSOs, bilateral and multilateral partners, and business representatives, are leading and advising the process of implementation of the national plan to achieve the SDGs.

Despite many years of conflict followed by the Ebola outbreak, Liberia has made remarkable progress on key national aggregate indicators - such as per capita income growth (550.00 USD), the Human Development Index (0.465), life expectancy at birth (63.7), and mean years of schooling (9.6%). Since the new national plan began in 2018, the education sector has better access to the internet along with free education in all public schools and universities. The health sector has seen up-gradation of equipment and doctors' qualifications in specialized medical fields. Additionally, over 75km of primary roads and 43km of urban roads have been constructed, and 65km of water pipeline has been laid. More than 40 institutions have now graduated to e-governance platform to improve performance. However, absolute poverty has been on the rise since 2014. The legacy of entrenched inequality, widespread infrastructure deficits, and economic deprivation remain barriers to sustainable peace, growth, and sustainable development, which may be further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Therefore, the government and its development partners are now focusing more on accelerating economic growth. To this end, roads and other infrastructure development are prioritized to create

physical corridors along with the implementation of a new integrated and multi-sectoral approach to spatial development. This, along with increased social spending in the neglected regions of the country will lift large majorities out of extreme poverty and food insecurity, strengthen local value chains, create local markets where they do not exist, raise labour productivity in agriculture and forestry, artisanal mining, and fishing, and increase access to basic social services across the country.

Now, the decade of Action towards achieving the SDGs has commenced with the Covid-19 pandemic, which is exposing structural fragilities in countries across the world and Liberia is no exception. This emergency calls for both an immediate health response and a longer-term socio-economic recovery response. Liberia brings to this challenge its long-term partnerships with regional and inter-governmental bodies - such as the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union, Economic Commission for Africa, and the Mano River Union. A robust national response mechanism is currently in place structured around key pillars, particularly case management and investigation, infection prevention and control, laboratory testing, vigorous contact tracing, and psychosocial support, etc.

Despite the economic shocks caused by COVID-19, Liberia remains deeply committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving the SDGs. Therefore, the post-COVID-19 recovery engagements will play out in a major way in accelerating actions to achieve the SDGs. The focus will be on sub-national development, human capital development, protection of children's rights, and reduction of systemic biases against women in the social and political arena with greater emphasis on social cohesion and sustaining the peace. Moreover, Liberia will continue to build a nation based on the principles of inclusion, harnessing its human capital of young people who comprise more than half the population, towards equitable distribution of revenues generated from natural resources, and on a rights-based approach to development. The eradication of extreme poverty, which is central to the SDG agenda, will be most urgent.

As per the philosophy, "Leaving No One Behind", the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index will be a key measurement. To monitor impact in the remotest areas, statistical systems will be ramped up to capture citizens' feedback. To measure inclusion and inequality, the HDI will be used. Subnational disaggregation on access to health, education, and opportunities to make a decent living will be measured through the Multidimensional Poverty Index. Surveys, censuses, sector assessments, and project evaluations conducted with development partners, will be used to generate evidence of outcomes and impact across various regions of the country.

H. E. Dr. George Manneh Weah
President
Republic of Liberia

Foreword



In early 2018, When Liberia decided to implement one plan; we aligned the ECOWAS Agenda 2020, African Union Agenda 2063, and the Agenda for Sustainable Development to our national development plan, the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), 2018-2023. The PAPD aims to address the basic needs of Liberians for income security, better access to basic services, and greater opportunities for self-improvement in a peaceful, inclusive, and stable environment. To make progress towards the PAPD and eventually the Agenda for Sustainable Development, the strategies and interventions are built around four pillars which form the pathways for the lifespan of the PAPD:

1. To empower Liberians with the tools to gain control of their lives through more equitable provision of opportunities in education, health, youth development, and social protection (women and vulnerable people with special needs)
2. Economic stability and job creation through effective resource mobilization and prudent management of economic inclusion
3. Promoting a cohesive society for sustainable development
4. An inclusive and accountable public sector for shared prosperity and sustainable development

A draft year one progress implementation report of the PAPD shows the level of work Liberia has done since the ascendancy to power of His Excellency, President George Manneh Weah. There have been a lot of challenges along the way of implementation yet, we have also made some progress. This also by extension is the progress we have made thus far towards the SDGs. We are entering a digital revolution; we improved the class registration and Wi-Fi system at the campuses of the biggest state-run university, mobile money, and online banking services are being introduced and used by telecommunication companies, various commercial banks, government, and other businesses, and the e-governance platform has connected over 41 ministries, agencies, and commissions. We have constructed and operationalized the 14th Military Hospital, which is currently being used to treat and observe COVID-19 patients. We have also upgraded equipment and the facility of the John F. Kennedy Hospital, the biggest referral hospital in the country. In infrastructure development, we continue to build and expand primary roads in the urban and rural parts of the country; we have expanded our water infrastructure by completing three outstations in Robertsport, Sanniquelli and Voinjama Cities. All these have happened in a very peaceful environment with the assistance of all Liberians and our development partners.

This VNR 2020 Report of the SDGs goes beyond what Liberia has achieved since 2018. It is an evidence-based report of interventions implemented from 2015 to 2019. As we endeavour to improve our implementation of the SDGs, we hope that other countries will benefit from our experiences as much as we benefit from theirs.

We wholeheartedly acknowledge the contributions and inputs of all stakeholder organizations and individuals in the preparation of this report. To UNICEF Liberia for not only providing the financial support for the preparation of the report but also its immense contributions to the country's national development efforts. To the Ministry of Finance and Development planning team which led the process, particular the Office of the Deputy Minister for Economic Management, the Office of the Deputy Minister for Budget and Development Planning, and the entire Division of Development Planning, we

acknowledged your level of professionalism in compiling the report during the heat of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Finally, let me acknowledge H. E. President George M. Weah, for his leadership and direction to positively change the lives of Liberians.

Honorable Samuel D. Tweah, Jr.

Minister

Ministry of Finance and Development Planning

Acronyms

AFDB	African Development Bank
AFL	Arm Forces of Liberia
AfT	Agenda for Transformation
CBL	Central Bank of Liberia
CDC	Coalition for Democratic Change
CSA	Civil Service Agency
CSIOS	County Statistics and Information Officers
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DPs	Development Partners
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FY	Fiscal Year
GAC	General Auditing Commission
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
GoL	Government of Liberia
ICDU	Implementation Coordination and Delivery Unit
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JFK	John Fitzgerald Kennedy Memorial Hospital
LACE	Liberia Agency for Community Empowerment
LCPS	Liberia College of Physicians and Surgeons
LEC	Liberia Electricity Corporation
LISGIS	Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services
LNP	Liberia National Police
LRD	Liberian Dollars
LRA	Liberia Revenue Authority
M&As	Ministries and Agencies
MACs	Ministries, Agencies and Commissions
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MICAT	Ministry of Information Cultural and Tourism
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoS	Ministry of State
MPW	Ministry of Public Works
MSPWG	Multi-Sectoral Planning Working Group
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMETWG	National M&E Technical Working Group
NIR	National Identification Registry
NKIs	National Key Indicators
NSC	National Steering Committee

NTA	National Transit Authority
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PAPD	Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development
PBO	Peace Building Office
PDU	President Delivery Unit
PMCS	Performance Management and Compliance System
PSIP	Public Sector Investment Project
PSL	Partnership Schools for Liberia
RAP	Resettlement Action Plan
RF	Result Framework
TWGs	Technical Working Groups
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UL	University of Liberia
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN Women	United Nations Women
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollars
WAEC	West African Examinations Council
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WASSCE	West African Senior School Certificate Examination

Table of Contents

Message from the President.....	5
Foreword.....	7
Acronyms	9
Table of Contents.....	11
Chapter 1: Introduction and Background	13
1.1 Demographic background.....	14
1.2 Constitutional Imperatives of National Development Efforts	14
1.3 Elections	16
1.4 Challenges of capacity.....	17
1.5 Unfinished Business under the MDGs	17
1.6 What needs to be done	18
1.7 Alignment of National Development Aspirations with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.....	19
1.8 Integrating the Dimensions of Sustainable Development.....	20
CHAPTER 2: The 2030 agenda within the Liberian context	21
2.1 Macroeconomic overview.....	21
2.2 Implementation Arrangements	23
2.3 Lessons learned from the past.....	24
2.4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting on the 2030 Agenda	25
2.5 Data for SDGs Reporting	28
2.6 Statistical institutions: capacities and deficits	29
2.7 Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships for coordination and implementation.....	29
CHAPTER 3: Methodology and process for the preparation of the Voluntary National Review 2020.....	32
CHAPTER FOUR: Progress on goals and targets.....	35
GOAL 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	35
GOAL 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.....	42
GOAL 3: Healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.....	47
GOAL 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	55
GOAL 5: Achieve gender equity and empower all women and girls	59
GOAL 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	64
GOAL 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.....	67

GOAL 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	69
GOAL 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation	73
GOAL 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries	75
GOAL 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	77
GOAL 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production pattern	79
GOAL 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	81
GOAL 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	84
GOAL 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	85
GOAL 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	88
GOAL 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.....	104
CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS.....	112
ANNEXES	114
ANNEX 1: Alignment between indicators of the current five-year national plan and the SDGs	114
ANNEX 2: External AID trends during period of review	Error! Bookmark not defined.
ANNEX 3: Liberia SDG Data – baseline and progress.....	139
BIBLIOGRAPHY	145

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

Liberia has a positive story to tell about its peaceful and democratic transition - and although many problems persist, particularly relating to poverty, vulnerable employment and inequality, the country have made great strides towards redressing the imbalances of the past and has firmly entrenched the new order of democracy with strong institutions as well as recognizing the importance of having sound policies and strategies in place across the three spheres of government.

Liberia is located on the West Coast of Africa. It is bordered by Sierra Leone on the west, Guinea on the north, Côte d'Ivoire on the east, and the Atlantic Ocean on the south. Liberia was founded in 1822 by Liberian people transported to Africa from America and got its independence on July 26, 1847, as a unitary constitutional republic and representative democracy. The executive branch of Liberia is divided into 15 functional sub-national administrative governance institutions called 'counties' and headed by superintendents who are appointed by the president. Other levels of local administration are the chiefdoms, headed by paramount and clan chiefs. The new government, established in 2005 after 14 years of civil war, has incontrovertibly worked towards maintaining the peace, accelerating economic development and provision of social services, promoting the rule of law and integrity of the justice system, supporting freedom of expression and rights to assembly, and striving to create an enabling environment for citizens' participation in the governance process of the country.

The Agenda for Transformation (AfT), which articulates the country's vision for achieving middle-income status by 2030 through inclusive and sustained economic development, was also adopted as a framework for meeting the country's expectation. It also considers climate change as a strategic objective. Although the economy was projected to maintain the GDP growth rate of 8.3% for two decades considering 2012 as the base year, assessments show that GDP growth for 2014 declined from 2.5% to 0.7% due to Ebola Virus Disease.

Topographically Liberia is diverse, ranging from features of coastal plains, lagoons, and mangrove marshlands, to rain forests and plateaus rolling towards the interior. The Northern Highlands marks the highest elevation, which includes Mount Wutivi. Six major rivers traverse the northern and southern boundaries of the country, of which the Cavalla River is the longest. Two major lakes are found in the country also. Liberia has a tropical climate with heavy rainfall from May to October and a short interlude in mid-July to August. The dry season extends from November to April. Liberia is endowed with several explored and unexplored natural resources.

The main economic sectors of Liberia's economy are mining, agriculture, and forestry, while the main natural resources are iron ore, rubber, timber, diamonds, and gold. The rain forest occupies roughly 45% of Liberia's land and is the source of its timber resources. Liberia is home to many rare and endemic species and is listed as one of 34 global biodiversity hotspots. The forest resources are severely pressurized by logging, road building, agriculture, and human settlement. Scant studies show that there are 167 species of freshwater fish and 464 saltwater fish known for Liberia, three of which are endemic to Liberia. 54 of Liberia's fish species are listed in the Red List of IUCN, 14 as critically endangered, 18 as endangered, and 22 as vulnerable. Liberia's population was put at 3.5 million in 2008 (LISGIS, 2008) and it is projected to increase to 10.3 million by 2058 (World Bank, 2016), with more than 70% of the population living in coastal cities including Monrovia, the country's capital. The population grew at an average rate of 3.3% annually between 1962 and 1974 and 3.4% during 1974 and 1984, which was extremely high. Between 1984 and 2008, average growth was 2.1% (LISGIS, 2008), reflecting the population exodus and losses during the civil war. In 2014 the economy was hit by the outbreak of EVD. In 2015 agriculture constituted around 46 per cent of the labour force with about 70 per cent of rural households involved in the sector

and contributing 23.9% to the real GDP. Fifty per cent of the total 3.5 million population of Liberia is youth. Out of this 33.2% have no education, 31.1% have attended primary education while 35.75% have attended secondary and tertiary education. To improve this condition Liberia launched an ambitious Education Sector Plan (ESP) covering the period 2010-2020 (LISGIS, 2008).

1.1 Demographic background

Liberia's population was estimated at 4,2 million in 2016. The national average household size is 4.3 persons and ranges from 3.7 persons per household in Gbarpolu county (Northwest region) to 4.9 in Maryland (South-eastern region) respectively. At the current growth rate, the total population is likely to be between 4.8 and 4.9 million by the end of the planning period in 2023. Females make up 51.1 per cent of the population and males 48.9 per cent. The sex ratio of the population is 1.011 (1.011 male per 1 female) which is lower than the global sex ratio (1.016 male per 1 female). By age categories, the skew leans heavily towards children, youth, and young adults at productive stages of the life cycle. About 70 per cent of the population was below the age of 35 and nearly half (44.5%) of the population was below the age of 15 years in 2016.

Age dependency ratios are extremely high due to a combination of a high fertility rate and short life expectancy. At about 90 per cent, each working adult must provide support for himself or herself, while providing for a child or a dependent elderly person. Most likely this would be a child under the age of 15 because of the low proportion (3 per cent) of the population above the age of 64 years. In urban areas, the age dependency ratio falls to 78.2 per cent but reaches 102.7 per cent in rural areas where the ratio of working-age to dependent population is over 100 per cent. Nevertheless, the untapped productive potential offered by this highly youthful population is enormous.

Life expectancy at birth is currently 61 years old. Liberia is among the top six countries where life expectancy increased the most over the past decade. Global life expectancy now stands at 71 while life expectancy in Sub-Saharan Africa stands at 46.

Liberia's ability to deliver a more balanced growth that cuts across income classes, geographic regions and age groups of the population will determine whether this dividend will move in productive or unproductive directions over the next decade. With nearly 53 per cent the population between the ages of 15 and 64, the share of the working-age population is larger than that of the non-working age population (0 to 14; 65 and older). Another 44.5 per cent of the population is below the age of 14; the clear majority of whom will enter the labour force over the next decade.

This should, in principle, give Liberia a demographic dividend. The magnitude of the dividend will be tempered by the ability of the formal economy to absorb and productively employ this workforce. Because of the limited opportunities for formal sector employment, large numbers have turned to farm and other productive activities in the informal sector, where returns from farm ventures and microenterprises remain low.

1.2 Constitutional Imperatives of National Development Efforts

Non-indigenous Americo-Liberians dominated Liberian politics between independence in 1847 and 1980; in fact, the country's first 10 presidents were born in the United States. In 1980, a military coup led by Samuel Doe ousted President William Tolbert and effectively ended the First Republic. However, the Doe administration's perceived favouritism for the Krahn ethnic group gradually generated widespread tensions across Liberia, particularly after he was formally elected president in 1985. In 1989, a militia led by Charles Taylor invaded Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire, sparking a conflict that would grow to span two largescale, devastating civil wars involving a variety of factions until the Economic Community of West

African States brokered a ceasefire in 2003.

Following the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the cessation of conflict, Liberia held landmark elections in 2005 that saw the election of Her Excellency Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. The elections broke a long-standing double glass-ceiling, resulting in the first elected female head of state in Africa and the first black woman head of state. These breakthrough elections were made possible through large-scale support of the international community, particularly through international peacekeeping forces led by the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), as well as with support and technical expertise provided by IFES with generous funding from USAID.

To end vulnerability, and reduce gender and social inequality, the government of Liberia has passed into law, ratified, and acceded to thirty domestic and international conventions. These include:

1. Constitution of the Republic of Liberia-Chapter III: Fundamental Rights
2. Inheritance Act of 1998 (specifies Equal Rights in Marriage and Inheritance under Customary and Statutory Laws)
3. The Rape Law of 2005
4. The Anti-Human Trafficking Act of 2005
5. Children's Law of 2015
6. The Adoption Law
7. Revised Act of the National Social Security and Welfare Corporation (NASSCORP) of 2017
8. The African Charter on Human and People 's Rights and its Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa
9. AU Protocols on Children
10. The New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD)
11. The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (2004)
12. African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa 2005
13. Conventions on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW and its Optional Protocol)
14. Convention on the Rights of Child of (1990) and its Optional Protocol
15. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)
16. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
17. International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
18. ILO Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No.105)
19. ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Conventions, 1958 (No. 111)
20. ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 102)
21. UN Security Council Resolution 1325
22. UN Security Council Resolution 1820
23. UN Security Council Resolution 1612 (Children and Armed Conflict)
24. Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)
25. International Conference on Population and Development (1994)
26. United Nations Declaration on Violence Against Women (1993); MDGs (2000)
27. Vienna Declaration and Program of Action in 1993
28. Universal Declaration of Human Rights
29. Millennium Declaration (MDGs)
30. Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

The government has developed the Environmental Management Law as a legal instrument for enforcing environmental protection. The law will be supported by 22 guidelines, of which 5 have been developed. A compliance monitoring regime has been established with project developers obligated to make quarterly, biannually, and annual reports. The government has developed the CRL and its regulations, Ten Core Forest Harvesting practices, National Forestry Reform Laws of 2006, Wildlife and Protected Area Management Law, Wetland and Climate Change Policies, ESIA procedural guidelines and Fees regime,

Noise and Asbestos regulations, Water quality guidelines, and a dispersant policy. Thirty-eight inspectors are deployed in 10 of the 15 counties of Liberia and this effort will be sustained.

Going forward, Liberia will modernize the legal framework related to disaster risk reduction. The Government will also strengthen disaster Management Committees at national, district, county, and clan levels. The focus will be on enhancing Liberia's preparedness for risk through early response and early warning mechanism, and mitigation and adaptation. The Government will use knowledge, innovation, and education to build a culture of safety and resilience among Liberians. Liberia will also create mechanisms to fully consider the impacts of climate change and "climate-proof" all future national policies and sectoral plans.

1.3 Elections

Liberia's 2017 presidential and legislative elections represented a historic achievement for the country and its citizens. The third polls conducted since the end of the 14-year civil war resulted in the first peaceful transfer of power from one president to another since 1944, and the first time that one democratically elected president succeeds another. Voter turnout was high, as many Liberians viewed peaceful dialogue and political action as important steps in the consolidation of the country's democratic progress.

In partnership with West Africa, Election Observers Network observed Liberia's electoral process from February 2017 to January 2018. The Institute conducted two pre-election assessment missions in February and September 2017; and deployed four long-term thematic analysts in Monrovia; six long-term observers across the country; and election day delegations for the October 10 legislative and presidential polls and the December 26 presidential runoff.

The 2017 polls involved 74 different electoral contests: the presidential election and 73 House of Representative races. Twenty candidates competed for the presidency, while 983 candidates contested for the House of Representative seats. Seventy-three per cent more women ran for legislative seats in 2017 than in 2011, though the number elected (nine) remained the same. Six major political parties competed in the presidential election, including the ruling Unity Party (UP) and the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), which had both dominated the two previous elections.

Liberians experienced active, open, and largely peaceful campaigns. Except for a few sporadic incidents of violence between supporters of competing parties, campaign events were carried out peacefully. Candidates did not report restrictions on their ability to campaign in various parts of the country. Despite a detailed legal and regulatory framework on campaign finance, the NEC did not have the capacity or technical resources to enforce the provisions of the law and to accurately track the flow of money. Parties and candidates also largely did not abide by these requirements.

National civic and voter education initiatives led by the NEC, civil society organizations, and the media raised citizen's awareness of the electoral process and improved understanding of voting procedures. Voter education, however, often focused more on encouraging people to turn out to vote than on the process of voting itself, and ultimately, the invalid ballot rate exceeded the NEC's ambitious target of 3 per cent by 2.4 per cent. For the December 26 runoff, the invalid ballot rate dropped significantly to 2.3 per cent, an improvement due in part to a simpler ballot (only two candidates) and voters' recent experience in the first round.

Women faced many obstacles to being nominated as candidates and running for office. These include cultural barriers, strong resistance by male party members, and traditional leaders to women in politics and bias in media coverage. The election law includes a provision that political parties "should endeavour" to include no less than 30 per cent women on their candidate lists, a standard that is difficult to enforce. Only one of the 24 competing parties, the Liberia Restoration Party (LRP), surpassed the 30 per cent

benchmark and only one of the 20 presidential candidates were a woman. Violence against women in elections (VAW-E) continues to be a significant deterrent and included smear campaigns and insults against women candidates on social media and in public places as well as physical intimidation and threats against them.

Youth played a prominent role in the election process, serving as election workers, party agents, and energetic partisans. In contrast to the 2005 and 2011 general elections, when parties and candidates used young supporters to cause disturbances and engage in violent protests, the 2017 elections saw a limited number of such instances. During the campaign period preceding the October 10 elections, young men participated actively in rallies and debates and marched in candidates' parades. Young people not only refrained from becoming involved in violence, they actively engaged in maintaining a peaceful process.

The media operated without serious constraints on their freedom and played an important role in covering the elections and the dispute resolution process. Many media houses made a genuine effort to disseminate fair information, though frequent use of sensational headlines and disproportionate coverage of alleged scandals negatively affected the information environment. Several factors put voters at risk of obtaining partial or biased information. A significant amount of content is paid for by those with commercial or political aims, and paid content is often not identified as such. Many media outlets are also owned by or affiliated with individuals associated with political parties.

1.4 Challenges of capacity

The government is committed to ensuring that all domestic policies and practices conform to the agreed values, codes, and standards contained in these commitments as well as other relevant treaties, conventions, and instruments adopted through international platforms. Nevertheless, the government recognizes that fiscal space is limited; and the capacity to gather and organize impact and service delivery information in a systematic way to feed into a high-level decision-making process is also limited. Institutional knowledge and knowledge retention on the related policies and strategies are weak areas. Understanding concepts, unpacking them, and utilizing them to drive policy and strategies are specific areas that need strengthening at senior and mid-management levels of the responsible MACs that are the duty-bearers of these instruments.

1.5 Unfinished Business under the MDGs

At the time of the Millennium Summit, Liberia was in the midst of a civil war that did not end until 2003. The country's engagement with social policies – ranging from basic infrastructure to social development goals in areas of health, education, and employment – is heavily dominated by efforts at reconstruction and rehabilitation. In this context, Liberia has been keen to showcase its commitment to MDGs in its policy discourse at home and abroad. In practice, however, efforts on MDGs and associated targets have been led by the UN country team that has been working with the Liberian government since the end of the civil wars.

Overview of country progress on MDGs for Liberia Except for being on track to meet Goal 4 on the reduction of child mortality, Liberia has been unable to meet other MDG targets (UNDP MDG Country Progress Reports 2004, 2008 and 2010).

MDG 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger: Although poverty in the country declined from 2000 to 2007, the number of people living on less than a dollar a day stood at 63.8% of the total population making it unlikely that the country will achieve the 2015 target.

MDG 2: Achieve universal primary education: Although Liberia has made progress through the institution of free and compulsory primary education and increased the net enrolment ratio, it will not achieve the

2015 target.

MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women: There are conflicting statistics on the ratio of girls to boys in primary education from the Liberian Demographic and Health Survey (LDHS) (which shows a ratio of 0.93 to 1) and the National School Census of the Ministry of Education (which shows a ratio of 0.88 to 1).

MDG 4: Reduce child mortality: Liberia is on track to reach the 2015 target. For both genders, under-five child mortality has declined from 220 per 1000 live births in 2009 to 75 per 1000 live births in 2012 (WHO, 2015).

MDG 5: Improve maternal health: The LDHS 2007 put the maternal mortality ratio at 994 per 100,000 live births; in 2010 the WHO and other UN agencies estimated the maternal mortality ratio at 770 per 100,000 live births.

MDG 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases: The 2007 LDHS, the most recent report on HIV prevalence among the general population, shows a prevalence rate of 1.5% among persons aged 15-49, indicating a low-level, generalized epidemic.

MDG 7: Ensure environmental sustainability: The current rate of deforestation in Liberia is high and it is unlikely the country will achieve the 2015 target. Similarly, Liberia was unlikely to achieve the target of having by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

MDG 8: Global partnership for development: Liberia remains a recipient of international aid in the aftermath of a civil war. In 2007 Liberia's external debt as a percentage of GDP stood at 388.8%

1.6 What needs to be done

Economic transformation is typically triggered by productivity gains in agriculture and the release of workers from farming--pushing them towards urban areas where higher efficiency industry locates. Progress in income and social indicators are usually associated with a demographic boom which fuels urbanization until fertility eventually decreases. This traditional model of change does not seem to apply to Liberia. Agricultural productivity remains low and the skill base of the largely youthful labour force is poor or modest at best, while rapid urbanization continues.

Extreme actions will be needed to establish and sustain minimum living standards. Putting into place policies and strategies to harness the demographic dividend will be critical to sustaining the peace. Furthermore, interventions will be needed to raise the aspirations of the poor, improve human capital, provide some form of income security, and raise the level of savings. These will have to come through technical and vocational education, increased access to new technology, access to relevant skills needed by the market, expanding access to cross-border markets, and training in small business and entrepreneurship.

Sustaining an enabling business environment will also be critical to entrepreneurship and the growth of new industries. Increased investment in infrastructure will improve the links between individuals, firms, and markets for goods and labour as well. Greater financial inclusion, targeting the youth and the rural-based population, will provide access to new mobile financial services technology that can draw small economic actors into the broader economy. Information technology and the move toward a digital, cashless economy should amplify the dividends to be reaped from all these activities, enabling Liberia to leapfrog some of its constraints.

1.7 Alignment of National Development Aspirations with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs

The Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development 2018 to 2023 (PAPD) is positioned as the second in the series of five-year National Development Plans (NDP's) towards the national aspirations expressed in the Vision 2030 framework developed in 2012. The national vision statement emerging from that process is multidimensional and simultaneously addresses the social, economic, political, environmental, cultural, and technological aspirations of the Liberian people. Therefore, the high-level goals of the PAPD align with and address all these dimensions as well.

The PAPD (2018-23) follows the Agenda for Transformation 2012-2017 (AfT). It draws heavily on the implementation experience of the AfT and incorporates lessons from the implementation of the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy 2007 as well as the Poverty Reduction Strategy (2008-2011). The PAPD is aligned to the ECOWAS 2020, Africa Agenda 2063, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

There are two objectives of the PAPD:

1. To build capable and trusted state institutions that will lead to a stable, resilient, and inclusive nation embracing its triple heritage and anchored on its African identity
2. To provide greater income security to an additional one million Liberians, and reduce absolute poverty by 23 per cent across 5 out of 6 regions--through sustained and inclusive economic growth driven by scaled-up investments in agriculture, in infrastructure, in human resource development, and in social protection

To make progress towards the PAPD and eventually the Vision 2030 goals, the strategies and interventions are built around four pillars which will form the pathways for the next five years:

1. Power to the People-- To empower Liberians with the tools to gain control of their lives through more equitable provision of opportunities in education, health, youth development, and social protection (women and vulnerable people with special needs)
2. The Economy and Jobs-- Economic stability and job creation through effective resource mobilization and prudent management of economic inclusion
3. Sustaining the Peace--Promoting a cohesive society for sustainable development
4. Governance and Transparency--An inclusive and accountable public sector for shared prosperity and sustainable development

The Pro-Poor Agenda is about the people, how to strengthen their capacity to thrive; and how to draw all Liberians living at home and abroad into the national development process. The Pro-Poor Agenda is also about altering the fundamental structure of the Liberian economy so that the growth does not leave the poor behind. The PAPD aims to bring prosperity to all and draw all Liberians at home and abroad into a transformed process of nation-building, leaving no Liberian behind. Over the next five years, addressing the basic needs of Liberians for income security, better access to basic services, and greater opportunities for self-improvement in a peaceful, inclusive, and stable environment will be at the core of the pro-poor approach. Over the long term, rising income levels and economic status to a middle-income country as outlined under the Vision 2030 framework will remain in focus. Over the next five years, however, the priority will be placed on removing the binding constraints to reaching that goal.

The PAPD was developed through a highly participatory process. Eleven budget sector meetings were organized with MACs and key partners to review performance under existing sector strategic plans, partnership arrangements, and budget allocations. Consultations were also organized in the 15 county capitals around the country. At these regional meetings, participants reviewed the progress made under the AfT and evaluated the impact on local areas. New challenges and priorities emerging since the launch of the AfT were identified and the perspective of the new government on change and the way forward was explained. Participants came from a cross-section of county residents and included women and

people with disabilities. Meetings were also held with Liberians living abroad in the United States, Europe, and West Africa to capture the perspective of a wide range of stakeholders outside of the government and the country.

1.8 Integrating the Dimensions of Sustainable Development

Liberia launched its Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) in October 2018. The PAPD is a five-year national development plan guided by the fundamental premise of extreme poverty, inequalities (income, and gender), regional disparities, and infrastructure deficits. The overarching aspiration is inclusion, a more equitable distribution of our national wealth, and a rights-based approach to national development which is aligned with both the agendas 2030 and 2063. The PAPD focuses on bringing growth back to the economy by increasing productivity through value chains with emphasis on agricultural processing and marketing, particularly in rural communities. Additional attention is drawn on addressing the infrastructure deficits which shall catalyse economic growth and national development. The implementation approach of the PAPD considers multi-sectionalism with share features of participation, de-concentration, and multi-discipline with the multi-sectorial approach. This requires drawing together multiple goals or packages for a project or several projects to be delivered to a specific target population or geographic region. These shall be demand-driven initiatives especially for rural communities that are behind in access to energy, safe drinking water, food security, and income generation opportunities.

As for the way forward on empowerment, stakeholders developing the current National Plan consistently cited access to good quality education and health as the top priorities for the PAPD. Demand for more and better health and education facilities and, for good quality instruction, was high. Water and sanitation facilities were also high in demand. Moreover, special programs targeting youth, empowerment of women and people with disabilities, and support for the elderly were high on the order of priorities.

On the Economy and Jobs, stakeholders recommended the training and deployment of “agriculture specialists” to the district and clan levels to introduce new technology, “provide new skills, improve monitoring, and to collect and disseminate data” relevant to the primary crops produced in the region. Storage, processing, and transport arrangements were also listed as critical needs that should be prioritized. Stakeholders noted that while it was important to pay attention to creating the right environment to attract foreign direct investment, increasing domestic production and returns to labour in agriculture were important as well. The agriculture sector was therefore identified as the major driver of growth and development-and stakeholders recommended it should be prioritized.

On Sustaining the Peace, stakeholders recommended prioritizing the maintenance of a visible presence of the civilian police and security organizations; but also felt that empowering some form of community watch mechanism could augment the limited capacity of the regular security forces. Stakeholders also recommended improving access to justice through enhancement of the court system, such as capacity building for magistrates and local deployment of more specialized courts and more dispute resolution mechanisms. Organization of the election of chiefs and city officials, as required by law, was recommended as an important contributor to sustaining the peace.

On Governance and Transparency, stakeholders called for an improvement of the CSC supervision, review of the guidelines for the County and Social Development Funds, and reduction in the influence of the Legislative Caucus on the local selection and appointment processes. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation arrangement of service delivery and new development interventions at the local level were recommended for priorities of the PAPD. Ensuring ownership of the change agenda, making related information more accessible, and increasing the level of participation of local communities in the decision making and implementation of the PAPD interventions were also recommended.

CHAPTER 2: The 2030 agenda within the Liberian context

Liberia officially launched the SDGs on January 25, 2016, with various stakeholders, namely, the legislature, judiciary, international partners, civil societies, business communities, local government, and citizens in attendance. The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning was nominated and approved by cabinet to serve as the lead and coordinating institution for the domestication of these agenda through a steering committee and a technical working group

A comprehensive audit by the country's General Auditing Commission followed the official launch. The need and justification for the audit were to assess Liberia preparedness as a country to implement the 2030 Agenda considering its obligations to the global initiative and outcomes as envisioned in the UN Resolution A/70/1 as well as assess the capacity of the Commission to audit the SDGs implementation.

In particular, the readiness assessment was conducted systematically to assess coordination and institutional arrangements in place for the complete domestication and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how well the 2030 Agenda is aligned to the country's long-term Vision 2030 and other medium-term national development plans. Also, the assessment took into consideration existing frameworks and strategies used during the implementation of the MDGs, and how they could enhance the implementation of the SDGs.

Finally, the commission assessed government commitment to sustain the implementation of the SDGs in terms of government preparedness to commit and mobilize the needed resource as well as providing an enabling environment for the 2030 Agenda implementation. In so doing, the assessment look at current culture and the way of doing things within government ministries/agencies, domestic resource structure capacities, political will, and leadership which are essential to promote and sustain transparency, objectivity, accountability, and a commitment to good governance. Finally, both the technical capacity and infrastructure within government ministries/agencies for planning, monitoring, and evaluation of the 2030 Agenda were assessed.

2.1 Macroeconomic overview

The macroeconomic environment in 2019 has been challenging for the country on account of the compounding effect of the adverse impact of the macroeconomic shocks that have beset the country. Real GDP growth slumped to -1.4 per cent in 2019 down from 1.2 per cent recorded in 2018. Despite the slump, there are prospects of a rebound in economic activities especially in the mining & panning sector, as growth is projected at 1.4 per cent in 2020 and to average about 4.4 per cent over the medium term (2021-2024). However, said growth prospects are conditioned upon the policies we pursue during the current challenging outlook; thus, improvements in the current outlook could have a significant positive impact on the medium-term outlook.

Growth of the economy has been steadily deteriorating over the past few years on account of adverse shocks, but it is projected to improve in the medium term driven by the agriculture and the mining sectors. While growth is falling, the prices of goods and services on the domestic market are increasing significantly on account of the pass-through effect of the depreciation of the Liberian dollar and the adverse impact of geopolitical tensions that have increased the global prices of food and energy. Consequently, Inflation (annual average) has been projected at 28.0 per cent in 2019 up from 21.2 per cent in 2018. However, inflationary pressure is projected to moderate over the medium term but to remain in double digits.

Falling domestic economic activities coupled with increasing general price level have constrained the Government's fiscal space by reducing revenues while increasing expenditures. Moreover, it has altered the currency composition of the government's fiscal space; that is, revenue collection in Liberian dollars

has increased while expenditure in foreign currency has increased thereby resulting in short-term liquidity issues. Government's revenue and grant as a percentage of GDP for 2019 were projected at 28.2 per cent up from 25.9 per cent for 2018, driven mainly by increases in both domestic revenue (14.4 per cent of GDP in 2019 compared to 12.9 per cent in 2018) and grants (13.8 per cent in 2019 compared to 13.0 per cent in 2018). Total revenue and grant as a percentage of GDP over the medium term is projected to increase gradually and to average around 30.0 per cent of GDP

One consequence of the narrowing of the Government's fiscal space has been the widening of the budget deficit. The overall fiscal balance including grants (excluding grants) as a percentage of GDP is projected at a deficit of 6.1 per cent (a deficit of 19.9 per cent) in 2019 up from a deficit of 4.8 per cent (a deficit of 17.8 per cent) in 2018. We have relied on donor assistance and borrowings in times past to finance the deficit. Financing the gap based on donor grants has proven challenging in recent times on account of donor fatigue and front-loading of donor assistance during the fight against Ebola. Moreover, the completion of most major donor-funded infrastructure projects has also contributed to the reduction in aid inflows. However, we intend to reverse the downward trend in aid inflows by convening a donor roundtable to seek assistance to finance the projects outlined in the PAPD. The fall in aid inflows has exerted significant financing pressures on the government as it has been constrained to absorb the financing of activities that were previously undertaken by donors.

Due to the widening of the budget deficit and the absence of aid to bridge the financing gap, the country's debt has increased significantly. The country's public external debt and public domestic debt as a percentage of GDP for 2019 is projected at 34.7 per cent and 19.8 per cent respectively compared to 28.4 per cent and 11.7 per cent for 2018. Barring any reversal in the current macroeconomic outlook, the public external debt is projected to increase significantly over the medium term with the public domestic debt remaining stable over the same period. Financing the deficit using borrowing has also been a challenge as the country's debt carrying capacity has been constrained on account of the fall in domestic economic activities. Consequently, the country's risk of debt distress has been downgraded from low to moderate. This provides a worrying situation as the Government has relied on contracting debt to finance the implementation of infrastructure projects to narrow the country's huge infrastructure gap. As of end-September 2019, the total stock of public debt amounted to US\$1,236.59 million of which domestic debt accounts for US\$422.01 million while external debt accounts for US\$814.59 million.

Meeting debt service obligations is also becoming a challenge as most of the external debts were contracted on concessional terms (long grace periods and longer maturity dates) are becoming due at the time in which we are struggling to resuscitate economic activities. Moreover, the fall in revenue, the currency composition of revenue, and the competing expenditure demands are also adversely impacting our ability to service our debts.

Challenges are as follows:

- The slow pace of growth in the economy constrains job creation and poverty reduction by inhibiting domestic resource collection while increasing expenditure outlay (specifically recurrent spending)
- Rising recurrent spending, specifically the wage bill, constrains our ability to finance the implementation of huge infrastructure projects to narrow our infrastructure gap
- Huge off-budget spending is also diverting resources away from capital spending and putting pressure on the already lower revenue being generated
- The rapid depreciation of the exchange rate which feeds into an increase in the general price level constrains domestic demand and by extension domestic resource mobilization

- The increase in the general price level has increased the demand for money, especially the demand for the domestic currency, thereby resulting in liquidity constraints for the banking system
- Lower levels of foreign reserves to intervene on the foreign exchange market to curb the rapid depreciation of the exchange rate. Moreover, the weak balance sheet of the CBL threatens the stability of the banking sector and by extension macroeconomic stability
- Rising public sector debts, which has placed the country in the moderate risk category, constrains our ability to borrow to finance the implementation of our infrastructure projects as contained in the PAPD
- Falling external aid on account of previous donor aid front-loaded during the Ebola period and the completion of huge infrastructure projects (Red Light – Ganta Highway, the Mt. Coffee Hydro-Electric Dam, amongst others) is also constraining the funding of the interventions contained in the PAPD

Liberia is aware that the major challenge facing the economy is the lack of confidence by investors, the donor community and by our people and we are taking concrete measures to address this situation to reverse the downward trend of the economy. As a demonstration of our commitment to getting on the program, we have taken a significant step in curtailing the rapid increase in recurrent expenditures, specifically the wage bill, by the implementation of the ongoing wage harmonization scheme. Moreover, on the fiscal policy front, we are committed to implementing a credible budget by aligning budgeted spending to identifiable available revenue; this reduces the temptation of deficit financing and helps in curtailing the increase in debts.

2.2 Implementation Arrangements

The PAPD (current national 5-year plan) laid out a clear implementation and coordination framework to ensure programs are aligned with each target, avoid duplication, and encourage joint implementation with all partners for transparency and accountability. The structure provides for a steering committee to be responsible for overall coordination and leadership to be strongly supported by the cabinet for policy decision making. The Implementation and Coordination Unit (the Division of Planning at the MFDP) serves as the secretariat involve with the technical planning, coordination, monitoring, and reporting of the PAPD that is supported by the Pillar and sector working groups meetings as indicated within the PAPD document.

In the early stages of the PAPD implementation, the coordination structures including the Sector Working Groups and Pillars were continually active in meeting and planning programs toward the achievement of each national target.

To reinforce the PAPD coordination mechanism and regularize the PAPD meetings to refocus the meetings around the national targets, the Minister of Finance and Development Planning convened a meeting with all sector and Pillar Champions in December 2019. The major focus of the meeting was to highlight the problems associated with such a decline in coordination, as were being expressed in the poor attendance and the failure of most meetings to be held, and finding solutions to solve the problems and ameliorate the situation. The Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Finance and Development has reengineered a platform to improve the PAPD coordination mechanism.

The PAPD was developed based on a set of macro-economic forecasts created in 2018. The forecasts expected real GDP growth of 3.0% in 2018, rising to 5.8% in 2023. This enabled a total resource funding

envelope of US\$5.2 billion over the five years. period Since that forecast, the macroeconomic situation in Liberia has deteriorated significantly. Real GDP growth is forecast to have reduced to -1.4 per cent in 2019 down from 1.2 per cent recorded in 2018 (itself an under-performance compared to forecast). Such economic deterioration has created significant pressure on the government budget and led the government to request an Extended Credit Facility program with the International Monetary Fund. This was approved in December 2019.

Throughout 2018 and 2019 much work was done to align development partner strategies with the PAPD, many of which had initially aligned to the Aft. This included the creation of the Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework with the entire UN system. Thus, while the government depends more heavily on development partner assistance during the difficult macro-fiscal period, the aligned assistance will enable continued progress to achieve the goals of the PAPD. The government intends to increase PSIP allocation as the economy recovers and domestic revenue grows. The Domestic Resource Mobilization strategy outlines the path to increase revenue that the government is pursuing. Given the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, however, and its possible effects on global growth, the government is realistic that the speed with which domestic revenue will increase may be below IMF forecasts.

The national planning process is top-down in structure. Sectoral and regional consultative meetings are held to review past performance of the NDP and build consensus on the best way forward. In principle, this connects the national, county, district, and community levels planning processes. Launched in Jan 2013, institutions within the Liberia Development Alliance (LDA) structure have four primary responsibilities:--coordinating policymaking, providing an open platform to all stakeholders, following up on the global commitments made under the “New Deal”, accounting for results and a functional M&E framework under the Aft. Nevertheless, structural, and institutional inadequacies limit the operation of the planning process; and national ownership of the NDP commitments has not been realized.

2.3 Lessons learned from past

A critical lesson learned from the design of the PRS (2008 to 2011) was that Liberia cannot simply recreate the economic and political structures of the past, which produced widespread income disparities, economic and political marginalization, and deep social cleavages, ultimately fuelling the conflict. In the design and execution of its NDP's, Liberia must create much greater economic and political opportunities for all its citizens and ensure that growth and development are pro-poor in the sense that they are widely shared--with the benefits spread much more equitably throughout the population

The 2018 APRM review concluded that the process of securing, negotiating, and implementing these concessionary agreements in Liberia met internationally accepted best practices and brought benefits. Overall, the economy grew by 6.7 per cent over the period 2009 to 2013. The mining sector grew by 70 per cent between 2005 and 2013. An estimated fifteen thousand jobs were created but large numbers were lost (2014 and 2015) when the twin shocks of the EVD outbreak and global commodity price decline occurred, with concessionaires ceasing operations. Over the same period, the agricultural sector grew by 2.8 per cent creating an estimated 500,000 income-earning opportunities.

Nevertheless, implementation of business and investment policies have been deeply flawed due to a combination of limited capacity to effectively monitor compliance with the agreements and a lack of political will for enforcement. Adherence to the key principle of First Prior and Informed consent (FPIC) has been difficult. In some areas, communities have been adversely impacted by land loss and have become more food insecure. The exploitation of forest resources through elite capture for profit continued at a more aggressive scale. These outcomes have brought into question the continuing efficacy of the old economic structures in employment, revenue generation, and inclusion.

Liberia has not found a successful pathway from a high level of dependence on natural resource exports

and foreign assistance for the large inflows of U.S. dollars it needs for food and fuel imports. Nevertheless, the government recognizes that sustainable economic growth and diversification is possible with the right macroeconomic and fiscal policy mix. Structural and institutional inadequacies, and the lack of will to implement the policies, will need to be addressed to be able to go forward.

Given the foregoing, this plan marks a paradigm shift in the design and management of the current national development plan.

- 1- There is now a recognition that sustainable development is a complex process, with interwoven layers, and constraints in one sector can inhibit progress in another. Therefore, sustainable development requires removal or reduction of constraints across multiple sectors to create an enabling environment for progress in all sectors. This multi-sectoral approach will also create the framework for the domestication of the SDGs and alignment of the NDP with the AU Agenda 2063 and ECOWAS 2020.
- 2- Supporting the paradigm shift is the acknowledgment that increasing capital investments to boost economic growth and increasing social expenditure to create local markets and reduce vulnerability are not mutually exclusive. When properly sequenced they are mutually reinforcing and sustainable. Economic growth produces the income security and wealth that the poor badly need to improve their living standards; while increasing social spending can increase demand for goods and services provided by the market, and build human and knowledge capital, to tap into the new opportunities that will emerge because of growth.
- 3- The PRS and the AfT reintroduced national development planning after a decade and a half of conflict and state collapse. The reorientation to achieving deliverables through results-based management was a welcome shift in development thinking, but the actual outcomes produced could have been greater given the level of resources committed to the effort.
- 4- Uneven development i.e. concentration of wealth and development in urban areas such as in the capital city has led to a lack of societal cohesion, as was observed during the years of conflict. The spatial distribution of human settlements in Liberia shows that development corridors and domestic markets will naturally evolve along with infrastructures such as roads, railways, ports, etc. Lifetime migration in search of decent living standards and security over the past three decades led to the current situation where more than half of the population now lives in urban areas. The development corridors approach will accelerate the normal migration process but will add alternative destinations for internal migrants.

2.4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting on the 2030 Agenda

Monitoring the SDGs and their indicators have been a challenge for Liberia. Properly monitoring change across the 169 targets, particularly on SDG Goal 16 given the strong reference to sustaining peace and building a capable state in the PAPD, will severely stretch the capacity of the national statistical system and those of government MACs. Accordingly, a minimalist approach has been formulated.

Identification and validation of the national key indicator involved both MFDP internal and external stakeholders for national development reporting on the PAPD. The process started after the launch of the PAPD in October 2018. The aim was to identify or select the NKIs and validate the selected NKI with MACs that are supposed to monitor and report on them. The MACs were then responsible to support the National Monitoring and Evaluation Unit by clearly defining the proposed NKIs, providing baselines were possible, and the reviewing of the PAPD targets. Moreover, the MACs helped in identifying the source for information on the NKIs, the responsible entity as well as the frequency for the monitoring of the indicators.

Currently, there are 140 high-level targets and 140 national key indicators of the PAPD. All the targets and indicators of the PAPD are linked directly to the targets and indicators of the global (Agenda 2030) and

continental (Agenda 2063) agendas. This indicates the government's willingness to support and promote the successful implementation of both agendas.

A national M&E Framework and Plan have been developed to improve reporting on national development against national goals and objectives. It points to whether there have been achievements and whether the direction and pace of Liberia's transformation are toward the "Liberia Rising Vision 2030". The National M&E plan:

1. Ensures a focus on results by embedding M&E in the management culture and practices of sectors, particularly for the lead MACs, and county authorities in the context of phased decentralization
2. Provides an early warning system to address potentially problematic areas or processes of PAPD implementation which may need corrective actions.
3. Promotes and institutionalizes a coordinated, harmonized, and integrated M&E system by ensuring a strong linkage and alignment between goals, strategic objectives, and outcomes outlined in the PAPD with the inputs and planned outputs in the national budget (through the MTEF process).
4. Clarifies the roles and responsibilities of various MACs and other stakeholders involved in the M&E of public programs, as well as monitoring of strategic activities carried out by non-state actors.
5. Enhances evidence-based decision making by key actors, including the Executive and the Legislature, and enables effective participation by other key stakeholders including the private sector and CSOs. Performance information and timely reports will be used to support policymaking, especially budget decisions, and to help MACs in their policy formulation and implementation of key programs/projects.
6. Strengthens transparency and accountability, to foster partnerships and learning relationships and processes by MACs. This will improve the confidence of the Liberian people in the commitment and capacity of the Executive and the Legislature to hold ministries and agencies and county authorities to account for delivering value-for-money results which will benefit directly the majority of the Liberian population.
7. Enhances institutional and technical commitment and capacities to manage and carry out an effective and demand-driven M&E system.

PAPD National Steering Committee	The National Steering Committee is chaired by the President of the GOL and leads the overall implementation of the PAPD. The private sector and DPs are represented in the National Steering Committee. In its quarterly meetings, it assesses the PAPD's progress based on accounts to be given by the Pillar Champions and recommendations on M&E related actions to improve the delivery of development results.
National M&E Technical Working Group (NMETWG)	Consisting of M&E Focal Points in MACs, assist in measuring the results of the PAPD towards a more effective, coherent, and efficient way as the government implements its national development plan.
The National M&E Unit (NM&EU)	It is the national coordinating body responsible to ensure the successful conduct of monitoring and evaluating at various pre-determined points of the life cycle of the PAPD at the national and sub-national levels.

LISGIS	It is the national statistical institute, which ensures the production, standardization, and validation of national statistics; Together with NM&EU, it has the responsibility in coordinating the implementation of the National M&E Plan. It has M&E staff at central and county-level, the County Statistics and Information Officers (CSIOS). The CSIOS report together with the RDOs, CMOs to the NM&EU
The Ministry of State	Is the coordinating body of the Performance Management and Compliance System (PMCS)?
Ministries, Agencies and Commissions (MACs)	The individual sector MACs have either M&E Units, M&E staff, or staff with M&E tasks report M&E results to the Pillar Champions and the NM&ECU.
National Evaluation Committee (NEC)	When established, it will provide technical oversight responsibility on the conduct of Evaluation. The private sector, CSOs, and DPs are supposed to be represented in the NEC. It will coordinate and oversee the establishment of effective Evaluation systems that will facilitate reporting on the effectiveness, efficiency, impacts, and sustainability of both government and development partners' projects, programs, and policies.

Tracking Mechanisms for monitoring national Flagship and Sector Projects have been developed as follows:

Quarterly Tracking Tools: A quarterly tracking tool for the flagship and sector projects of the GoL under the PAPD has been designed and tested. Moreover, a comprehensive PAPD quarterly performance report developed for the consolidation of all progress reports from MACs. Each project (PSIP or donor) will report on its progress towards selected PAPD NKIs. If the sector in which the project is implemented has no designated NKI, it reports towards the project or sector outcome indicator. To make reporting more focused, each project can at a maximum report on two project outcomes and five project outputs per outcome. The quarterly and consolidated tracking tools combined both financial and non-financial reporting by linking outcomes and outputs to financial data. A scoring system with color codes and points is proposed which aggregates summary scores for actual project outputs according to plan and actual budget management data according to plan. These two together form the aggregated score for the progress of outputs and budget management according to plan.

National Data Warehouse: It has been the obligation of the AfDB to ensure that all member states have the platforms to report on key national development indicators. The goal of such a platform is to provide real-time trend information on the national key indicators as well as provide budget performance information on projects/programs across the country. In so doing, the AfDB developed an open data portal for Liberia in 2013. Notwithstanding, the portal has been unable to provide real-time trend information since its development due to some implementation challenges. However, there are ongoing discussions with the AfDB to make sure the portal is functional and operational. As a result, the AfDB informed the government that the designing and operationalization of the will be fully funded and technically supported by the AfDB. The platform will be redesigned or expanded beyond its current perimeter of indicators purposely to add the PAPD indicators and other national key indicators. Any amount of dataset from all sectors will be uploaded. Meaning, Liberia will have complete access and freedom to populate the portal with its national key indicators as well as other indicators that there is a need to report on. Moreover, features of the portal can be redesign and structure as per the country preference. Furthermore, the portal can exclusively integrate with other platforms. That is, other systems like MOH Health Information Management System can easily be linked directly to the portal without manual human processing, and the country’s technical team will have complete control in allowing and denying access to

anyone for updating purposes. Finally, the system will have an interface that will allow Liberia to create customized dashboards, tables, and charts. When created, they can be embedded into any other platform or website, and once the source data is updated, the dashboards, tables, and charts will automatically be updated.

Performance Management and Compliance System: Every head of a government spending entity will sign a performance and compliance contract with the President of the Republic of Liberia. The purpose of the contract agreement is to ensure the delivery of development results and the execution of MACs statutory mandates. The performance and compliance contract will be inclusive of a list of activities or interventions a MAC is expected to achieve in a specific fiscal year. However, not all MACs will be implementing projects/programs, but all MACs were created with specific mandates and functions and are also money from the national budget to execute those mandates and functions. Therefore, all MACs will be required to report on progress made on those mandates and functions against the resources allocated to them.

Citizens Feedback Mechanism: This mechanism will increase citizens' participation in the overall monitoring processes of development projects/programs. In so doing, citizens, CSOs, and the media will be able to channel their concerns and issues about the delivery of services through a systematic and technological approach to relevant authorities for prompt redress and feedback particularly to the office of the president. Overall, the Citizens Feedback Mechanism (CFM) is intended to create a platform for improvement in service delivery as well as provide the government with the information needed to increase the number of services provided and make informed decisions purposely to improve the wellbeing of its citizens. Additionally, the CFM will provide information to citizens as relates to services delivered by MACs at the county level, and about the national budget (appropriation, allotment, and disbursement). The CFM is accessible via both mobile and the web.

Key institutions for national M&E and organizational structure

The implementation of the PAPD is led by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) through the Division of Development Planning (DDP). The MFDP work closely with the PAPD Pillars Champions along with sectors MACs, and report to the National Steering Committee chaired by the President of the Republic of Liberia and has representatives from the Cabinet, the Private Sector, Development Partners (DPs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

The coordinating body (Division of Development Planning/DDP) of the PAPD implementation is headed by the Assistant Minister for Development Planning as the National Coordinator. The DDP has four units, namely: the Plan Development & Coordination Unit (PDCU), the Regional & Sectoral Planning Unit (RSPU), the Public Investment Unit (PIU), the NGOs Coordination Unit and the National M&E Unit (NM&EU). These work closely together with other departments of the MFDP in coordinating the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the PAPD.

2.5 Data for SDGs Reporting

To improve the capacity of the government at the sub-national level to monitor the PAPD during year one, the Government of Liberia, through the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, with support from UNDP, conducted result-based management training for all Regional Development Officers (RDOs) and County Monitoring Officers. The training was also conducted for the usage of data collection, monitoring, and reporting.

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning developed data collection, monitoring, and reporting templates at the national level and distributed to various MACs through sector working group meetings. Progress on interventions was compiled by sectors and submitted to the Ministry of Finance and

Development Planning. Mobile engagement teams were set-up to work with MACs that were slow in populating the templates. To verify reports coming from MACs, joint monitoring exercises were conducted with selected MACs, particularly MACs that implemented projects under the PSIP. The joint monitoring exercises were useful, as they helped verified information that MACs reported.

Going forward, a more systematic data collection quality monitoring system will provide the foundation for the PAPD National M&E framework by providing continuous information about implementation and results. The monitoring system will serve to detect irregularities and inefficiencies and allow the government and its development partners to correct them promptly. Moreover, reliable information about the progress and quality of implementation will be presented on multiple platforms and at policy decision meetings.

2.6 Statistical institutions: capacities and deficits

Early 2019, the United Nations Statistical Division based in New York completed a mission to assess the capacity needs of government statistical institutions implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in line with the country's national development plan (Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development). The mission team conducted a comprehensive statistical capacity assessment about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) monitoring processes and procedures. The capacity assessment looked at some key areas that needed human capacity and system strengthening purposely to enhance ongoing capacity building efforts for the country preparedness in collecting data on the SDGs, creating and upgrading national data platforms, engaging with users of SDG indicators to determine data availability per indicator, and technical assistance. This was part of a series of national statistical strengthening initiatives supported government and key development partners including AfDB, the World Bank, UNICEF, UNFPA, etc. Key government statistical institutions assessed including the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Labour.

To date, the country's National Statistical Strategy developed by the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Survey is serving as the fundamental guidelines for statistical analysis across the economic, social, environmental, and technological sectors at both national and sub-national levels. There exist an interactive National Projects System (allocation, disbursement, and results tracking) and expenditure monitoring system. Also, the SDGs monitoring platform that is currently undergoing development will be completely integrated with the National Data Warehouse. The platform is to provide real time trend information on the SDGs indicators as well as provide budget performance information on projects/programs across the country. Furthermore, the platform will exclusively integrate with other platforms. That is, other systems like MOH Health Information Management System can easily be linked to the portal without manual human processing.

2.7 Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships for coordination and implementation

The Government of Liberia has a national implementation and coordination framework that is being used to coordinate, monitor and report on the Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), by extension the SDGs 2030 and Africa Agenda 2063. The below outlines the roles and responsibilities of each layer of the framework and its current status:

National Steering Committee (NSC): There is a National Steering Committee (NSC) which is the apex level coordination and decision-making body. The NSC is chaired by the President of the Republic of Liberia. The NSC is responsible for the overall management and coordination of the PAPD. The membership of the NSC comprises of the Minister of State for Presidential Affairs, the Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Representatives of five key Development Partners, and Champions of the four pillars of the PAPD. The NSC is to hold meetings more frequently, respond more rapidly, and make

substantive decisions more easily.

However, the National Steering Committee (NSC), chair by the President of the Republic of Liberia, has not been able to hold its meeting and make decisions emanating from the various pillars. There are plans to ensure that the National Steering Committee is held.

Cabinet: The cabinet is to guide policies and priorities that may affect the implementation of the PAPD. In collaboration with the Division of Development Planning, the cabinet monitors the goals, NKIs, and strategic objectives by assessing PAPD progress periodically, per the Results Framework. The cabinet facilitates inter-institutional coordination and collaboration to improve the participation of various public and private sector actors directly involved in the implementation of the PAPD.

Implementation, Coordination and Delivery Unit (ICDU)/Division of Development Planning: The ICDU was initially intended to lead on the general coordination and monitoring of the PAPD whose roles and responsibilities are being carried out by the Division of Development Planning in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. The Division of Development Planning serves as the secretariat to the National Steering Committee and the Pillar Working Groups (PWG). It provides support to and follow-up with ministries, agencies, and commissions, and other key national and international stakeholders to ensure timely implementation of the agreed strategies and activities of the PAPD. The Secretariat works with the National Steering Committee, the cabinet, and the Multi-Sectoral Planning Working Group to monitor interventions and ensure compliance with the strategic goals of the PAPD. The Division of Development Planning works along with Pillar champions to plan and coordinate Pillar Working Group and Technical Working Group meetings and to also provide periodic progress reports and other supporting documentation on the PAPD implementation.

Currently, coordination meetings, support to spending entities project development, and monitoring of progress on projects, programs, and activities implementation are being carried out by the Division of Development Planning.

Multi-Sectoral Planning Working Group: The MSPWG comprises heads of planning departments of ministries, agencies, and commissions and representatives of the County Development Committees. Its function is to review sector plans, strategies, and interventions; identify linkages and synergies; improve coordination, and prevent duplication of efforts. These functions are fully being coordinated and implemented with a multi-sectoral approach.

Technical Working Groups

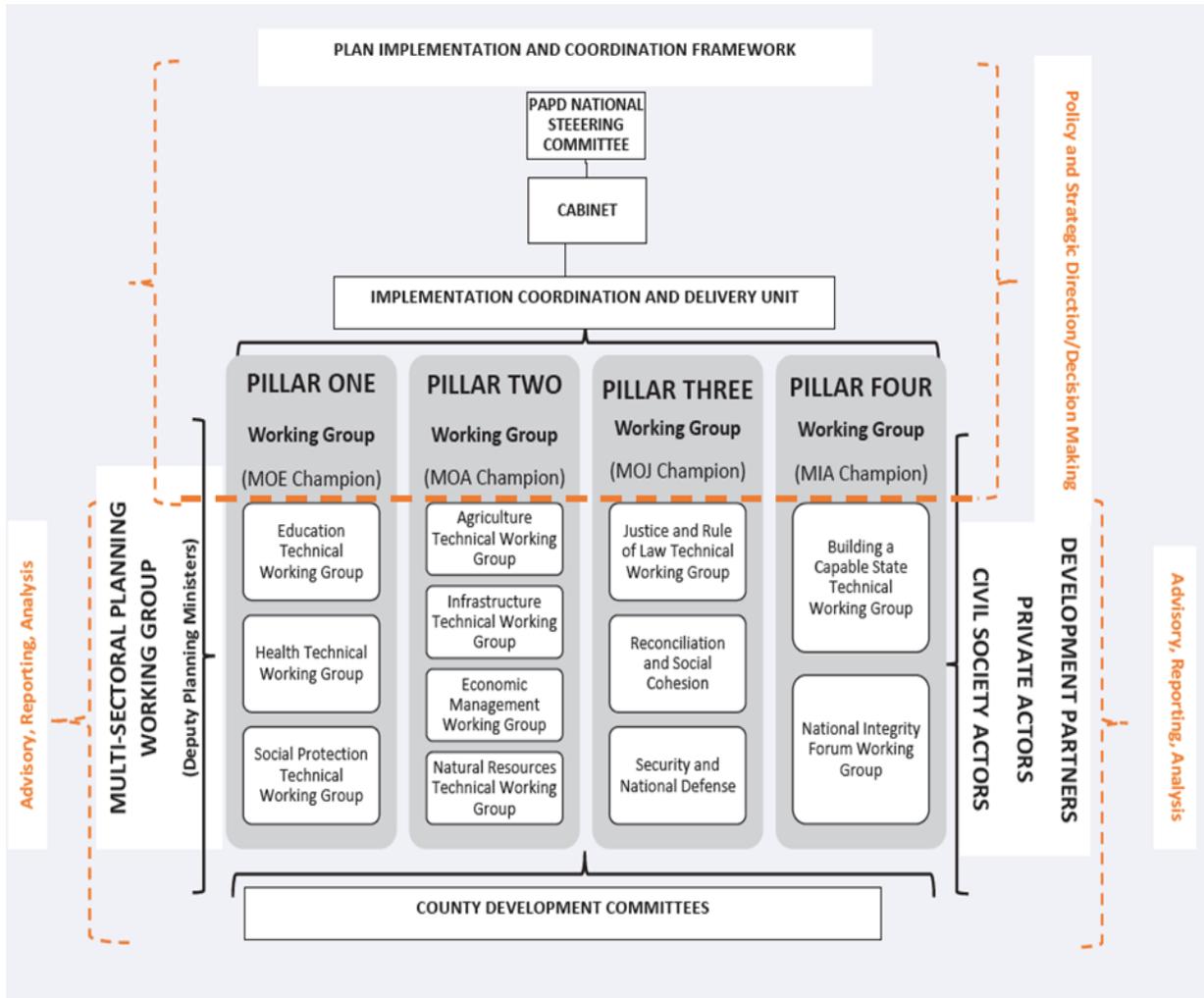
Each pillar is led by a Champion, with the primary role of convening quarterly meetings to deliberate on progress towards the development outcomes and agree on resource requirements from a multi-sectoral perspective. The membership of the Pillar Working Group comprises of cabinet ministers (or designates) and others by invitation. The Pillar Working Group meetings are being coordinated and held quarterly chaired by Pillar Champions and Co-Champions.

The Technical Working Groups (TWGs) comprise experts and specialists from ministries, agencies, and commissions. They support the pillars. There are 12 TWGs. Their role is to ensure the participation of multiple stakeholders to advise public planning, ensure wide-ranging buy-in and disseminate information throughout the implementation of the PAPD. Civil Society Actors, Development Partners, County Development Committee Representatives, and Private Actors play an advisory role within the TWGs. In close coordination with the Division of Development Planning at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, the TWGs undertake strategic and operations planning activities, including the development of the strategic plans and financial projections.

Currently, the Technical Working Groups (TWGs) meetings are being coordinated and held monthly by

sector leads with support from Pillar Specialists and Sector Analysts of the Division of Development Planning in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

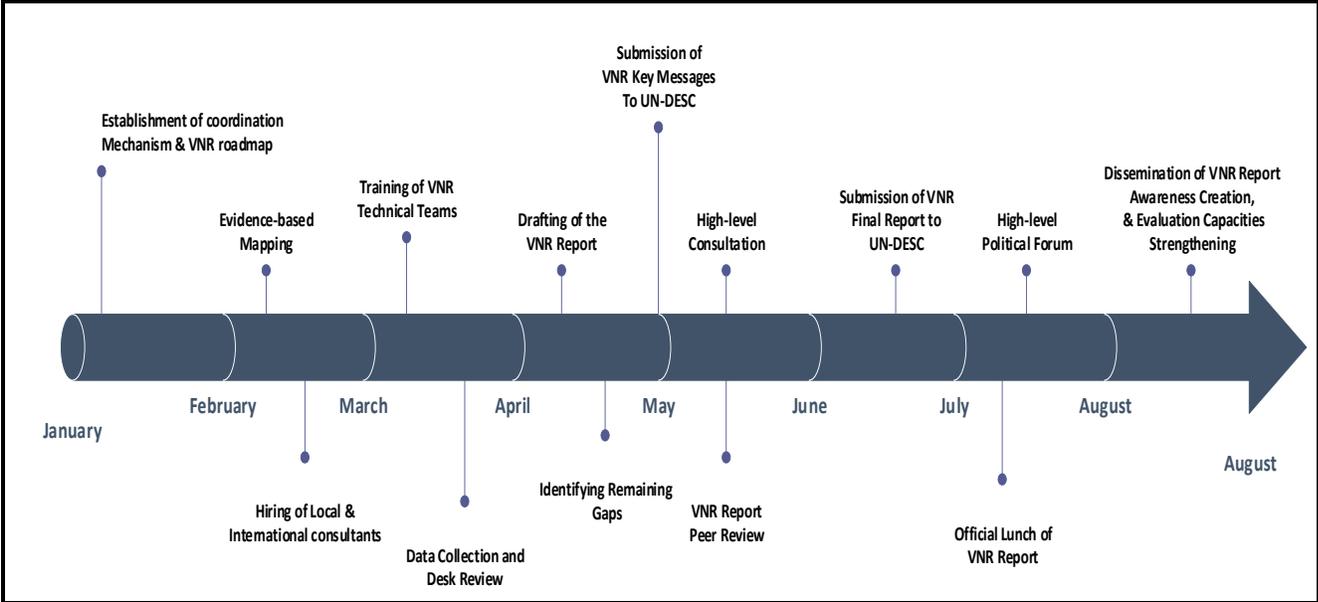
Below is a graphic of the Plan Implementation and Coordination Framework



CHAPTER 3: Methodology and process for the preparation of the Voluntary National Review 2020

Liberia’s first VNR exercise will provide the opportunity for Liberia to track its progress, share experiences, lessons learned, and challenges encountered during the five (5) years of SDGs implementation. Moreover, the exercise will support the strengthening of existing systems and national capacities for the coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of the PAPD, SDGs, and Agenda 2063 implementation as well as improve services and product deliveries and further reinforces the principle of “leaving no one behind”. Finally, the exercise will also identify existing partnership opportunities for collaborative efforts and provide recommended actions to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through the PAPD implementation.

3.1 Liberia's VNR Roadmap



3.2 VNR 2020 Expert Team

Liberia VNR 2020 Technical Teams were set-up on each of the seventeen (17) goals of the SDGs to work with the hire consultants for a comprehensive data collection and reporting at both national and sub-national levels. Each team was headed by Focal Person (M&E/Planning Director or persons with M&E or planning responsibilities) of a government institution that is either serving as a chair or co-chair of a sector of the national development plan that is linked to a particular goal of the 2030 Agenda. The teams were responsible to work with key stakeholders to provide status updates on SDGs Indicators (Sectors progress towards the achievement of the SDGs per indicator), additional needed data or information, SDGs implementation challenges, and lessons learned at the sector level, and recommendations for SDGs implementation improvement.

3.3 Launch of the VNR 2020 Process

To assert ownership and to guarantee that the process was led by the national government, a high-level event organized by the government was intended to bring together all with key stakeholders purposely to agree on priority areas for reporting and official launch the Liberia VNR 2020 exercise. The Vice President was expected to officially the VNR report process. Unfortunately, due to the Coronavirus

outbreak, all planned outdoors or crowded events of the ongoing VNR of the SDGs were postponed until further notice from the country's health officials. However, the exercise was launch remotely.

3.4 Consultative Meetings

The major components of the stakeholder's engagement were national and sub-national consultations and awareness creation with greater emphasis on including the disadvantage and marginalized. Initially, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and Champions of the four pillars planned to work with their partners (UN Agencies and others) to organize and conduct sectoral consultations on the 2030 Agenda goals and its 169 targets. At the national level, the consultations were organized to be inclusive of key actors (MACs, local and international NGOs, CSOs, private sector, development partners/donors, etc.) that would together provide the information needed for the VNR report such as progress, challenges, and lessons learned across sectors. At the county level, the County Development Steering Committees (CDSC) chaired by the county's superintendents were responsible to provide leadership during sub-national consultations with technical support from MFDPA Regional Development Officers. The planned consultations were expected to draw representations from a broader spectrum of the society including students, youth leaders, children, business communities, women's organizations, persons with disabilities, religious and traditional leaders, farmers, teachers, health workers, local community opinion leaders amongst others.

Nevertheless, no planned consultations across the country were actualized due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The VNR Coordination Team had to quickly redesign the consultations strategy focusing on swiftly moving the consultations at the later stage of the process to ensure participation.

3.5 Data Collection and Report Drafting

An evidence agenda was developed which outlined the processes to ensure the collection of evidenced-based information/data on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In so doing, existing evaluation reports, final project reports, researches and survey reports, and other useful evidence-based reports from relevant data sources were systematically identified, collected, and documented as per each SDGs. Additionally, a comprehensive data collection and reporting tool were developed and shared with VNR focal persons at the agency level. At the later and most critical stage, syntheses drawings from the identified sources of information were done which led to a comprehensive desk review of all the documented and other evidence-based reports. As the drafting of the report was ongoing, the hired consultants along with the VNR coordination team continued to engage relevant government agencies and development partners on identified remaining gaps and challenges in obtaining the available data as well as requests for additional needed information.

3.6 Awareness Creation

A massive awareness initiative on the Sustainable Development Goals was carried at both national and sub-national levels. SDGs teams were deployed in each of the 15 counties to raise awareness on the SDGs. The teams organized radio talk shows on national and community radio stations in major cities and rural parts of the country. The messages were spread not only in English but also in local dialects in the view of leaving no one behind. During the exercise, the teams also conducted town hall meetings in city halls, schools and universities auditoriums targeting students, youth leaders, children, business communities, women's organizations, persons with disabilities, religious and traditional leaders, farmers, teachers, health workers, local community opinion leaders amongst others.

3.7 Review and Validation Process

As the nationwide lockdown and social distancing measures continued, it was unfeasible to conduct the VNR review validation process as planned. However, after the drafting of the VNR report, the draft report was shared with key stakeholders including government agencies, all UN agencies, Civil Society Organizations Groups/Associations, students and youth associations, and other development partners that are intensively involved with the implementation of the SDGs. Moreover, throughout the peer review exercise, there were regular high-level engagements both on the progress of the peer review purposely to ensure that the report meets the standards sets for voluntarily reporting on the SDGs and that the report is a true representation of the Government of Liberia, its development partners, and other key stakeholders.

3.8 Launch and Dissemination of VNR Report

Plans for the official launch of the VNR 2020 report underway. Due to the existing social distancing measures and lockdown restrictions across the country, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning is working closely with the Office of the President to properly arrange and organize the official launch of the VNR report taken highly into consideration public safety measures. The official launch is expected to be attended by high-level government officials, government agencies, all UN agencies, Civil Society Organizations Groups/Associations, students and youth associations, and other development partners

CHAPTER FOUR: Progress on goals and targets



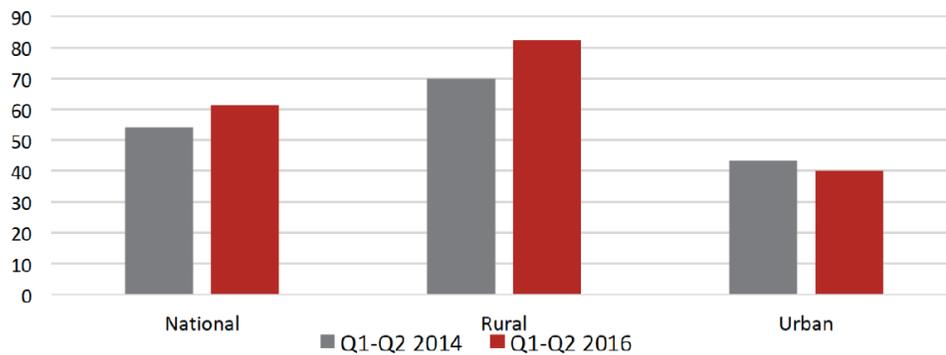
GOAL 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Poverty is widespread in Liberia, affecting most of the population. According to the 2016 Household Income and Expenditure Survey, the most recent nationally representative data source on poverty rates in Liberia, 50.9 per cent of the Liberian population, or about 2.2 million people, are poor (they cannot achieve the minimum expenditure to acquire basic food and non-food items). Some 39.1 per cent of Liberians were found to be ‘food poor’ (cannot meet their basic food needs), and 16.5 per cent of the population was classified as ‘extremely poor’.

An alternative measure of poverty levels, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) **multidimensional poverty index**, captures multiple, overlapping deprivations across the three dimensions of education, health, and living standards. A multidimensional approach to measuring poverty recognizes that poverty is multifaceted and may not be adequately captured simply by measuring income, expenditure, and consumption. According to the most recent UNDP Human Development report (which draws on data from 2013), **70.1 per cent** of Liberia’s population was multidimensionally poor, with an additional 21.5 per cent living near multidimensional poverty. High rates of multidimensional poverty reflect the low levels of human development in Liberia, which ranked 181 [2017 UNDP] out of 188 countries in the 2016 Human Development Index.

Poverty trends

While significant progress was made in reducing poverty in Liberia in the years following the civil conflict, with poverty rates dropping from 64 per cent in 2007 to 54 per cent in 2010, progress has slowed in recent years due to shocks to the Liberian economy. In 2014 real GDP growth, which had averaged 6.2 per cent between 2003 and 2013, dropped dramatically to a mere 0.8 per cent in 2014–2016. This was due in large part to the Ebola crisis of 2014–2015, which had devastating effects on economic activity (including foreign investment, agriculture, mining, and businesses), and was exacerbated by a fall in prices of Liberia’s main exports, iron ore, and rubber. Growth rates in Liberia are beginning to recover, but the 2014–2015 disruption is likely to impede Liberia’s progress towards SDG targets to halve overall poverty and food poverty by 2030. The Liberian economy remains vulnerable to external shocks given the volatility in prices of its key exports (rubber and iron ore), its dependence on food imports, and its susceptibility to natural disasters and disease. These shocks are likely to impact poor and near-poor households most severely, and thus, if they occur, may increase the number of people living in poverty and further entrench poverty among those who are already poor.



Source: LISGIS, 2016.

Note: Only the first two quarters of 2014 and 2016 were used to ensure comparability, given that the 2014 survey was interrupted by the Ebola outbreak and was thus only administered from January to July of that year.

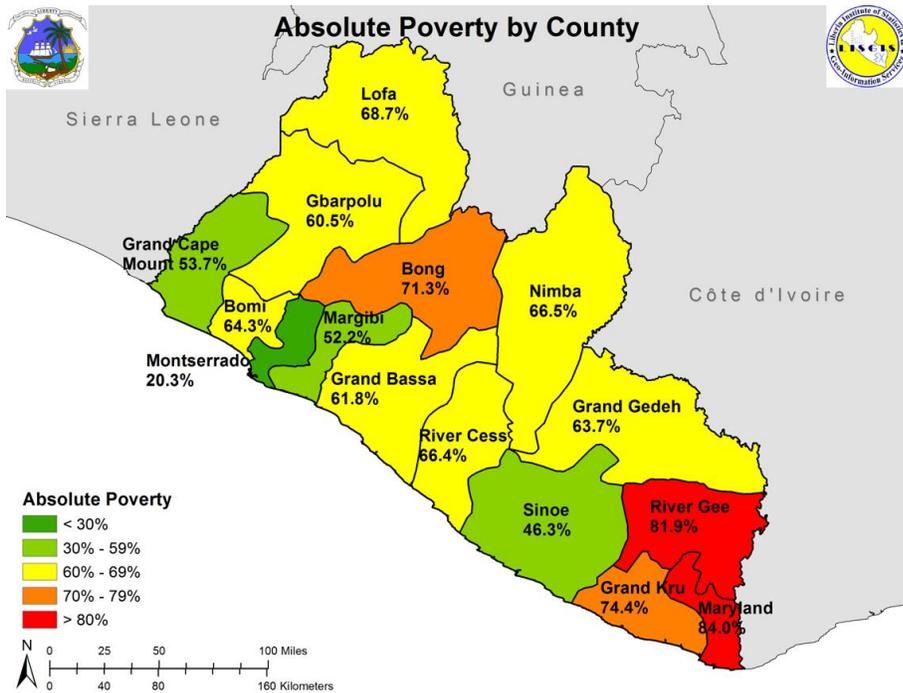
Poverty distribution

Income poverty is unevenly distributed across Liberia, ranging from as high as 84 per cent in Maryland County to 20 per cent in Montserrado County. Poverty rates are about twice as high in rural areas, with rural poverty at 71.6 per cent, compared with 31.5 per cent in urban areas. Rather than improving, the rate of rural poverty has increased, largely due to the Ebola outbreak crisis and a sharp drop in commodity prices in 2014. While urban poverty is not as prevalent in the figures, it is an issue due to the concentration and high numbers of the population in urban centers. Despite its relatively low poverty rates, Montserrado County has the highest number of poor people (over 275,000 people) because so many people live within that county.

Absolute poverty refers to the condition where a person does not have the minimum amount of income needed to meet the minimum requirements for one or more basic living needs over an extended period. As with extreme poverty, there are high rates of absolute poverty in Liberia, and these rates have been on the rise in five of the six national statistical regions. Absolute poverty varies significantly by region, with Maryland and River Gee having the highest rates at 84 and 81 per cent respectively, followed by Grand Kru (74 per cent) and Bong (71 per cent).

‘Extreme poverty’ is defined by the World Bank as living on less than US\$1.90 per day and remains particularly persistent in certain parts of the country. Although extreme poverty has been almost eradicated in Montserrado County (2.7 per cent), nearly half (47.5 per cent) of the population of Maryland County in the South Eastern B region is classified as falling within the extreme poverty category. Persistent poverty among certain subpopulations, and within rural and remote communities, is likely to prove especially difficult to eradicate, posing a challenge to achieving SDG targets. For instance, according to recent estimates, household food production supplies only 35 per cent of household food requirements in the poorest rural areas, leaving households vulnerable to food price fluctuations and other shocks.

Persistent poverty and uneven growth patterns are indicative of entrenched inequalities in access to basic services, assets, and income in Liberia. While consumption inequality is not extreme in Liberia when compared to its regional neighbors (the Gini coefficient is 0.33, compared to 0.34 in Sierra Leone and 0.43 in Ghana), wealth inequality is strikingly high and has changed little over the past few decades.



Child poverty

Recent estimates of levels of child poverty in Liberia are not available. A 2014 UNICEF publication estimated that 63.4 per cent of children in the country suffer from multidimensional poverty and that 1,825,143 children out of the total child population of 2,179,015 were living on less than US\$1.25 per day (the figure that defined the poverty line at that time). Available evidence also suggests that households with higher numbers of children are more likely to experience poverty. Poor households tend to have higher dependency ratios than non-poor households, meaning they have a greater number of children and elderly persons per working-age adult. Fertility rates are highest in rural areas where poverty is concentrated.

Child poverty, and particularly rural child poverty, are likely to be ongoing challenges in Liberia, indicating a need for comprehensive and nationwide social protection measures if the Government is going to meet SDG 1.2, which require a reduction by half in the proportion of all children living in poverty in all its dimensions. Children who are living in poverty suffer from its multidimensional impact, causing inequity in the enjoyment of other rights such as education, survival rights, employment, and housing, detailed in the other sections of this report.

Most children live in poor households and cope with gross deprivation. These include risks of stunting, limited or no access to healthcare, lack of access to safe drinking water, and no toilet or sanitation facilities at home. The infant mortality rate is among the 20 highest in the world. The 2013 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey (LDHS) shows 32 per cent of children under 5 years old are classified as malnourished, 6 per cent wasted, 15 per cent underweight, and 3 per cent overweight. Essentially, the percentage of stunting has increased with the age of the child.

Poverty among the elderly

The highest level of poverty is found among households headed by elderly persons (60+). Slightly more than 60 per cent live in absolute poverty, 48 per cent in food poverty, while 22.2 per cent live in extreme poverty. As most of the elderly have never worked in the formal sector, they are not likely to be vested in any pension scheme that provide some form of income security. Liberia does not have universal statutory

social security for its elderly people. The only form of old-age protection available is the contributory national pension scheme for the wage-earning population. Under the current eligibility criteria, no more than 300,000 persons would qualify.

Social Protection systems

As a part of the effort to leave no one behind, the government sees poor, disadvantaged, and vulnerable groups in the population as part of our national assets. Fulfilling the government's commitment to include them into our national development plan in substantive ways is a strategy of the PAPD. Therefore, issues concerning women and girls' empowerment, at-risk children and youths, people with disability, people living with HIV, and EVD survivors are included in efforts to reduce absolute poverty by an additional 23 per cent and widespread vulnerability over the next six years.

Investment in social protection was a new policy area injected into the AfT as part of the transition from humanitarian assistance. The experience with using this policy tool to reduce vulnerability and decrease poverty (finance, food, and fuel crisis) levels is therefore limited but evolving. The intervening EVD outbreak saw national priorities return to life-saving humanitarian assistance, upending prospects of a smooth transition to sustainable development, and exacerbating widespread vulnerability once again. Moreover, all the SP programs under the AfT were donor funded and delivered by the end of 2017.

No comprehensive review of the implementation of the National Social Protection Policy has been done. Nevertheless, the initial and very limited evidence available from the final evaluation of the pilot social cash transfers (SCT) to poor, food insecure, and labour constrained households in Bomi and Maryland counties, suggests that food security, health, education, and economic conditions of participating households improved markedly. Moreover, the evaluation found evidence of a multiplier effect benefiting the 52 communities and the local economies where beneficiaries reside

Social protection investments include wider and sustainable expansion in access to the four minimum guarantees: i) access to essential health care, ii) basic income and food security for the whole family—especially children in the family environment (including vulnerable groups and people with disability), iii) providing some form of basic income for the working age population through pre-employment support and household enterprises for adolescents and young adults, expansion in the national social pension scheme, enforcement of the Decent Work Act and iv) social grants for the elderly, pregnant women, and people living with disabilities.

A major thrust of the pro-poor agenda is to raise total spending on social protection-related investments from less than one per cent to two per cent of GDP, focusing on those living in extremely poor and food insecure households and regions of the country first to be able to reduce overall inequality.

Social protection

Liberia is a state party to the new consensus adopted by the 100th Session of the International Labour Conference in 2011—the two-dimensional strategy on the extension of social protection. This two-dimensional approach aims at the gradual implementation of national social protection floors containing basic social security guarantees towards the realization of universal access to essential health care and income security at least at a nationally defined minimum level (horizontal dimension), in line with the Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) , and the progressive achievement of higher levels of protection (vertical dimension) within comprehensive social security systems according to the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No.102).

Liberia aspires to establish a national social protection floor comprised of the following four social security guarantees for all including special populations:

1. access to essential health care, including maternity care, as addressed under the health sector interventions
2. basic income security for children, providing access to nutrition, education, care and any other necessary goods and services
3. basic income security for persons in active age who are unable to earn enough income, in cases of sickness, unemployment, maternity and disability
4. basic income security for older persons.

Such guarantees will be provided progressively to all residents and all children, as defined in national laws and regulations, and subject to existing international obligations.

Social protection for children

The Liberia Children's Law 2011 provides a comprehensive framework for the recognition and realization of children's rights with respect to their protection, development, and socio-economic participation. Among others, the Children's Law details rights to parenthood and care, an adequate standard of living, access to medically necessary health care; access to education; access to adequate shelter, food and water. This law has however not been adequately translated into SP strategies, plans, and programs to facilitate the comprehensive attainment of its objectives.

Government is also committed to implementing the Child Welfare and Protection Policy and updating its accompanying 5-year plan of action. An adoption law, which protects adopted children, has an accompanying standard operating procedure which will be followed by adoption agencies and individuals opting to access adoption services.

From 2005 to 2017, the number of orphanages in Liberia decreased from 114 to 56, with a corresponding reduction of the number of orphans from 5,000 plus to 2,251. Eight government facilities- -including a transit centre for children were established. Of the 8,697 children affected by the EVD outbreak, 2,310 received case management services including follow-up visits, medical, food and non-food items and educational services. Government is committed to the policy of seeking reunification with family (or next of kin) as the first and best option for providing a nurturing environment for children.

The main social protection programs linked to children are the Liberia Social Safety Net project (LSSN) and the School Meals programs. LSSN is a cash transfer program to extremely poor and food insecure households in the counties with the highest incidences of vulnerability, namely Bomi, Maryland, Grand Kru, and River Gee. The LSSN budget amounts to 10 million USD from 2017 to 2021 (effectively), from which 8.1 million USD will be delivered as transfers to 10,000 households. The transfers will be made to the female member in each household, with the most responsibility for household spending.

Based on the economic analysis of the poverty gap and household consumption among extremely poor households, the transfer amount is pegged at between 10 USD and 34 USD per month, depending on the size of the households. In parallel to the cash transfer, the programme will also develop a Social Registry targeted to register 200,000 households in the six counties in its first phase but with the objective of becoming a national household registry.

The other major social protection intervention benefiting children is the school feeding programs. Like the LSSN project, these programs are exclusively funded by donors due to limited fiscal space in the government resource envelope. Coverage of the school feeding programs currently extends to 300,000 students, a decline from the 500,000 participants in 2015. This program provides around 300,000 school meals in nine counties. It additionally, provides take-home rations to 3,000 adolescent female students. The current planned expenditure of the school feeding program is equivalent to around 0.8 per cent of GDP.

People living with disabilities

Social and cultural factors limit opportunities to find work while living with disability, but even more so, people with disability face discrimination from employers. Even those who find employment face wage discrimination because they tend to earn less than their colleagues. Disability and poverty are mutually reinforcing. Insecure living conditions, lack of access to basic services, malnutrition and other dimensions of poverty can lead to disabilities. Persons living with disabilities are usually excluded from social and economic life and their rights are not fully fulfilled.

Equal rights to resources, equal access to services

One of the aims of the Liberian government is to ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance

The Land Rights Act (LRA) was passed in 2018, which presents a unique opportunity for promoting access to land rights, promoting land tenure security, harmonizing of customary and statutory land tenure systems, and for disadvantaged Liberians in rural areas to be decision-makers in the management of their land resources and to benefit from its proceeds. The passage of the Land Rights Act provides an inimitable prospect in addressing land issues including land/property disputes, border/boundary disputes, and concession related tensions that will allow women, youth and customary communities to become owners of their land and beneficiaries of the proceeds in the management of their land resources thereby reducing conflicts, decreasing violent tendencies, and improving the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable people. The passage of the Land Rights Act also provides an opportunity for the decentralization of land services and reduction of land-related disputes in conflict-prone counties. The Land Rights Act is being implemented by the Liberia Land Authority that was established in 2016 to address land issues in decreasing violent tendency as a means of mitigating conflict for peace and prosperity.

Accordingly, a **High-Level National Target** was established that by 2023, land tenure security would be strengthened, and land information management system would be improved. A comprehensive strategy was designed for acquiring, surveying, and mapping of concession lands. A special program has been developed for review and implementation of policies on land security and passage of the Land Rights Act, to limit criminal conveyance of land, conduct inventory on public and government lands. This programme will ensure inclusive land administration and management of public and government lands by enhancing programs for inclusive land rights bill and putting in place a national database for landowners and surveyors. Further, the government has established a Gender Unit on Land issues at the Liberia Land Authority which offers a unique opportunity for gender issues on land matters to be amicably addressed considering inclusiveness on community land administration, governance framework, etc.

Economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters

Liberia's location and weather condition make it prone to natural disasters such as floods. High population growth, uncontrolled urbanization, rural and urban poverty often lead to unplanned settlements in marginal and environmentally sensitive areas. The weak policy, legal and institutional framework for disaster preparedness, physical planning systems, and land-use practices are bottlenecks to effective disaster management. Inadequate emphasis on hazard risk management, including a lack of hazard data and mapping, vulnerability assessments continue to exacerbate environmental degradation.

Liberia has an enormous natural capital that can be used to provide environmental benefits to the entire country. However, given Liberia's proneness to climate-related risk, there is an urgency to improve

Liberia's preparedness in mitigating disaster and other climate-related risks. Key cities and infrastructures are already threatened by sea erosion and other climate actions.

By 2023, Liberia will have made significant steps in achieving a disaster-proof development. Specifically, the country will have a) improved resilience to all forms of hazards; b) improved emergency response capability; and c) climate change-sensitive development process.

As it relates to the implementation of the National Environmental Policy, the NDMA as part of its contribution has begun renovation Work on the building that will host the National Early Warning & Emergency Operational Centre; the National Flood Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan have been drafted & ready for submission to stakeholders in the Sector for validation; at the same time, the Gender Disaster Risk Management Policy final draft has been submitted to partners. For the first time in the history Liberia, NDMA has, along with other stakeholders across MACs with support from UNDP, developed a National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and Resilience Plan that was validated in Buchanan where stakeholders were invited on October 24, 2019, for finalization and validation. The National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and Resilience Plan captured three climate-related hazards including flood, windstorm and coastal erosion. NDMA has also complemented several major policy instruments including the National Flood Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan and the National Gender Disaster Risk Management Policy.

Macroeconomic stability

To maintain macroeconomic stability and fiscal health, the government has set itself the two targets. 1) To contain fiscal deficit at less than 5% GDP. And the main intervention in this regard was to contain the high public wage bill. 2) to pursue monetary policy interventions to **maintain and sustain single-digit inflation consistent with acceptable sub-regional standard (ECOWAS Convergence Criterion)**

The government payroll harmonization exercise reduced the civil service wage bill in adherence to the IMF recommendations. More importantly, the exercise led to a reduction in recurrent expenditures of the National Budget and increased the percentage of the National Budget allocated to Public Sector Investment Programs/projects. Also, the central bank has introduced new policy instruments (standing deposit facility, standing credit facility and the strengthened CBL's bills). In the last quarter of 2019, with the recommendation from the Monetary Policy Advisory Committee, the CBL Board of Governors, amongst others, set the monetary policy rate to 30 per cent, higher than the rate of inflation at the time of the pronouncement to help control inflation. This has helped inflation fall from the high of 30.9% for September 2019 to 20.3% for December 2019 helping to maintain the purchasing power of the poor and vulnerable.

GOAL 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture



The extent of hunger in Liberia

In the 2019 Global Hunger Index, Liberia ranks 112th out of 117 qualifying countries. With a score of 34.9, Liberia suffers from a level of hunger that is serious. This is an improvement from a decade ago when the GHI score indicated 'alarming' levels of hunger in Liberia.

There has been a slow yet steady decline in chronic food insecurity among people in Liberia. In 2010, nearly 41% of households were food insecure, 49% in 2012, 16% in 2015 and 18% in 2018. Chronic food insecurity is a grave concern in Liberia largely due to poverty, unsustainable livelihoods, low agricultural production and productivity, land constraints and gender inequalities. High numbers of Liberians continue to suffer from hunger and undernutrition, the consequences of which severely hamper social and economic development. Currently, about 20 per cent households are consuming diets deprived of the most needed nutrients found in animal products, legumes, vegetables, and fruits. Poor diets are intrinsically linked with poverty. According to Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) 2016, 50.9% of households in Liberia are living in poverty. Households are highly dependent on food markets, which are often inaccessible during the rainy season or lean period. Household food expenditure is extremely high (60% of total income) compared with spending on education, health, and other necessities. Stunting or chronic malnutrition remains a persistent public health concern in Liberia. The Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey 2018 estimate that 35.5% of children under five years are stunted like the 2012 prevalence of 35.0%.

The recently released Key Indicator Report of Demographic and Health Survey 2019 indicates that while the nutritional status of children in Liberia continues to be of concern, there have been some improvements in key indicators. Between 2013 and 2020, the per centage of children who are stunted (low height for age) decreased from 32 per cent to 30 per cent; the per centage of children who are underweight (low weight for age) decreased from 15 per cent to 11 per cent, and the per centage of children who are wasted (low weight for height) decreased from 6 per cent to 3 per cent. The per centage of overweight children has increased to 4 per cent from 1 per cent in 2013. The per centage of children who are exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life has not changed since 2013 at 55 per cent.

Agriculture

Liberia depends heavily on food imports and the dependency trend is increasing and the development towards the strategic objective is not going in the desired direction. Liberia's subsistence farming on insecure tenured land makes it hard for Liberians to compete on the market with cheaper food imports, and agriculture has not recovered from the 2014 Ebola outbreak and prolonged civil crises. The

agricultural productivity remains low and artisanal fisheries have not progressed for over three decades due to lack of credit, capacity, illegal fishing, and continuous environmental degradation to which the fishermen in part contribute to themselves through destructive practices and wrong gear.

Farming households comprised 35 per cent of Liberian households in 2016.²⁰ Slightly more than half a million Liberians make their livelihood through the farm or related ventures. Secure access to productive land remains their most valuable resource and the most severe constraint. Only five per cent of cultivated land is privately owned; and less than three per cent of farming households have a deed that can be collateralized or transferred from one generation to the next to build wealth. Most farming land is in community, tribal trust, or family held.

Liberia's agriculture strategy is aligned with SDGs - specifically, eradication of extreme poverty (SDG 1); ending hunger (zero hunger) (SDG 2); equality in gender (SDG 5); sustainable and reliable access to energy services (SDG 7); decent employment and economic growth (SDG 8); build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization that benefits all (SDG 9); preserve, restore, and sustainably manage terrestrial ecosystems and forests (SDG 15); and strengthen capacity to implement sustainable development initiatives (SDG 17), amongst others.

Vision for the Agricultural Sector (2017-2025)

In line with the SDGs, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Regional Agricultural Investment Programme (RAIP), the Malabo Declaration and the Economic Community of West African States Agriculture Policy (ECOWAP), the Ministry of Agriculture led the process of formulating the second generation of the Liberia National Agriculture Investment Plan called Liberia Agricultural Sector Investment Plan (LASIP II), which builds on past progress and reaffirms the Government of Liberia's commitment to transforming its agricultural sector. The process was supported by the ECOWAS and the Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST) European Union – Food and Agriculture Organisation partnership program, and in close consultation with donors, state and non-state actors as well as with active participation of relevant stakeholders in the sector.

Challenges include inefficient production systems, weak policy and business environment, human resource challenges, inadequate infrastructure, insufficient agricultural funding, subsistence farming, weak natural resources management, and poorly developed agricultural research and development.

Various studies conducted in recent years indicate that Liberia has a comparative advantage in the primary production and value addition of some specific crops in terms of its contribution to food and nutrition security and export earnings. These are oil palm, rubber, cocoa, fisheries (marine/aquaculture), rice, cassava, horticulture (i.e., vegetables), and poultry/livestock. Producing diverse outputs (including value-added products) for domestic and international markets could result in gains in agricultural and economic growth. Five major inter-related components have been identified as strategic in delivering the plan. These components are food and nutrition security; competitive value chain development and market linkages; agricultural extension, research, and development; sustainable production and natural resource management; and improved governance and institutional strengthening.

Direct food support

In coordination with the Government and United Nations agencies, WFP reached vulnerable communities in nine counties across Liberia with direct food and nutrition support. In addition to the implementation of school feeding activities and enhancing agricultural value chains through strengthening the capacities of smallholder farmers, WFP

provided essential food and logistics assistance for the national emergency response to seasonal flooding between August and October 2018. Targeting was informed by the 2013 Comprehensive Food Security

and Nutrition Survey (CFSNS) complemented by other food security and nutrition-related assessments and studies conducted by the government and partners. Moreover, WFP supported the Government to conduct the 2018 Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey (CFSNS), the first survey since 2013 to assess the level of household food insecurity and malnutrition.

In 2018, WFP provided enhanced support to the Government in implementing home-grown school feeding (HGSF) as a vital social safety-net in Liberia. Through the convening of a national stakeholder conference and a multi-sectoral planning and coordination committee, the Government has prioritized HGSF as a mechanism to strengthen agriculture and education as well as advance overall economic and social development. The Government acknowledged WFP's expertise in developing a sustainable, nationally owned HGSF program to enhance the livelihoods of vulnerable Liberians

In 2018, WFP interventions under this strategic outcome included support to the government's effort to put in place a robust food security monitoring system (FSMS) identified by the national food security and nutrition strategy (NFSNS). The FSMS consists of three components: (1) market price monitoring, (2) food security and nutrition surveillance system (FSNSS), and (3) comprehensive food security and nutrition survey (CFSNS). As part of this initiative, WFP provided technical and financial support for the finalization of the 2018 CFSNS. Market price monitoring was supported for only the first quarter of 2018 due to resource constraints.

Fisheries

The sector has made progress towards expanding the fisheries capacity in the country with investment in the Mesurado fishing pier and has increased awareness of the fisheries management framework to help tackle illegal fishing. Forestry production has also been boosted through granting community forest status to 11 communities and the FDA has taken over the chain of custody operations from a private provider saving the government \$0.7m.

The government worked towards increasing production in the fisheries sector and increase its contribution to the GDP from 3% to 6% by improving harbor facilities for industrial fishing to increase efficiency and facilitate local consumption and enhance exports. To complement this, the govt aimed to establish a robust fishery monitoring and surveillance system, and fisheries governance, to tackle Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU). A draft proposal for Mesurado Fishing Pier Expansion has been completed and the government has signed a \$3.7 Million Fisheries Project Preparatory Agreement with the World Bank which will help increase industrial fishing activities and exports. Activities have been undertaken to raise awareness of the establishment of a comprehensive fisheries management framework by National Fisheries Authority which will help reduce IUU fishing

Under 5 malnutrition

Stunting or chronic malnutrition remains a persistent public health concern in Liberia. The 2019-20 Liberia Demographic and Health Survey (LDHS)¹ results show that 30 per cent children under age 5 are stunted while 10 per cent are severely stunted. The stunting prevalence can be classified as 'very high' based on the WHO-UNICEF threshold of ≥ 30 per cent. Stunting rates are spatially distributed across the county with geographical variations. For instance, children residing in urban areas are less likely to be stunted than those living in rural areas (25 per cent and 35 per cent, respectively). Additionally, stunting is lower in the South-Central region (25 per cent) than in the other regions (33-34 per cent). Among the counties, the prevalence of stunting is highest in River Cess (41 per cent) and lowest in Montserrado (21 per cent) again indicating the urban-rural disparities. The prevalence of stunting decreases with increasing mothers' education and household wealth showing an inverse correlation. Children from educated mothers and those from the highest wealth quintile are less likely to suffer from stunting. Stunting has long-term

consequences for children's survival and development because of the effects of stunting on brain development, learning performance and, ultimately, on adults' health and productivity, and its strong association with increased morbidity and mortality.

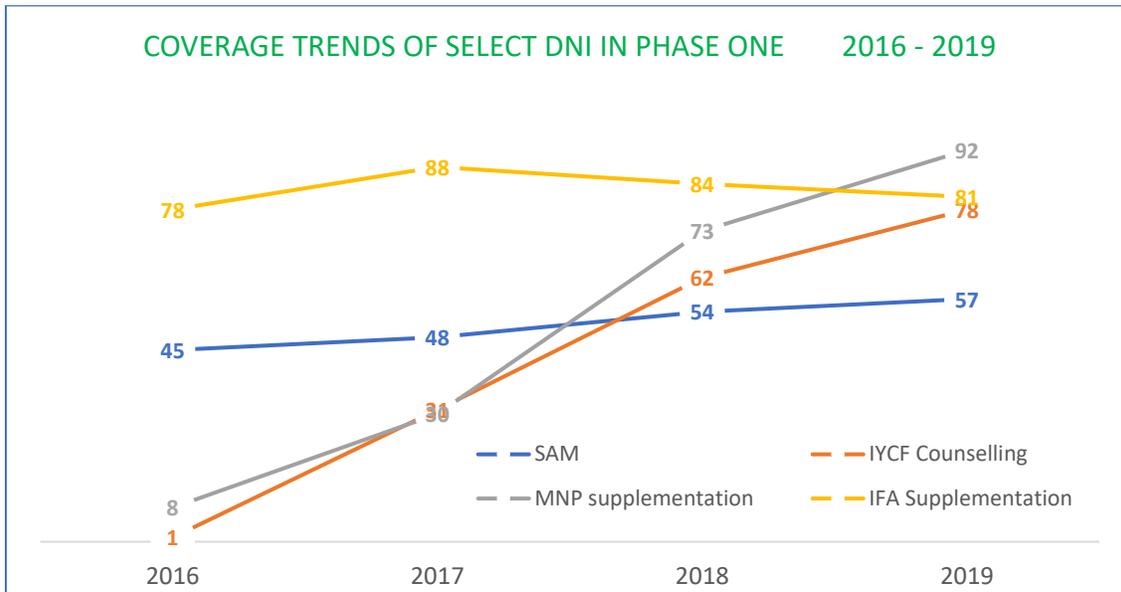
Three per cent of Liberian children are wasted, and 1 per cent are severely wasted (-3 SD). There is no variation in wasting between based on the area of residence with children in both urban and rural areas being wasted at 3 per cent each. Also, wasting is similar among boys (4 per cent) and girls (3 per cent). Unlike with stunting, there is no clear relationship between the prevalence of wasting and mother's education; however, wasting increases with increasing wealth status before dropping among children in the highest wealth quintile.

With regards to underweight, the 2019-2020 demographic and health survey showed that 11% of Liberian children are underweight, with 3per cent classified as severely underweight. The proportion of underweight children varies by residence, with 13 per cent of children in rural areas and 9 per cent in urban areas being underweight. By region, the proportion of children who are underweight ranges from 9 per cent in North Central to 16 per cent in North Western. The proportion of underweight children is highest in River Cess County (20 per cent) and lowest in River Gee County (7 per cent).

A trend analysis of anthropometric data in the 2013 and 2019-20 LDHS surveys shows that stunting, wasting, and underweight have improved in the last seven years. Over this period, stunting prevalence took a downward trend moving from 32 to 30 per cent, wasting decreased from 6 to 3 per cent while the proportion of underweight children decreased from 15 to 11 per cent. Additionally, both surveys show that stunting prevalence in Liberia varies with age with the highest increase recorded among children within the complementary feeding age of 6-23 months. In the 2019-2020 LDHS, the prevalence of stunting increases gradually from around 13 per cent among children aged 6-8 months and peaks at 31 per cent among children 18-23 months.

To reduce under-5 malnutrition a Unit was established and well equipped with twenty-four (24) trained staff at the JFK Medical Centre and ELWA Hospital catering to malnourished children. The National Nutrition policy and an Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) guideline was revised and disseminated. The children under-5 treated for malaria have increased to over 133,782 since 2018. The key achievements in nutrition include the following.

- Significant improvements in the coverage of nutrition interventions have been achieved: Based on routine data from the MoH, micronutrient powder supplementation and counseling on Infant and Young Child Feeding are now reaching over 70 per cent of target population cohorts from baselines of less than 10 per cent for both interventions. On the other hand, the treatment coverage of SAM improved from 45 to 57 per cent. More details can be found in the graph alongside.



- Nutrition services have been embedded into the public health care system fostering sustainability: Nutrition services are now provided in over 80 per cent of all public health facilities from baselines of less than 30 per cent. The embedding of nutrition services into the public health care system was very successful in improving access and availability of the same to the population.
- A comprehensive package of ten nutrition interventions is now provided in health facilities across the country: UNICEF supported the MoH to expand the package of nutrition services from three to ten with most of these services (seven) now provided routinely in public health facilities.
- Capacities in the area of nutrition have been strengthened with health care providers from across the country trained on diverse aspects of nutrition.
- A full set of standard nutrition Indicators are now included in the Health Management Information System (HMIS) which has improved monitoring of implementation, enhanced accountability, and fostered sustainability of nutrition services.

At the upstream level, the following has been achieved in shaping positively the enabling environment for the implementation of the nutrition program. UNICEF has supported, influenced, and catalyzed the following.

- The National Nutrition Policy (NNP) has been revised and updated and is presently under implementation.
- Nutrition has been included as a priority in the government PAPD.
- Nutrition objectives are now included as part of the outcomes of the Liberia Social Safety Net (LSSN) program.
- The development of a Multisectoral costed plan of action for nutrition is currently ongoing. The Scaling Up Nutrition movement is now fully functional in the country following the appointment of a SUN focal point by the government.

Despite the progress made in mainstreaming nutrition services into the health care system, opportunities exist to further strengthen the quality of the services and to enhance the effective coverage of some of the key interventions. Furthermore, there is a need to expand select DNIs to the community level to achieve universal coverage.

Going forward, it is paramount to apply multi-sectoral approaches in addressing stunting to ensure that all causal pathways are fully addressed. There is a need to implement nutrition-sensitive interventions and programs since they address the underlying determinants of malnutrition—such as poverty, food insecurity, and scarcity of access to adequate care resources.

GOAL 3: Healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

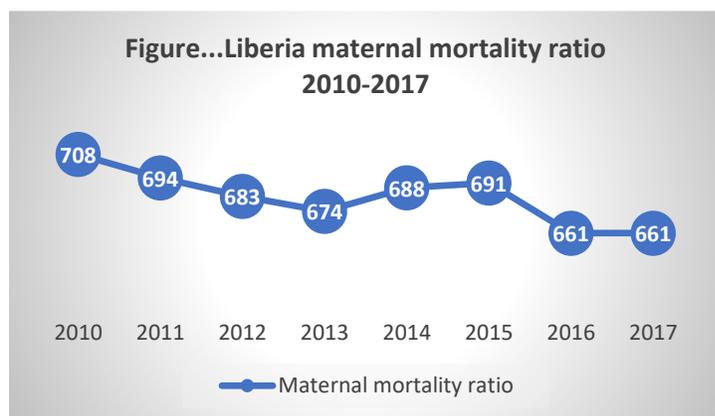


Before the EVD crisis, Liberia’s health outcomes had been improving steadily since the end of the second civil war in 2003. The 2013 Liberia Demographic Health Survey showed a 15 per cent decline in the under-five mortality rate (U5MR). By 2012, Liberia was among the first countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to achieve its Millennium Development Goals (MDG) target of reducing U5MR to less than one-third of its 1990 level (as of 2015, U5MR was estimated at 70 per 1,000 live births compared to 255 in 1990).

However, the EVD crisis led to a devastation of the already fragile healthcare system in Liberia and severely constrained the ability of the Government to deliver key social services, including basic and secondary health services, thereby leading to many preventable deaths. For example, measles vaccination rates dropped from about 78% in January 2014 to 45% in January 2015. Similarly, health facility deliveries decreased from 65% to 28%, while deliveries attended by skilled providers dropped from 61% to 31%.

Maternal mortality

As a result of ongoing efforts, the country’s maternal mortality ratio shows decreasing trends from 2010 (708) to 2013 (674) until 2014 (688). In 2015 (691) Liberia started to experience a rise again due to the Ebola epidemic that cripples the country’s health system significantly. Notwithstanding, some gains have been made since 2016 (661), as shown in the figure below

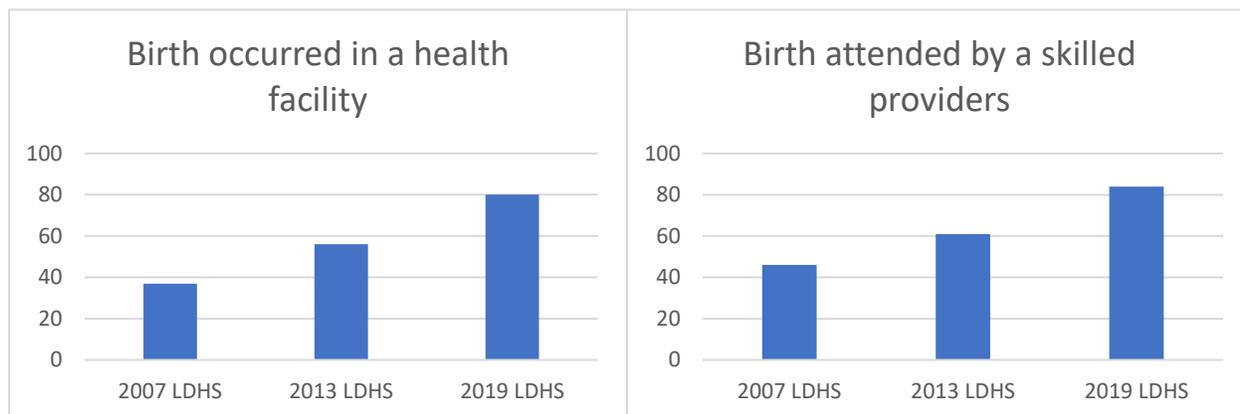


To date, Liberia has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the world. This is due to the causes of the recently afflicted by civil conflict and an epidemic of Ebola virus disease. However, the government and development partners have set ambitious national health targets to improve maternal health reduce the high prevailing maternal mortality ratio and there have been some gains.

About the characteristics of the women described in MDRs reported to NPHIL in 2017, 40 per cent of the 258 reported maternal deaths occurred among women 25–34 years old. 36 per cent were due to hemorrhage, 11% to sepsis, 9% to hypertensive disorders, and 1.6% to obstructed labor. Over a quarter of women who died had no formal education and various risk factors—including anemia, malaria, and hypertension—were documented during ANC visits. Close to three-quarters of deaths occurred at a health facility, while an additional 13% and 12% occurred in the community and en route to a health facility, respectively. 29 per cent of reported deaths occurred within 24 hours after delivery, and only 44% of women who died were documented to have been cared for by a professional/skilled birth attendant.

The proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel

A skilled medical professional assists majority of births (84%) in Liberia. This is a considerable increase from the 2013 LDHS when a skilled provider attended only 61% of births. Assistance at delivery by a skilled provider is more common in urban (89%) than rural (79%) areas. There is a good deal of variation between regions and counties. Among regions, assistance at delivery is highest in North Central (92%) and lowest in North Western (78%). In the counties, delivery by a skilled provider range from 51% in Gbarpolu to 97% in Lofa.



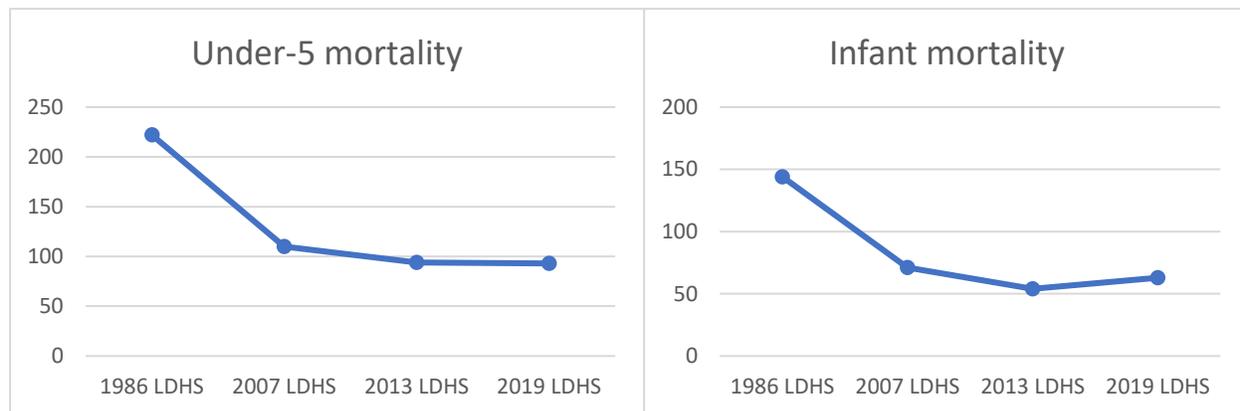
As expected, there is a positive relationship between mother’s education and assistance at delivery; 81% of women with no education are assisted by a skilled medical professional, as compared with 90% of those with higher education. Assistance at delivery generally increases with increasing wealth, from 76% among the poorest women to 94% among those in the highest wealth quintile.

Prenatal care from a skilled provider is important to monitor pregnancy and reduce morbidity and mortality risks for the mother and child during pregnancy, at delivery, and during the postnatal period (within 42 days after delivery). In Liberia, skilled providers trained to assist during delivery include doctors, nurses, midwives, and physician assistants. Currently, 98% of mothers are receiving care from a health professional at least once for their most recent birth in the last 5-year which is slightly higher than the 96% figure reported in 2013. Nevertheless, women with no education, those in the poorest wealth quintile, and those living in Margibi, Sinoe, and Grand Kru counties are slightly less likely to report receiving prenatal care from a skilled provider than other women. Overall, 87% of women had four or more prenatal care visits, a large increase from 56% in the 2013 LDHS. Urban women were slightly more likely than rural women to have had four or more prenatal care visits (89% and 85%, respectively). Among the counties, the proportions of women with at least four prenatal care visits were lowest in Gbarpolu,

Sinoe, and Grand Kru (72%-74%) and highest in River Gee and Bomi (93% each). The percentage of women with four or more prenatal care visits generally increases with increasing education and wealth.

Under-five mortality rate

The government established a high-level national target of reducing under 5 mortality ratios to 57 per 1,000 live births by 2023. Ongoing interventions towards achieving this target include training vaccinators to enhance immunization services, carrying out routine maintenance of cold-chain equipment, conducting routine immunization outreach and periodic mass vaccination campaign, introducing new vaccines for children & conducting regular supportive services, heightening VPD surveillance and neonatal death surveillance, striving to achieve measles elimination status and MNTE, and improve immunization supply chain management, training health workers especially female health workers on (IMNCI).



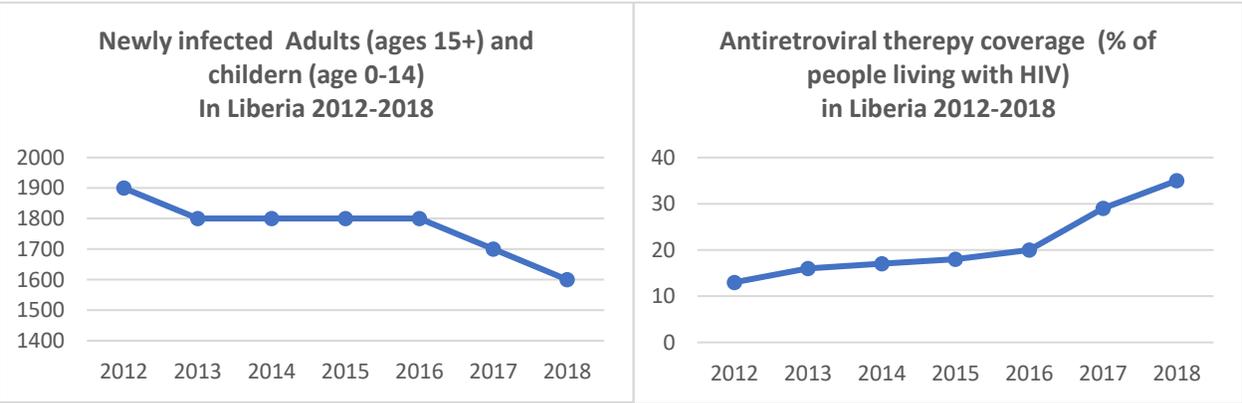
Presently, under-5 mortality is 93 deaths per 1,000 live births, which shows a slightly decreasing trend from 94 deaths per 1,000 live births between 2013 and 2019. Most of the mortality occurs during the first year of life, as the infant mortality rate is 63 deaths per 1,000 live births, while mortality between the first and the fifth birthday is 33 deaths per 1,000 children. Mortality during the first month (neonatal mortality) is higher than postneonatal mortality (37 deaths per 1,000 births versus 25 deaths per 1,000 births) and accounts for 59% of overall infant mortality.

Comparing estimates from national surveys conducted at different predetermined points in time results from the 2019-20 LDHS and the previous three LDHS surveys generally show a decline in child and under-5 mortality within the range of 0-4 years preceding each respective survey. The data show an increase in infant mortality since the 2013 LDHS; this increase is predominantly due to the rise in neonatal mortality from 26 deaths per 1,000 children in 2013 to 37 deaths per 1,000 children in 2019-20.

Prevention and treatment of HIV, TB and Malaria

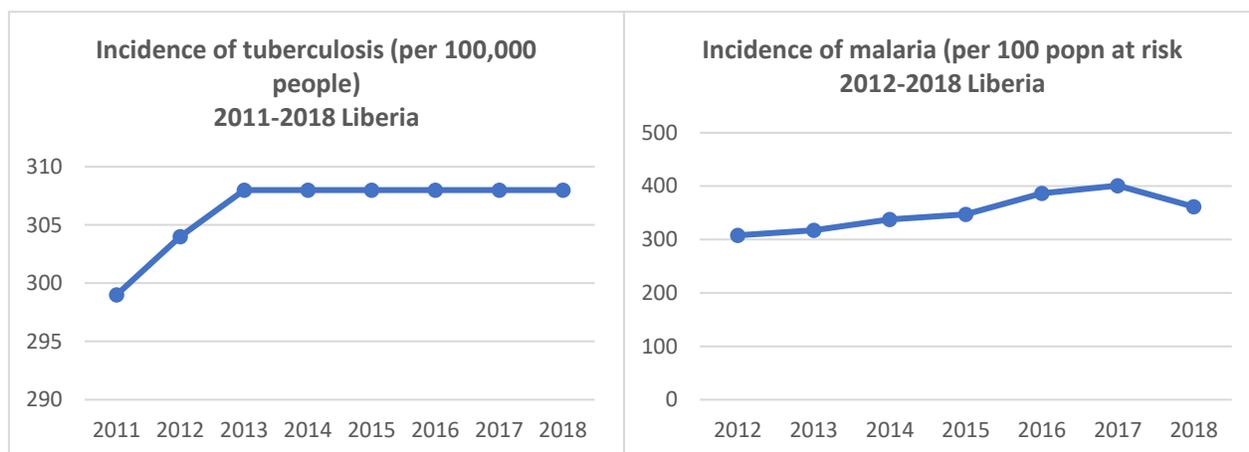
The Government of Liberia through the National AIDS Commission and the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, in partnership with implementing partners, international and national agencies, and non-governmental and civil society organizations, has made steady progress in containing the spread of HIV and mitigating the impact of the epidemic on the general population through the implementation preventing new HIV infections (Clinical and Non-Clinical), preventing HIV in Key Populations (KPs), condom promotion and distribution, treatment, care, and support for PLHIV, critical social and programmatic enablers, rapid testing and awareness. Since 2010, two National HIV Strategic Framework (2010 – 2014 and 2015 -2020) has been developed for ensuring the successful coordination and management of the national HIV response. Over the years, prevention activities, testing, and treatment services have been scaled up and expanded to ensure universal access to HIV and AIDS services.

Liberia presently has a generalized HIV epidemic with the general population new infections decreasing from 1900 in 2012 to 1600 2018. Though the impact of the epidemic continues to be significant, the downward trend in the new HIV infections started since 2013 due to massive combine efforts by both government and its development partners to stop the spread of the epidemic. In Liberia, the majority living with HIV have access to antiretroviral therapy.



Knowledge of ways to reduce HIV transmission has proven to be vital in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The involvement of multi-media and civil society organizations in the national response has increased the public’s knowledge and awareness of HIV and AIDS with special emphasis focused on youth and key populations. HIV prevention programs focus their messages and efforts on several important aspects of behavior to avoid the spread of HIV. These include using condoms and limiting sexual intercourse to one uninfected partner. 73 per cent of women and 83 per cent of men know that HIV can be prevented by using condoms during sexual intercourse, and 79% of women and 85% of men say that limiting sexual intercourse to one uninfected partner can reduce the chances of getting HIV. Overall, 66% of women and 77% of men know that both practices offer protection from HIV. Women and men age 15-19 have lower levels of knowledge of these HIV prevention methods than people age 20 and older. Urban and rural women have similar levels of knowledge about each of the prevention methods; however, urban men are

more knowledgeable than their rural counterparts. TB treatment success rate has increased from 68 per cent in 2015 to 76 per cent in 2016.



Malaria is endemic, and the entire population is at risk of the disease. Children under five and pregnant women are the most affected groups. During the period under review, the country’s malaria incidence has been on the rise since 2012 (307.903) and reached a peak of 401.11 in 2017 before moving downward 361.504 in 2018.

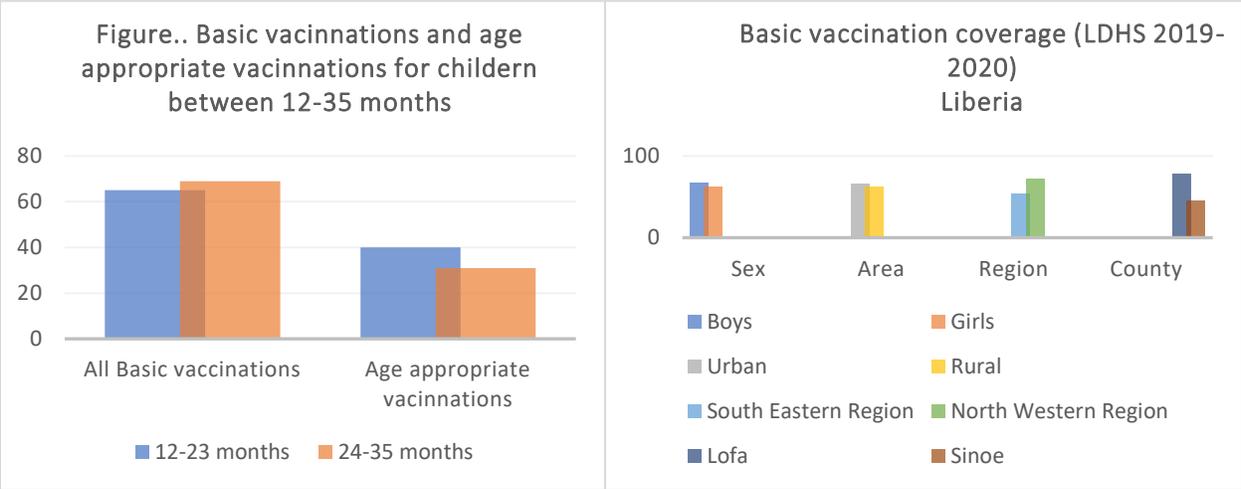
However, the government is committed to ensuring that 80 per cent of the country’s population is protected by malaria prevention measures by 2023. Between 2008–2018, approximately 11 million ITNs were distributed in Liberia through campaigns, ANC services, and institutional deliveries. Moreover, ongoing efforts through strong and sustained partnership are directed towards the implementation of interventions that cut across intervention areas but bolster the achievement of malaria program results, such as supply chain management, health information systems strengthening drug quality monitoring, and scale-up IPT uptake to prevent malaria in pregnancy & provide special care to infected pregnant mothers. Moreover, more service providers in malaria diagnosis and case management have been trained, and the management and leadership of county health teams have been strengthened to oversee and monitor malaria service delivery through updated national clinical standards, support for quality improvement interventions, including regular supervision as well as clinical training, strengthening of the health information system, and improved human resource management.

Liberia’s policy on malaria in pregnancy (MIP) is a three-pronged approach, consistent with WHO’s recommendation to combat malaria in pregnancy. This approach consists of prompt and effective case management of malaria and anemia, providing IPTp with sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine (SP) at every ANC visit after the first trimester, and use of ITNs. Scaling up the implementation of IPTp was slowed during the Ebola-virus disease (EVD) epidemic from 2014 to 2015, collective support has contributed to an increase in ANC attendance and IPTp coverage. Results from the 2016 Liberia Malaria Indicator Survey (MIS) indicate that almost all women (98 per cent) received ANC from a skilled provider for their most recent birth and 79 per cent had the recommended four or more antenatal visits. The per centage of women receiving two doses of IPTp 6 (IPTp2) increased from 45 per cent in the 2009 MIS to 55 per cent in the 2016 MIS, and three doses of IPTp (IPTp3) doubled from 10 per cent in the 2009 MIS to 22 per cent in the 2016 MIS.

Access to vaccines

Overall, basic vaccination coverage among children age 12-23 months has improved since the 2013 LDHS, rising 10 percentage points from 55% to 65%.

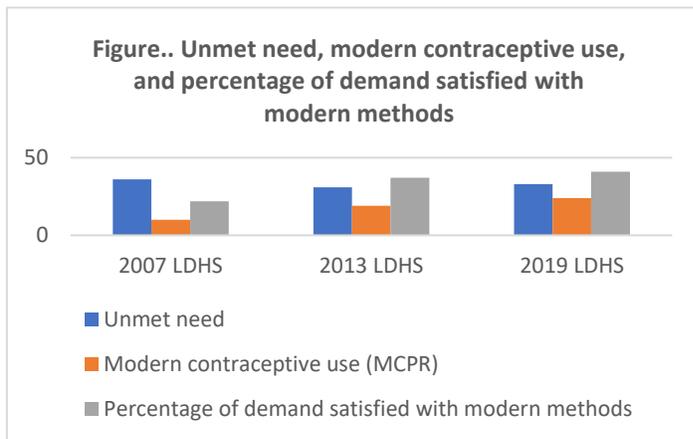
In Liberia, routine childhood vaccines include BCG vaccine (tuberculosis), DPT-HepB-Hib or pentavalent vaccine (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B, and Haemophilus influenza type b), oral polio vaccine or OPV (poliomyelitis), inactivated polio vaccine or IPV (poliomyelitis), pneumococcal vaccine, rotavirus vaccine, measles vaccine, and yellow fever vaccine. In Liberia, the BCG vaccine is usually given immediately after birth. A birth dose of the oral polio vaccine (polio 0) is given within 7 days after birth, while the first two doses of the pentavalent, pneumococcal, rotavirus, and oral polio vaccines (excluding polio 0) are given at approximately age 6 and 10 weeks. The third dose of the pentavalent, pneumococcal, and oral polio vaccines are given at 14 weeks, at which time IPV is also given. The measles vaccination and yellow fever vaccination are given at age 9 months.



To date, 65% of children age 12-23 months have received all basic vaccinations, while only 40% have received all age-appropriate vaccinations. Six per cent of children age 12-23 months have not received any vaccinations. Among children age 24-35 months, 31% have received all age-appropriate vaccinations. Among children age 12-23 months, basic vaccination coverage is higher among boys than among girls (67% versus 63%). Also, basic coverage is higher in urban than rural areas (66% versus 63%) and higher among children whose vaccination card was seen than among those whose card was not seen (85% versus 28%). Basic vaccination coverage is lowest in the South Eastern A region (54%) and highest in the North-Western region (72%). By county, basic coverage is highest in Lofa (78%) and lowest in Sinoe (46%). Coverage rates do not exhibit a strong relationship with either mother’s education or household wealth other than being lowest among children in the poorest households. In the case of multi-dose vaccines, coverage rates are highest for the first dose and decline for subsequent doses.

Family planning needs

The use of any contraceptive method by currently married women has more than doubled in the past 13 years, from 11% in 2007 to 20% in 2013 and 25% in 2019-20. The proportion of currently married women who use modern contraceptive methods has also increased, from 10% in 2007 to 19% in 2013 and 24% in 2019-20.



One in four married women of reproductive age is using a method of contraception (25%). Almost all of these women are using modern methods (24%), with only 1% using traditional methods. Injectables are the most widely used method (14%), followed by implants (5%) and the pill (4%). In general, contraceptive use among married women in Liberia increases once they have had at least one child. Use of any contraceptive peaks at 28%-31% among currently married women age 20-34 before declining to 14% among women age 45-49. While there is little variation in contraceptive use among married women residing in urban and rural areas, the difference is more pronounced across regions. Women in South-Eastern B and South-Eastern A are more likely to use any method of contraception (43% and 38%, respectively) than women in other regions (27% or less). By county, contraceptive use is highest among women in Maryland (45%) and lowest among women in Margibi (18%). Contraceptive use initially increases with educational attainment but drops off after women achieve some senior high schooling.

One in four married women have a met need for family planning (25%)—that is, they are currently using a contraceptive method—and this has increased since 2013 when 20% of women had a met need for family planning. The total demand for family planning among currently married women is 58%, and the total demand satisfied is 43%; this demand is satisfied almost entirely by modern methods (41%).

Health Systems Strengthening

Community Health Assistance Program: Community Health Assistants (CHA's) are delivering an integrated and standardized service delivery package, which includes curative, preventive, promotive, rehabilitative, and palliative services, to households located more than one-hour walk (more than 5km) from the nearest health facility. Households located within 5km of a health facility, are receiving a tailored package of services delivered by other community cadres. To date, 76.2 per cent or 2,904 of the overall targeted 4,000 CHAs have been recruited, trained, and deployed in 13 counties. The CHA program is a promising approach that can, potentially, change the narrative around health care delivery in Liberia.

Drugs and Medical Supplies: Enormous progress has been made in setting into place the institutional framework for an effective supply chain management system. A temporary quality-testing lab will house the Liberia Medicines and Health Products Regulatory Agency (LMHRA), while the construction of a new testing lab that meets ISO standard is being planned. A new environmental health laboratory to test the quality of drinking water to protect Liberians was dedicated and a centralized Health Care waste management facility for the management of medical waste from major hospitals in Montserrado County is under construction. The LMHRA is currently receiving and evaluating medicines and health products for registration and Mass Drug Administration for the elimination and control is ongoing in all counties for Onchocerciasis and Soil-transmitted helminths. Lymphatic Filariasis Mass Drug Administration is ongoing

in 13 counties except for Bomi and Gbarpolu. Schistosomiasis Mass Drug Administration is ongoing in 13 counties except for Rivercess and Grand Kru.

Diagnostic Services: Diagnostic capacity has improved over the years. Molecular diagnostic and Microbiology techniques are up and running at the National Reference Laboratory (NRL), and Phebe and Tappita hospitals. About 70 per cent of the laboratory infrastructure at JDJ hospital has been improved. Notwithstanding, capacity for diagnostic is still limited due to a combination of infrastructure deficits, inadequate human resource and technical capacities, and inadequate or lack of modern diagnostic equipment.

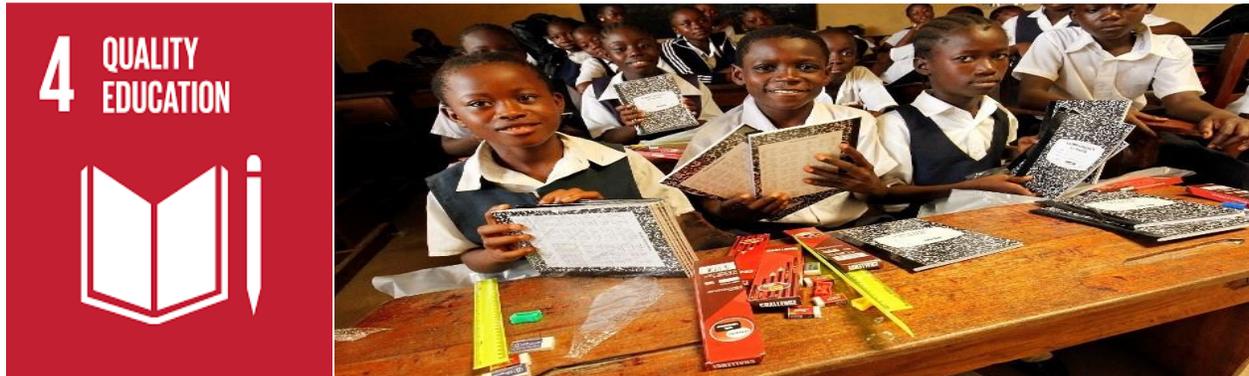
Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (IDSR): Post EVD outbreak, preventing and controlling public health threats, and mitigating related risks are national priorities. Among several strategies put in place to address threats is a functional public health surveillance system with an early warning system that uses the IDSR platform. The system managed by the newly established National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHI). Eleven of the 15 counties experienced disease outbreaks and humanitarian emergencies with the most frequent being measles (20), Lassa fever (5), and pertussis (5). The high frequency of measles outbreaks may be related to its endemicity and the high number of susceptible children in the population. Recurring outbreaks of Lassa fever were also noted particularly in Nimba and Bong counties. Two health-related emergencies involving flood and mudslides in Margibi

Response to disease outbreak: Liberia ranks the highest in the sub-region in terms of institutional capacity to respond to any outbreak within 48 hours. The emergency response for a disease outbreak in the country has significantly improved, ranking Liberia as having the best response system in the sub-region as per the WHO recommended response time of an outbreak within the 48 hours. The National Public Health Institute has successfully detected and responded to 30 outbreaks covering Lassa fever, meningitis, and measles. The National Reference Laboratory (NRL) of the institute increased its capacity to test for 11 priority diseases and recently added the capacity to test for Buruli Ulcer for the first time in Liberia. The laboratory is working towards getting an international accreditation in 12 months, which will enable it to gain recognition in Africa.

Health systems capacities: To date, there are 736 clinics, 36 hospitals, and 57 health centers across the country. Currently, the country's health workforce is 16,064. Furthermore, the capacity of the health workforce was significantly enhanced by routine training and specialties study for about forty medical and master public health for 17 non-medical staff of the sector. Additionally, local scholarships were awarded to 60 students of who 58 are studying Laboratory Science at the Mother Pattern College of Health Sciences and two studying master's in public health at the Cuttington University Graduate Program. The Ministry of Health employed 1,318 Volunteers. The National Tuberculosis Reference Laboratory, 155 beds new Redemption Hospital, Bo-Water Side Health Center and staff housing completed awaiting dedication, are under construction, renovated 12 health facilities (clinics) in Bomi, Montserrado, Bong and Monrovia and ten counties already have installed 17 Gene expert Machines for rapid diagnosis of TB cases along with a digital X-ray Computer-Aided Detection for Tuberculosis, which automatically screen people.

The government has committed significant resources to train, equip, incentivize and deploy CHAs to deliver community-based FP/HBIMNC interventions and link communities to facilities, integrate and scale-up adolescent and youth-friendly services (AYFS) in all counties, improve maternal death surveillance and response, provide and maintain ambulances to strengthen referrals networks for SGBV cases, ensure essential lifesaving drugs and commodities are available in health facilities, improve basic amenities (water, light/power, incinerators, placentas pit, and latrines) in all public health facilities with a focus on IPC.

GOAL 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all



Progress has been made in increasing school enrolment, but Primary Net Enrolment Rate (NER) in Liberia is significantly lower than rates in low-Income Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Figure 2.1 displays a persistent gap in NER from 2013 to 2015. Moreover, approximately 82 per cent of primary students and 75 per cent of children in Early Childhood Education (ECE) are above age for their grade levels.

The participation of youth in education decreases substantially after their 18th birthday. At 18 or older, youths are more inclined to transition to the labour force. Girls are at a high risk of dropping out of school. Boys are also at high risk of dropping out of school without employable skills, credentials, or other qualifications to acquire employment or self-employment. Youths who drop out of school need much more time (as much as two years) to be integrated into the formal labour force than their colleagues with acquired qualifications.

On a more positive note, NER was even for male and female students across all academic levels. But nearly two thirds (61.5%) of schools do not have a library. Media centers with computers are virtually non-existent or non-functional. Only 58 per cent of schools have latrine facilities segregated for boys and girls. At higher grade levels, retention of female students is a challenge.

Women remain woefully underrepresented in the makeup of the instructional staff. Overall, less than 10 per cent of teachers are female, creating a potentially demotivating absence of appropriate gender role models in the classroom environment during critical stages of the physical, psychological, and emotional development of girls. Public schools have the lowest proportion of female teachers. Only 48 per cent of schools are owned and operated by the government. The average number of students per teacher in public schools range from as high as 158:1 in primary grades to 9 to 1 in Senior High School. The estimated deficit of qualified public-school teachers in 2017 was 7,600.

Early childhood is a critical developmental window when a child's abilities or disabilities can be identified to aid further development. Early Childhood Development encompasses all aspects of children's development including cognitive, social, emotional, and physical abilities. In 2015, 13% of children aged 0-4 years were enrolled in ECD programs. Children in urban areas (19%) were more likely to receive ECD services than children in rural areas (9.8%).

Over the period under review, several programs and policies on Early Childhood Education Development have been initiated to reduce the student to classroom ratio across the fifteen counties. A number of these initiatives include the development of inter-sectoral policy on ECE/E, curriculum revision and development, reading activities in schools to improve reading proficiency at the ECE level along with research in quality of ECE interventions.

Programs and activities aimed at raising Net Enrolment Rate (NER) in primary schools carried out during the period. A number of these programs include the enforcement of free and compulsory education policy, introduction, and expansion of school feeding programs in primary schools, curriculum revision in primary schools, additional classroom construction, etc.

The issue of retention has been a challenge, particularly at the junior high school level. This has affected the net enrolment ratio at that level. To maintain and raise the Net Enrolment Ratio for junior high schools, year one of the PAPD implementations recorded several successes in this direction. They include; the provision of take-home food ration to at least 5,000 adolescent girls, additional take-home ration provided to 14,442 girls in 220 schools in four counties (River Cess, Grand Bassa, River Gee, and Grand Gedeh); with support from the WFP/Master Card, take-home ration provided to 4,000 girls in 176 schools in additional four counties (Maryland, Grand Kru, Gbarpolu and Nimba).

To improve outcomes of senior school classes, a three pathway curriculum was developed and launch in 2019 for grades 1-12 with a competency-based curriculum; additional achievements have led to the payment of all WASCE fees for all secondary school students in addition to the organization of a nationwide WASSCE tutorial program. Under this initiative, WASSCE fees were paid for 39,889 12th graders and 43,409 9th graders. Additionally, 1,249 teachers, 70 school supervisors, 578 principals, and 14 Master Trainers trained in EGR teaching methodology.

The government to Increasing the proportion of appropriately qualified and trained teachers to 60% and double the number of female teachers in public school classrooms, by removing unqualified/delinquent teachers from the payroll and investing in training B-Certificates and hiring more teachers with Bachelor’s degrees.

During the period under review, a number of programs and activities aimed at increasing the number of appropriately and qualified teachers, both male, and female, were being implemented across the various levels of education. For example, 34 facilitators in ECESTEP, 500 teachers/caregivers in ECECEAP, and ECESTEP, as well as 120 adolescent girls to serve as ECE teacher assistants/assistant caregivers as part of efforts to empower vulnerable young women under the World Bank/EPAG Project. Also, 454 education officers, teachers, and community leaders were trained in ECESTEP and ECECEAP. Under the C-certificate program, a total number of 764 teachers (Male 672 & Female 92) were graduated from the various TTIs.

Continuous professional development training was also provided for 10,000 teachers nationwide in pedagogy and Psychosocial Support (PSS) in 2017. In 2018, pedagogy and Psychosocial Support (PSS) to 1,800 in-service teachers in five counties (Nimba, Lofa, Grand Bassa, Rivercess, and Montserrado) were provided.

On the program side, the following were being achieved. They include the development of a home visitor’s training manual and the training of 21 home visitors who are currently working with 180 families with children (ages 3 – 5) in four communities, Development of Program to Account for Teachers Work time and Control Absenteeism. For curriculum development, a revised curricular for Teachers “C” & “B” Certification Programs substantially to be completed in 2020, with the “C” program being expanded to 12 months, beyond the traditional ten (10) months.

The government is particularly committed to girls' education. The aim is to reduce Out of school rate to 10% and to increase the retention rate to >80% and a rise in completion rate by 20% by 2023. This will be done through PTA and community engagements, roll out of gender-responsive training and curriculum, enforcement of teachers’ code of conduct and provide timely, appropriate responses to reports of GBV or exploitation of students, improving WASH facilities in schools, hiring more female teachers and designing/implementing special teaching modules for teenage mothers after a break in their education to continue with learning in a bid to achieve the desired targets in line with the above-listed interventions, several achievements are recounted for the period under review. Efforts to strengthen PTA

and community engagements in schools which witnessed the setting up of 2,094 schools PTA and provision of training to these PTAs on their roles and responsibilities. Additionally, there was the finalization of the National Parents, Community Engagement, and Dropout Prevention Policy that is awaiting approval. In terms of dealing with the issue of GBV or sexual exploitation in schools, training was provided to 1,920 teachers in sexuality education and classroom observatory tools for sexual exploitation were being provided. 10 school sensitized in environmental safety; establishment of 150 school clubs; training provided to 466 WASH focal persons; vision screening of 34,021 school children in two counties; deworming of 63,871 school-age children; production and printing of harmonized sexuality education IEC/BCC materials.); 150 schools provided full WASH facilities

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

The government is committed to **providing Liberians lifelong learning opportunities through market-driven TVET and Alternative Learning skills by** expanding alternative learning programs to areas of low adult literacy, implementing a national service program recruiting adults to receive on-the-job skills training in areas that support the education sector, upgrading 4 TVET institute by 2023 and certifying BWI to award degrees in TVET by 2023 to train and license TVET instructors

For the period under review achievements against these interventions have been gear towards creating lifelong opportunities for those falling short of the requirements of secondary education. In this regard achievements against these broad interventions are categorized in terms of training in pedagogic, curriculum enhancement, or upgrade infrastructure improvement. Additional achievements are recorded for alternative learning skills. A number of these noticeable skills as per a number of the categories include the production of a TVET curriculum in agriculture and oil palm nursery development of which 10 teachers have been trained; training of 3 teachers and one staffing BRAIN SCIENCE with the provision of advance laboratory equipment and accessories to 12 public schools across the country; about 8,585 learners enrolled into the Alternative Education program with a total number of 2,479 completing. Other achievements include the vetting and selection of an initial 61 teachers out of a total number of 100 for sponsorship in several outstanding TVET institutions across Africa for training; Completion of renovation and furnishing of three dormitories, construction, and furnishing of the administrative building at KRTTI.

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics education

The government is committed to offering young people fields of education and training that align with professional manpower needs for economic development around science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The aim is to harmonize and roll out curriculum with English West African Countries, conduct comparative cost-effectiveness study in financing the offering of five disciplines in three HILs and establish quality assurance mechanisms

A comprehensive curriculum developed to award the National Diploma in Agriculture (NDA), as well as produced a Standardized Curriculum to train road maintenance technicians and teaching guidelines for teachers and learning material for trainees. The 'New Higher Education Act' has been designed and presented to the national legislature for enactment. Student enrolment in state-run universities has gone up.

Strategic Priorities for Higher Education

The government commits to reviewing the challenges of delivering Higher Education through a structured approach. In FY2018/19, a comprehensive assessment of Higher Institutions of Learning (HIL) was completed. Thereafter, six-core thrusts will be the focus of HIL over the national plan period:

- Create a strategic, systematic, and affordable long-term plan for higher education transformation
- Reinforce the governance and management system of higher education
- Improve the cultural and economic relevance, level of capacity, accessibility, and participation in

higher education, in the context of emerging demands for highly skilled and culturally sensitive professionals in government and the private sector

- Enhance the quality of higher education pedagogy and infrastructure to be on par with regional standards
- Rationalize the disciplines on offer and the content of degree-granting programs among the network of community colleges to make them more relevant to anticipated local demand for a mid-level professional workforce
- Build strategic partnerships with HIL overseas for the long-term growth of higher education institutions

The autonomous National Commission on Higher Education intends to create a comprehensive and cohesive group of higher education institutions that will focus on providing the specialized skills needed by priority sectors of national development (e.g., agriculture, infrastructure, health, education, fisheries, and forestry), extend the possibilities for second-chance opportunities, develop affiliated businesses that use the creative capacity of the higher education community to generate income and economic potential for the country, and enable the intellect of Liberia to apply its potential for national wealth creation and to African cultural resurgence.

GOAL 5: Achieve gender equity and empower all women and girls



Liberia is one of the lowest-ranked countries in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Gender Inequality index in 2016. Women remain disadvantaged relative to men across a range of measures related to employment, health, education, and political participation. Gender-based violence remains a persistent problem in the country

Ending vulnerability and increasing access to livelihood through programs and policies are crucial to the growth and development of the country. Gender and social protection are a key sector that subscribes to the global development theme of leaving no one behind. As part of the effort of enlisting to the tenets of this global principle, the national development plan considers the disadvantage and vulnerable groups as national access that needs to be cherished. The Gender and Social Protection Sector encapsulates interventions that would lead to improving the livelihood and wellbeing of the most marginalized in society through the provision of safety nets programs and other empowerment modalities such that are channeled through policies, programs, and skills development.

Policy and legal environment for women's empowerment and advancement

Liberia has a national policy and program that explicitly address discrimination against women and girls. The policy is referred to as the National Gender Policy (NGP). It is implemented by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. The initial implementation framework covered from 2009 to 2016. Later the document was revised for another five years (2017-2022). The Ministry of Justice (1973) and the Independent National Human Rights Commission or INHRC (2010) were established to address issues related to discrimination against women and girls.

Liberia never harmonized national legislation with international commitments on gender inequality. But it had concrete implementation measures which are the Equity and Domestic Violence Bills. However, these bills have not been ratified by the Lower House (House of Representative). Moreover, the country created an independent body or the INHRC (with a budget) that is responsible for promoting and protecting the right to non-discrimination. The implementation of the Domestic violence policy and promotion and protection of the right to non-discrimination is at level zero which is a major concern.

Major achievements in the promotion and protection of the right to non-discrimination are the establishment of the Independent Human Rights Commission (INHRC) with the appointment of Commissioners. The process was facilitated by the Executive Branch of Government and the barrier was lack of funding.

The most relevant issues regarding discrimination against women and girls for inclusive sustainable economic and social development that should receive further public policy priority for the next five to ten

years are harmonization of national and international commitments on gender inequality; full budgetary allocations for the Independent Human Rights Commission; and the legislative ratification of the Domestic Violence Bill and Equity Bill. There was no research conducted on discrimination against women and girls for inclusive sustainable economic and social development for planning purposes at the national or subnational level in the last five years.

The most relevant issues regarding the discriminatory impact on women and youth especially girls for inclusive sustainable economic and social development, that Liberia considers a priority for public policy for the next five (5) to ten (10) years are force (child) marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). Liberia has not researched the discriminatory impacts on women and youth especially girls for inclusive sustainable economic and social development for planning purposes at the national or subnational level in the last five (5) years.

Moreover, Liberia has established institutional entities to address issues related to the equal participation of women. These institutions are the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Governance Commission (GC), Ministry of State, Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and the Independent Human Rights Commission. The following issues regarding equal participation of women, for inclusive sustainable economic and social development in Liberia, have been addressed in the last five (5) years. These issues are: i) supporting paid parental leave; sick leave; ii) offering of work-place accommodations for nursing mothers; iii) creating and supporting gender equality offices/units; iv) creating/ supporting institutions providing leadership training for women.

For the Equal Participation program, the major achievements made include series of leadership training offered to women across the country (by UNDP); and the equity or Equal Participation Bill that was submitted to the legislature with the support of UN Women. The achievements were facilitated by the MGCSP with an entrenched cultural and traditional mindset and limited funding serving as major barriers.

Women's land ownership is one of the major issues related to the empowerment of women and young people. The major achievements made toward this issue are the Draft Land Rights Act that has been sent to the Legislature for ratification through the Liberia Land Authority (LLA). The failure to ratify the Land Rights Act remains a major barrier.

Some national policies and programmes addressed gender equity, equality, and women empowerment. These programs are a) Liberia National Gender Policy which has been implemented through the MGCSP from 2009-2016 and revised from 2017-2022. b) Gender-Based Violence (GBV) National Action Plan which is one of the programs that has been implemented by the MGCSP and revised in 2008 for the period 2016 -2021. c) National Action Plan UNSC1325; this policy has been implemented by the MGCSP from 2008 - 2013 and has not been revised.

Women in leadership and politics

The presidential and legislative elections of 2017 witnessed both highs and lows for women in Liberia. For the first time in Liberia's history, a female vice president was elected, and 49% of women were registered to vote. Yet, in a race of over twenty male presidential candidates, there was only one single female presidential candidate. Moreover, the 2017 elections saw a decrease in female representation from 11 in 2011 to 9 in the house of representatives in 2018. Within the National Elections Commission (NEC), there have been some efforts to ensure increased women's political participation during the elections. Coordination around women's political participation during the election was weak. NEC alongside some development partners aimed to have the new election law "endeavor to ensure", a practical tool for the 2017 election as a way of having more female candidates in elections. Little was realized from this effort as NEC did not have the sanctioning power to enforce that mandate. The newly elected president has also failed in appointing enough women in his cabinet.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights

Liberia has made positive steps to increase respect for and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights but is still hampered by harmful traditional practices, low knowledge of rights and services, and poor service availability and accessibility. Liberia at the end of 2017 introduced a temporary and partial ban on the practice of FGM which prohibits the practice of FGM on a person under the age of 18 or a person 18 years or over without their consent.²⁰ Sida's support to CSOs working on SRHR advocacy and policy at the national level (specifically Action Aid's Development Forum) is considered to have contributed to this policy change. Despite structural barriers for LGBT persons to access their rights, there is evidence of a positive change in attitudes from the Liberian National Police and the Ministry of Health towards the LGBT population.

Women's empowerment

In support of the government's target to empower 375,000 women across the 15 counties over the next 5 years, the strategies employed include enhancing the use of enabling technology, information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women, strengthening the implementation of the National Gender Policy to reduce and eliminate the existing discrimination against women and girls by addressing unequal outcomes between women and men and increasing women's involvement in the National Peacebuilding and Healing and reconciliation Plan through practical engagement.

The Ministry of Gender in collaboration with ECOWAS launched a 50 Million project the African Women Speak Platform on January 23, 2019, and installed the country team members comprised of (17 Females and 1 male). This project aimed at enhancing the capacity of females entrepreneurs in accessing business and non-business information. The platform will contain information on how to create, promote and grow your business, such as Legislation, law, code, procedures, and useful technical information of Liberia; Financing opportunities and offers from banking and microfinance institutions; and Training and Capacity building opportunities.

With support from UN Women, the Ministry has developed the Abridged Version of the Revised National Gender Policy (2018-2022). Dissemination, awareness, and sensitization were conducted in two Counties: Grand Bassa and Bomi, as well as international, national, and local stakeholders. The Ministry in collaboration with Millennium Challenge Account-Liberia established its Gender & Social Inclusion Unit in Ministries of Mines and Energy, Public Works and Liberia Electricity Corporation; and also drafted the Gender & Social Inclusion Policy and Action Plan for the implementation of the Gender and Social Inclusion Policy as well as the National Gender Policy.

The Joint Programme on Rural Women Economic Empowerment was implemented in six Counties, (Montserrado, Grand Bassa, Sinoe, Maryland, Margibi, and Rivergeee Counties). The program benefitted two thousand seven hundred and fifty (2,750) women and men living in rural communities in numeracy, literacy, vocational, and business development skills, as well as established eighty (80) village savings and loans associations to reduce poverty and increase women participation in decision-making, and provided alternative livelihood training for one hundred & eighty (180) At-Risk Girls in Montserrado, Nimba, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, and Grand Cape Mount Counties.

Sexual and gender-based violence

The government is committed to reducing the Incidence of SGBV by 50% by 2023 through the provision of appropriate support services & access to justice systems. As a way of achieving the objective set out in this target, the Ministry of Gender carried out several programs in collaboration with development

partners. Additionally, several legal frameworks were concluded. The understanding is that these interventions would lead to a reduction in the incidence of SGBV by 50% for the projected period.

The conduct of a Prevalence Survey of SGBV in five counties (Montserrado, Nimba, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, and Grand Cape Mount) to collect data on the prevailing rate of violence against women and girls. Other programs include the Spotlight Initiative which has been launch and is expected to directly benefit 613,578 and indirectly benefit 1,987,701 women, girls, boys, and men in Grand Cape Mount, Nimba, Montserrado, Grand Gedeh, and Lofa counties, respectively.

An agreement was reached on the suspension of all bush (traditional) schools across the country. The idea is to discourage harmful traditional practices that border on SGBV. This period is being used to conduct an inventory of traditional groves and map out traditional practitioners as an agreeable action in ending harmful traditional practices in Liberia.

The Gender-Based Violence Comprehensive Prevention Strategy of “Leaving No One Behind” was developed and validated. The Strategy will be used to highlight the protection of women, girls, men and boys against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), including marginalized groups The 2011 National Psychosocial Training Manual was revised and validated and will be used for training of social workers, mental health clinicians and community-based service providers to mitigate trauma, mental health and psychological issues caused by substance abuses, gender-based violence, and harmful traditional practices. The passage of the Domestic Violence Bill by the National Legislature is a milestone in the fight against SGBV.

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection conducted awareness in collaboration with partners on the Rape Law, SGBV referral path and the SGBV National Action Plan to provide more education on the danger of rape, how to refer SGBV cases, and SGBV National Action Plan for implementation that intend to reduce rape and SGBV cases across the country. The regular monthly SGBV task force and Joint Program coordination meetings are being held at the MGCSP and county level with SGBV actors.

The Ministry of Justice, through its collaboration with national and international stakeholders, has established a Gender Unit at its headquarters to coordinate all gender-related issues associated with the security sector. The ministry has also embarked on integrating the Gender Responsive Budgeting in its budget planning through collaboration with the Gender Responsive Budgeting Unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. The Ministry of Justice, through the collaboration with various relevant stakeholders and funding support from the UN Women, has completed the draft of the Gender Policy Document, which is pending validation.

To expedite investigation sin SGBV cases, the Ministry of Justice in partnership with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection restored the functioning of the DNA Machine procured through funding from the European Union in collaboration with the UNDP, UNFPA, and WHO through the Spotlight Initiative Program. Besides, the program has also trained and hired 2 Pathologists to support the efforts in investigating and reducing SGBV related crimes. Plans are also underway to establish a Forensic Laboratory to support also the efforts in investigating and reducing SGBV related crimes.

Towards providing support to 10,000 Extremely Poor and Food Insecure Households of which 50% are female-headed households and 13,000 individual beneficiaries of which 50% are women receive cash transfers by 2023, the govt is implementing several measures. The Liberia Social Safety Net Project, with support from the World Bank and USAID, disbursed more than Fifty-Nine Million Liberian Dollars to a total of 3,250 households beneficiaries in Maryland and Grand Kru Counties and continuing to River Gee and Bomi Counties.

Empowering women in agriculture

From June to October 2019, LISGIS conducted a survey with support from UN Women which was aimed at empowering women in agriculture through access to Information Communication Technology (ICT). The project is a joint effort with the “BuyFromWomen” initiative (2019-2021). The goal of the project is to empower rural women farmers economically and to strengthen their resilience through sustainable food systems, greater access to factors of production, and high-value markets. Thus, the project will contribute to overcoming the constraints faced by rural women for productive and resilient agriculture through three expected outcomes, which are:

- a) improved efficiency and climate resilience of women’s agricultural productivity and profitability through ICT
- b) increased resilience and productive capacity of women farmers through increased access to information, innovative technologies, and climate-smart practices; and
- c) enhanced women’s participation in high-value chain activities for market access.

LISGIS also conducted The Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) with support from the UN Women Organization. This survey-based index was meant to measure the empowerment, agency, and inclusion of women in the agricultural sector. The WEAI was initially developed as a tool to reflect changes in women’s empowerment that may result from the US Government’s Feed the Future Initiative, which commissioned the development of the WEAI. However, the WEAI can also be used more generally by other organizations to assess the state of empowerment and gender parity in agriculture, to identify key areas in which empowerment needs to be strengthened and to track progress over time. The WEAI comprises two sub-indexes. The first assesses the degree to which women are empowered in five domains of empowerment (5DE) in agriculture. It also takes into account the percentage of individual domains in which women are empowered among those who do not meet the combined empowerment threshold. The second sub-index (the Gender Parity Index [GPI]) measures gender parity within surveyed households.

GOAL 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all



The Water Supply and Sanitation Policy 2009 set out institutional arrangements and policies in delivering WASH services. The WASH Compact 2011 set out a roadmap of themes based on four key commitments and related cross-cutting issues. WASH Sector Strategic Plan 2012-2017 provided detailed guidance to the institutional responsibilities and strategies for implementing the 'WASH Compact' and the sector policies. GoL prepared WASH Sector Investment Plan (SIP) 2012-2017 that provided details on the investment plans to WASH activities for the five years, and Sector Capacity Development Plan 2012-2017 put together areas needed for capacity development based on the findings on needs assessment in WASH. The National Water Resources and Sanitation Board (NWRSB) was established in 2015 and was supported by the National Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene Promotion Committee (NWSHPC). To date the WASH Commission established in 2017 has been given the mandate to coordinate multi-ministries relating to WASH, oversee legislation, and policy implementation. Moreover, the government launched the One WASH Program in 2018 to modernize the way WASH services are delivered to the communities in Liberia and thereby contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction. The One WASH Program provided a platform for a single annual work plan, annual budget, information system, monitoring and evaluation system, and reporting system.

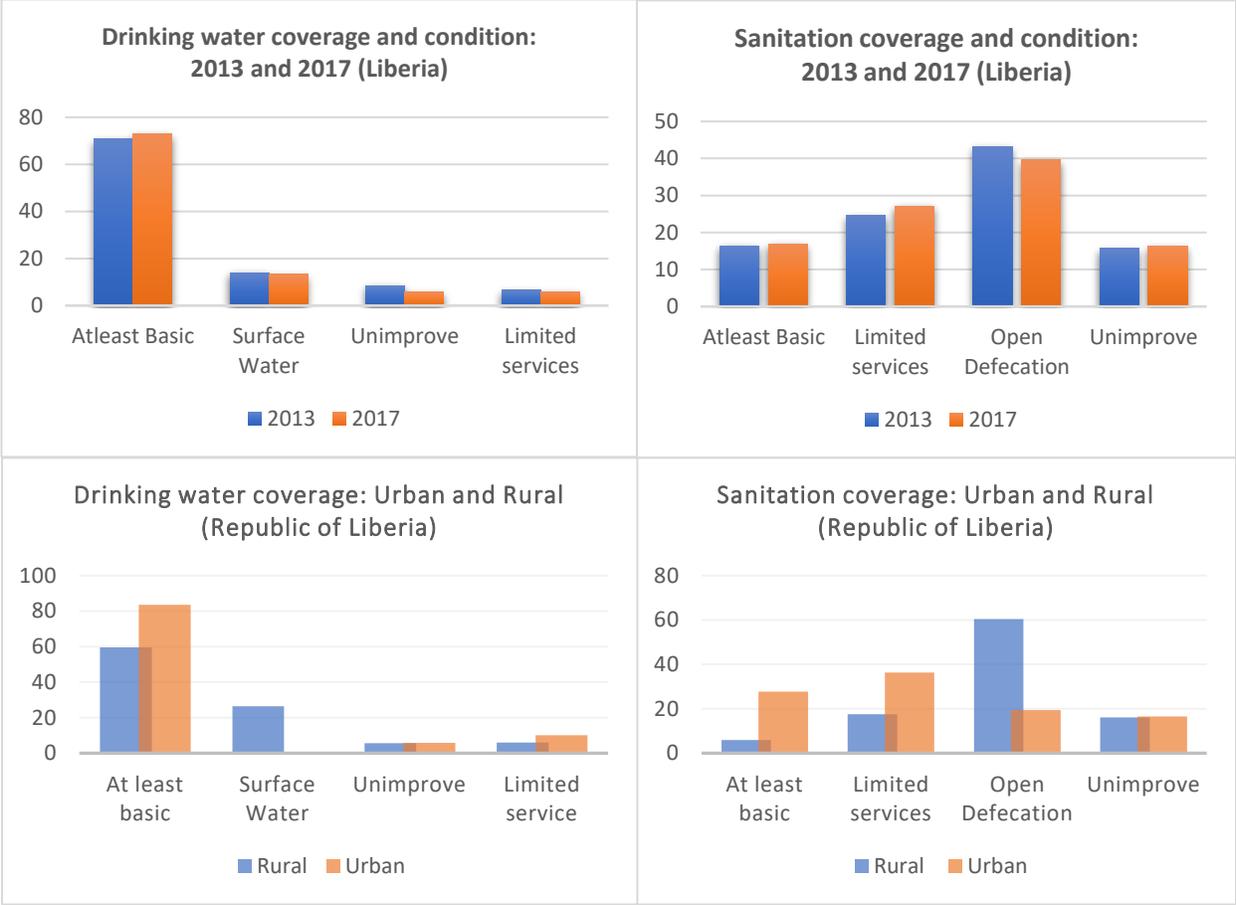
However, the government has been facing some challenges due to coming short in its significant commitment required to prioritize the WASH sector, allocating a substantial amount of resources and manage such financial resources, coordinating multiple ministries and agencies and development partners on the investment made at national, county and community level, and building capacity in implementing WASH activities.

According to the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program Report, 73 per cent of the population have access to at least basic drinking water services, up 3% from 2013. The coverage of limited access to improved sources of drinking water is decreasing considering the coverage difference in 2013 (6.5 per cent) and 2017 (5.9 per cent). On the other hand, 13 per cent use surface water as of drinking water, down 1%. It is also a welcome sign that those using unimproved drinking water supply has fallen from 8.5% in 2013 to 5.7% in 2017.

While 80 per cent of the urban population has access to basic drinking water services, only 57 per cent of the people living in the rural areas do.

Overall, 40 per cent (2017) of the population practices open defecation, a decrease from 43 per cent in 2013. However, nearly 60 per cent of the rural population lacks access to toilets and latrines.

There is a slight increase in the coverage of population 17 per cent in 2017 as compared to 16 per cent in 2013 having at least basic access to sanitation services. The proportion of the population having limited access to improved sanitation services has increase from 25 per cent in 2013 to 27 per cent in 2017, while the coverage of unimproved sanitation facilities is gradually increasing across the country.

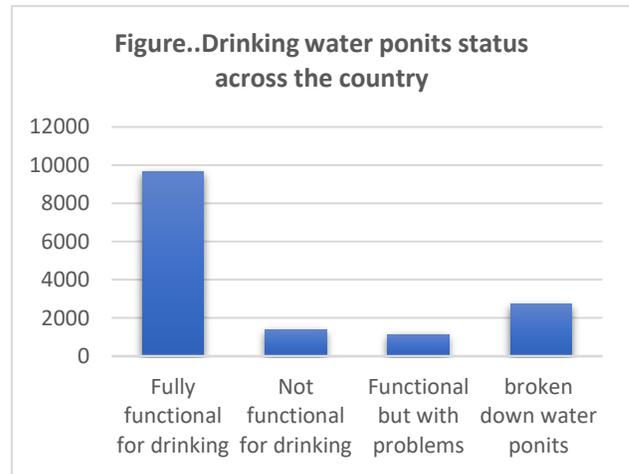


Furthermore, majority of the population (26 per cent) that use/drink surface water in the rural parts of the country. The coverage of surface water in the urban parts of the country is 0.4 per cent mostly from reservoirs sources. The unimproved conditions of drinking water points (urban (6 per cent), rural (6 per cent) and sanitation facilities (urban (17 per cent), rural (16 per cent) are almost the same in both urban and rural parts of the country. About 36 per cent of the urban population uses improved sanitation facilities share between two to three households, which is more than the rural population (18 per cent) with such access. Finally, 10 per cent of the population in the urban areas and 5 per cent of the population in the rural areas drink water from an improved source for which collection time exceeds 30 minutes for a roundtrip including queuing.

In total, 15089 water points in Liberia are reported to be improved, and 9674 (64.1%) are technically fully functional and in use. 1408 (9.3%) are functional but not in use for drinking water, 1145 (7.6%) are functional but with problems, and 2733 (18.1%) are broken down.

Over the years, many investments have been made in improving water supply and sanitation management. Development partners UNICEF, USAID, the World Bank, AfBD, EU and others including local and international NGOs, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have been supporting the government to increase the coverage of WASH services in rural and urban communities, schools and health facilities,

strengthened the capacity of WASH institutions to be able to plan and implement and scale up WASH services across the country, and build national systems. However, the results for the trends analysis shows that more need to be done in achieving the goal of the 2030 Agenda on clean water and sanitation.



GOAL 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all



Energy consumption in Liberia is dominated by biomass with more than 80% using it as primary energy sources. Woody biomass is used for domestic cooking and heating. It has been established that over 95% of the population depends on firewood and charcoal for cooking and heating needs and palm oil for lighting. The most recent Census (2008 data, published in 2009) shows that 70% of the urban population use charcoal for cooking and 5% of the rural population; 91% of the rural population use firewood for cooking and 21% of the urban population. In Monrovia, the percentage of households using charcoal is even higher, 85%. Around 2% of the population has access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking (World Bank, 2014)

Modern energy services based on electricity and petroleum products are predominantly used for economic production and transportation. In households, the use of modern energy services consists of kerosene, electricity, and liquefied petroleum gas for lighting, cooking, and entertainment. These are used by higher-income households in urban areas.

According to the data of the government and world bank, about 16.8% of urban residents and less than 2% of rural residents have electricity access from self-generation with gasoline or diesel generators using expensive imported fuel. The access rate to public electricity is 1%. In March 2012 LEC served about 5,600 connections in Monrovia (around 2,500 residents from an estimated number of 210,000 households), In August 2012 already 11,000 customers are served by LEC. Imported electricity from Ivory Coast can be used by around 36000 persons in Nimba, Grand Gedeh, Maryland county.

Liberia's Initial National Communication (2013) reinforces the National Energy Policy with long-term targets and related activities, which includes: (i) reducing GHGs by at least 10% by 2030; (ii) improving energy efficiency by at least 20% by 2030; (iii) rising share of renewable energy to at least 30% of electricity production and 10% of overall energy consumption by 2030. In 2015, the Electricity Law of Liberia and the Act to establish the Rural and Renewable Energy Agency (RREA) was formulated. In 2016, the **Rural Energy Strategy and Master Plan For Liberia (RESMP)** was designed.

The Mount Coffee Hydro Power Plant was the major source of energy in the capital, Monrovia before the civil war and was devastated as a result of the war. The reactivation of this plant has increased the expansion of energy access to many communities in and around urban Monrovia.

To ensure the achievement of SDG goal 7, the GoL, in its national plan has set one of the high-level national targets as "Increase electricity access by 30% (2023)". According to the Liberia Electricity Report 2019,

the following progress has been made. The LEC has developed a business plan with a performance matrix that is aligned with the National agenda and intends to connect approximately 20,000 households in 2020. About 2,000 households have been connected with electricity in Maryland and Grand Gedeh Counties and 2,500 in Monrovia, Montserrado County. The LEC has about 50,000 customers within its database including business entities and household customers.

It is projected that by the end of 2020, the LEC would have connected 70,000 households or 7% of the population, and increase its current access by 40%. In 2018, 10 mini-grids using renewable energy (hydro, wood, solar PV, palm oil, solar-diesel) are operational with capacities ranging from 22.5 kW to 60 kW.5 The projects were funded by the EU, USAID and World Bank.

Increasing international collaboration in support of clean and renewable energy:

Many different projects have been advanced to increase electricity access and generation across the country, especially outside Monrovia, including hydro projects, solar electricity systems, and public-private-partnerships. Construction continues to connect Monrovia to the West Africa Power Pool through distribution lines from Ganta.

The Government of Liberia, through the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME), has plans to implement an EU-supported project for the expansion of the Rural Electrification supply to the South-East of Liberia. This action fully supports the implementation of the Rural Energy Strategy and Master Plan and Government priorities to continue to expand electricity to all parts of Liberia. The Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) prepared for the Paris Agreement underlines that the energy sector is the highest contributor of greenhouse gases (GHG) in Liberia emanating mainly from the use of traditional fuels such as firewood, charcoal and palm oil and the use of fossil fuels, especially petroleum products.

Three projects are underway for hydropower plants in Loaf, River Gee, and Nimbi adding 2.5 MW, 2.13 MW, and 9.34 MW of generation capacity respectively. Also, with support from the EU, the Government has conducted a full feasibility study of a 2 MW run-of-river hydropower plant in Sine County. 13 rural health facilities are also to have solar equipment installed. The increased generation will allow for social services to operate more effectively and rural communities to benefit from clean renewable energy access.

In collaboration with the European Union, the GoL has conducted financial pre-feasibility studies for electrification that showed that 10 cities are financially viable for energy services under public-private-partnership initiatives. These will enable the government to leverage private sector investment to grow its generative capacity and bring energy access across the country.

The Ganta-Gbarnga Grid Extension Project, funded by USAID and UNIDO, is approximately 75% completed, with transmission poles located and excavation nearing complete, eventually this will connect Gbarnga and environs to the West Africa Power Pool, enabling grid expansion and supporting business growth and development in Liberia.

A draft feasibility scoping report on the development of an integrated tool to transform waste to Energy in Whein Town and the new Cheesemanburg landfills was developed. This project could both reduce Liberia's carbon use and create cheap electricity for the country.

GOAL 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all



Towards boosting economic growth, the Government has provided three (3) million USD through LBDI for Small and Medium Business Enterprises has increased access to micro-finance loans nationwide. The loan has enabled Liberian small business owners to produce goods and services for the domestic market. In the long run, it will help them move from the level of petty markets to manufacturing, and from being spectators to being active participants in the national economy. This initiative will help put Liberian businesses in the position to take ownership of the country's economy. Through GoL with UNDP partnership, the Business Opportunities Support Services (BOSS) Project, is building the capacity of businesses in four counties (Nimba, Bong, Margibi and Grand Bassa) through the provision of training and logistical support. The project increasingly enhanced decentralization and support of start-up opportunities for small and micro-entrepreneurs across the country and increased sustainable employment opportunities across the country. Also, beneficiaries (youth, women, and small agricultural producers) skills have been strengthened to participate and engage in the decision-making process, volunteerism, and community development.

Gross official reserves are projected to decline in 2019 to US\$276.3m down from US\$287.2m for 2018, however, reforms instituted as part of the IMF program are ensuring reserves will improve over the medium term to US\$310m which will ensure a sufficient balance of payments buffer, enabling continued access to critical imports e.g., energy, food.

As part of the new IMF program, the government has committed to implementing credible budgets by aligning budgeted spending to identifiable available revenue. This will ensure that arrears and then the unplanned public debt is not incurred helping to ensure debt sustainability and enable Liberia continued access to borrowing for investment.

The govt aims to increase the contribution of the mining sector to GDP from 10% to 15% by attracting new Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the mining sector. The government negotiated a concession with the Hummingbird mining company. The mining sector is expected to grow by 7.8% due to increased production of gold and iron ore increasing the contribution of mining to real GDP

The govt aims to strengthen regulatory mechanisms to provide greater governance and transparency in the mining sector including catering to the welfare of small-scale miners while safeguarding the environment. With support from the Ministry of Mines and Energy, 12 Artisanal Mining Groups were transformed into cooperatives in Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Grand Gedeh, and Sinoe Counties. The

cooperatives had a total membership of 330 with 1,980 household beneficiaries. As a result of these artisanal miners being transformed into cooperatives in line with the Mining Laws of Liberia, the Government of Liberia was able to generate US\$49,500 as payment for mining claim licenses.

Financial inclusion

Liberia has made progress in terms of increased financial inclusion. According to 2017 Findex data, 35.7 per cent of the population have accounts at a financial institution or with a mobile money provider, which is an increase from 18.8 per cent with an account at a financial institution in 2011 – before the introduction of mobile money. Mobile money has been the driving force behind these gains in financial inclusion, as presently 21.6 per cent of the population have accounts at a financial institution, a 2.8 percentage point increase from 2011, while 20.8 per cent of Liberian population reported having a mobile money account. In this context, 27.6 per cent of Liberians reported making or receiving digital payments.¹ Mobile money services are available in all 15 counties in Liberia through a large mobile money agent network (6,995 agents as of 2018).

The financial sector has made significant progress since the end of the second civil war in 2003 but has challenges with profitability. The number of banks has grown steadily, increasing from three to nine between 2004 and 2016, with a total of 81 branches in 2018. Between December 2015 to October 2018, Return on Equity (ROE) grew from -5.14 per cent to 6.36 per cent and Return on Assets (ROA) grew from -0.72 per cent to 1.05 per cent. Non-performing loans (NPLs), while still high, decreased from 18.6 to 13.76 between 2015 and 2018. For MFIs, the lack of capital, coupled with inadequate management information systems (MIS) and payment systems, among others, makes it difficult for MFIs to operate profitably due to the cost from manual transactions and expanding access beyond Monrovia. Many MFIs operate at a loss, have limited access to resources to lend, and some have a legacy debt to CBL from serving as a vehicle to channel funds for government-directed lending programs.

The National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS), 2020-2024, aims to leverage progress made with recent financial sector development efforts to further advance access to financial services in Liberia in a coordinated and strategic manner. Access to financial services, particularly through digital channels, can provide tools for all segments of Liberian society to borrow, save, and make payments more affordable and easier, among others, thus, advancing poverty alleviation. The NFIS will serve as a platform to develop the core underlying financial infrastructure, bolster the regulatory framework, and enhance institutional and consumer capacity to achieve progress towards financial inclusion for all. **The NFIS Framework outlines the key focus areas to achieve the NFIS vision and address the underlying issues that serve as barriers to increasing financial inclusion in Liberia.** Thus, the Framework is built on three main pillars: i) Access to Financial Services and Credit, ii) Digital Financial Services, and iii) Consumer Protection and Financial Capability

Access to mobile money increased significantly. There was a 31% increase in the number of mobile money subscribers from 2.71m in 2018 to 3.54m by December 2019. Such growth helps increase access to basic financial services facilitating increased business trade and more financially resilient households.

Launched the National Financial Inclusion Strategy (NFIS) in December 2020. The NFIS will improve financial inclusion through three pillars: Access to Financial Services and Credit, Digital Financial Services and Consumer Protection and Financial Capability. The CBL has also strengthened the regulatory framework on Consumer Protection for Micro-finance Institutions and other non-banks to offer digital credit. This will increase access to credit while keeping consumers protected.

The establishment of two satellite stations and the new automated business registration system with

modern capabilities have enhanced public financial service delivery, increased access to basic financial transaction services. With the fully automated system in place, we will experience more than 50% reduction in transactions in cost and time especially when the online platform, mobile money, etc.

The government through the MOCI continues to fully participate in the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AFCFTA) trade negotiations along with other relevant government ministries and agencies (MACs). Technical work is currently ongoing to facilitate the submission of this regional trade instrument to the legislature for ratification. This will increase regional trade investment opportunities by boosting the movement of people and increase Liberia trading and investment opportunities with other African countries.

People living with disabilities and their access to economic opportunities

Liberia developed national policies and programs to address the rights of all girls, boys, and children with disabilities to health, nutrition, and education. The policies and programs are a) special education policy implemented by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 2009; b) National Social Welfare Policy and Plan; Essential Package Social Service. Special Education Policies implemented by MGCSP in March 2009; c) vulnerable girls program implemented by MGCSP in 2013 and d) National Policy on Girls' Education implemented by the MOE. The country has addressed issues related to the rights of all girls, boys, and children with disabilities to health, nutrition, and education through the MOE (established in 1973); MGCSP and National Commission on Disability (2005).

Livelihoods for young people

The government has signed and ratified three concession contracts, which have created a total of 2,000 jobs, have increased access to sustainable and secure employment opportunities in the private sector as well as increase monthly income in the view of improving the wellbeing of Liberians across the country.

By providing pre-employment training and skills, capacity building, household enterprises, the establishment of rehabilitation services for vulnerable youths, the following have been achieved:

- The Monrovia Vocational Training Centre and the Business & Domestic Occupational Training Centre admitted 3,336 trainees in the following trades areas; auto mechanic, heavy-duty, welding and fabrication, auto electricity, electricity, electronics, refrigeration, and air conditioning, and 389 trainees in the areas of the front office, food and beverages, housekeeping, waiter/waitress service, cookery, tailoring, event decoration, beauty culture, baking, braiding and weaving, respectively.
- Trainees in the Computer section at MVTC have completed training in Office Suites and have started training in hardware.
- Trainees in the Computer section at MVTC have completed training in Office Suites and have started training in hardware.
- 46 trainees of the Youth on the Job Training Program underwent training in Bamboo and Rattan Weaving under the Chinese Bamboo and Rattan Program at the SKD Complex.
- The Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) trained 30 individuals in Oil Palm Nursery Development
- The Ministry of Youth and Sports in collaboration with the China Aid Bamboo and Rattan Weaving and Vegetable Planting Technique Assistance Project completed the fourth training cycle and graduated 29 trainees in General Agriculture.
- In June 2019, the Ministries of Youth and Sports and Agriculture, along with WFP, ILO, and FAO jointly launched the "Sustaining peace and improving social cohesion through the promotion of

rural employment opportunities for youth in conflict-prone areas" project. The Program budget, USD 1,500,000, is expected to benefit 1,200 young people in Bong and Lofa Counties over a two-year duration.

Medium and small-scale enterprises sector

The ultimate goal of this sector is to ensure that the sources of economic growth in Liberia are broadly diversified, private-sector resilience is enhanced, and that benefits from this growth are equitably distributed. The outcome is to reduce income poverty across regions and grow the private sector to absorb new entrants into the labor market. It intends to place the economy on a sustainable and inclusive economic growth pathway that can generate productive employment and livelihood opportunities by 2023.

Key achievements in the sector include increased access to micro-finance loans by providing three (3) million USD to SMEs across the country in the view of empowering Liberian small businesses. Over 125 (79% women) entrepreneurs and local service providers received business start-up opportunities and business management skills in four (4) counties. More than 1000 sustainable employment opportunities were created as a result of the signing and ratifying three (3) concession agreements. The mining sector is expected to grow by 7.8%, which is a boost for the country's real GDP. Domestic revenue generation has increased through the establishment of new tax compliance mechanisms, the automation and decentralization of the vehicle registration process, and the opening of commerce satellite stations across the country. The successful harmonization process reduced the country's wage bill enabling the government to increase spending on public sector investment or development programs. Finally, the government is working to improve regional trade to freely allow the movement of people and increase Liberia trading and investment opportunities with other African countries.

GOAL 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



The lack of adequate infrastructure remains the binding constraint to Liberia's development, particularly road, energy, ICT, and water and sanitation. Lack of access to all-weather roads and basic infrastructure continues to impede the movement of goods and services, equipment, and machinery for production which directly affects the poor and vulnerable. To ensure pro-poor development of the infrastructure, the government will ensure that all projects incorporate livelihood programs directly and indirectly into their supply chains to allow local community dwellers as well as local businesses to participate.

These infrastructure investments are important for private sector expansion, and for creating additional jobs in energy transmission and distribution, road and ports construction, fiber optic installation and distribution, and in water and sanitation projects.

The infrastructure sector is focused on creating transportation and communication capabilities to facilitate economic growth within Liberia. One of the most significant aspects of such infrastructure in Liberia is increasing the proportion of all-weather roads in the country. The sector also encompasses water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure improvements that improve the health and well-being of citizens.

One of the major challenges for the infrastructure sector has been the timely provision of counterpart funding for road projects. Development partners require the government to cover certain parts of the cost of road projects, but the tight fiscal position of the government has made these difficult to meet, delaying the construction of primary road projects.

The national road network forms the backbone of Liberia's transportation system and plays a critical role in socio-economic development. Liberia has approximately 11,536 kilometers (km) of primary, secondary, urban, and feeder roads. These comprise about 1,899, 2,479, and 6,263 km of unpaved primary, secondary, and feeder roads respectively. Approximately 622 km of the total is paved roads. Liberia has 2,884 bridges and 7,651 culverts, but approximately half of the bridges and one-quarter of the culverts are in poor condition, limiting accessibility during the rainy season. Only 15 per cent of bridges and half of the culverts are in excellent or good condition.

Several constraints continue to impede the progress of roads and bridges intervention in Liberia. They include i) a weak domestic contracting and consulting industry which lacks technical capacity; ii) inadequate materials testing facilities; iii) negligible road maintenance interventions, and iv) unpredictable weather due to global climatic change. Low Government funding and investment in the road sector and lack of human capacity in the infrastructure sectors combine to impede progress on reducing the deficit

The government intends to make significant inroads in transforming infrastructure over the next five years. By 2023, Liberia will have a more expansive national road network, reducing the cost of transport and doing business, supporting the generation of decent employment opportunities, and transforming the living conditions of the poor and the vulnerable through better access to social services. As a supplementary benefit, traffic congestion and transit times around Monrovia will ease. Alternative water transport opportunities will also be pursued.

Road investments will not be pursued in a silo but will be linked to development corridors in important sectors such as agriculture. Along developed road corridors, the government intends to establish growth clusters--comprising SEZ and agriculture value chains in rice and cassava production.

To deliver on its promises, the Road Fund Act and the establishment of a Road Authority will be fully implemented. Five materials testing facilities, zonal planning processes and databases, and a more effective road maintenance system will also be established.

Since the launch of the current development national plan, 75km of the primary road has been upgraded to all-weather paved road increasing connectivity between county capitals and reducing the cost of transport, generating employment opportunities, and increasing access to social services. Also, 43km of urban roads have been paved in communities across the country which has helped ease traffic congestion and transit times around Monrovia and other urban centers.

An Axle Load Implementation Unit was also established which will help reduce road maintenance costs. A Road Safety Action Plan was developed and launched which will help reduce the number of road traffic accidents and deaths.

The amendment of the 2010 PPCC Act on Public, Private, Partnership (PPP) Policy has been completed Pending Review by the MOJ. The amended act will help bring increased private investment into the infrastructure sector.

In Monrovia 65km of the water pipeline has been laid and 59 water kiosks constructed, three outstations have been completed in Robertsport, Sanniquellie, and Voinjama. Moreover, connections for 5000 customers is underway in Monrovia, Kakata, Buchanan, and Zwedru. These investments are helping to ensure equitable, safe, affordable, and sustainable water supply and sanitation services for all Liberians.

ICT investments have also been made, with 41 ministries and agencies now connected to the e-governance platform.

GOAL 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries



Non-discrimination is enshrined in the Liberian Constitution but the UN HR Committee has asked to adopt comprehensive legislation that prohibits discrimination based on national or ethnic origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, and provide for effective remedies in case of violations. Same-sex sexual conduct between consenting adults is criminalized. LGBTI individuals are stigmatized and experience violence, arbitrary detention, and police abuse. Defenders advocating for the rights of LGBTI individuals experience harassment and reprisals. Women's and girls' rights are not effectively protected, particularly under traditional law; and sexual and gender-based violence, as well as impunity, is high.

The Constitution of the Republic of Liberia and the Liberian Code of Laws Revised 1976 provide for the organization, regulation, and existence of associations, trade unions, political parties, etc. Article 78 of the Constitution indicates, "As used in this Chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, an 'association' means a body of persons, corporate or other, which acts together for a common purpose, and includes a group of people organized for any ethnic, social, cultural, occupational or religious objectives; a 'political party' shall be an association with a membership of not less than five hundred qualified voters in each of at least six counties, whose activities include canvassing for votes on any public issue."

Minorities enjoy the same rights as members of other communities in Liberia. They are allowed to practice their culture and profess their religion without hindrance and to use their language in public spaces. For example, in political and other social settings, Muslim minorities who ascend to high political positions in Government are permitted to kiss the Koran when taking their solemn oath. Moreover, in the light of the level of human rights awareness in the country in respect of religious tolerance, the best practice has been in the case of mixed social activities where people of diverse religious backgrounds meet, a period of silence is observed so that each reflects on his or her own religious belief.

The Inter-Religious Council of Liberia (IRCL) promotes dialogue amongst various religious communities. It has an office in Lofa County that continues to work specifically on inter-religious and inter-ethnic issues.

There have been some challenges in light of religious tensions in the country in recent years. For example, in 2010 the Vice President, in collaboration with governmental and non-governmental organizations, organized a dispute resolution workshop for traditional leaders in Lofa County to mitigate tensions between Muslim and Christian communities in that area. The Government of Liberia continues to work to protect the rights of all its citizens including religious minorities.

Today Liberia's ethnic and religious minority groups enjoy full voting rights and are free to participate in public affairs. Today, factors that impede citizens' ability to vote include illiteracy, poverty, and

inaccessible roads in the hinterland, serving as barriers to free movement. General elections, in which universal suffrage was first enjoyed, were held in Liberia on 1 May 1951, as previously only males of Americo-Liberian descent had been allowed to vote. Universal suffrage came into force in Liberia as a result of a national referendum held in 1955; changes to the Constitution granted women in the provinces the right to vote (women of Americo-Liberian descent had previously been granted the right to vote in a 1946 referendum). The May 3, 1955 referendum further granted the right to all women to be elected into parliament.

The Local Government Act (LGA) enacted in 2018, provides the legal regulatory framework for decentralization and local governance reform in Liberia, which is being implemented through the Liberia Decentralization Support Program (LDSP), with funding from USAID, UNMIL, and UNDP. Through the engagement, a cross-session of local government officials and citizens at the local level received copies of the LGA. To print and distribute Nation-wide the LGA, a total of 2000 copies of the LGA were printed by GC. Out of the 2000 copies, 1000 copies were submitted to the Ministry of Internal Affairs for onward distribution. The GC in this regard, distributed copies of the Act to all members of the Legislature, including both Secretariats of the 54th Legislature of the Republic of Liberia. The government through the Ministry of Internal Affairs have recruited a consulting firm to design and develop a five-year Decentralization program for the implementation of the Local Government Act (LGA) 2018 (2020–2024); the project funding provided by the European Union Development Fund is little over 7.3 Million, other contributors include a 2.5 million from the UNDP, 10 million from the Swedish Internal Development Agency(SIDA

The government is also committed to improving the operational capacity of the 15 County Service Centres (CSC). As a means of improving efficiency in service delivery at the CSCs, a handbook on Operations of the CSCs was developed by the Governance Commission in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the UNDP Office in Liberia. The handbook was also validated by all the county service center coordinators in Liberia and representatives of the Decentralization Support Units from the MACs that are assigned to the County Service Centres. Three (3) County Service Centres in Grand Kru, River Cess, and River Gee have been renovated; at the same time, three giant-sized billboards were planted at the Service Centres in Bassa, Bomi and Bong Counties to provide more access to information to clients; A Revenue Sharing Formula for Central and Local Government in Liberia under the Decentralization frameworks has to be completed and launched by the Governance Commission with support from relevant MACs and partners. At the same time, conversations are beginning for the drafting of the Revenue Sharing Regulations and or Act.

GOAL 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable



About 31.5% of the current population of Liberia lives in Montserrado, where the capital Monrovia is situated. There has been a persistent exodus of people from rural to urban areas and this trend is ever increasing.

Nearly two-thirds of the population currently lives in the Montserrado and the North Central statistical regions comprising four counties. Within this geographic space, unplanned urbanization continues to accelerate at an unprecedented pace, creating a potential source of economic paralysis or an opportunity to develop urban markets. The rapid growth in the size and number of informal settlements is now a significant health risk and could impose a potential threat to peace and stability over the long term if left unresolved. Residents of informal settlement generally have little or no security of title to the land they occupy, and they face severe income insecurity. Unemployment is twice as high as in rural areas and three times as high among the youthful population. Moreover, access to basic services such as electricity, water, and sanitation in some informal settlements is worse than in rural areas. By current estimates (LISGIS HIES 2016), 56 per cent of the labor force reside in these urban areas. Most of the movement has been towards the capital city Monrovia, but other population shifts have been seen along the current economic corridors as well.

Towards a paradigm shift, the national development plan has committed to piloting the concept of sustainable cities in five selected cities with specific emphasis placed on some form of urban renewal action around informal settlements and city planning and zoning; waste reduction, reuse, and recycling; and expansion in public water, sanitation, and hygiene resources. The government will also develop a comprehensive urban land policy to address growing informality in urban environments.

The government is working closely with UN-Habitat to develop a National Urban Policy to integrate the urban economy into national development policies and help create the conditions for Liberia to achieve its long-term development goal of reaching middle-income status by 2030. In 2018, the National Urban Policy discussion paper was finalized with stakeholders. The second phase of the activity has already started, which involves engaging with a wide range of stakeholders for a more participatory approach. This engagement will be countrywide through mechanisms including the National Urban Forum, and regional visits to ensure ownership of the policy.

Slum improvement

The Liberian government has finalized the Slum Upgrading and Affordable Housing framework, which identifies some of the key steps needed to upgrade slum communities. It explores issues such as decongestion and densification, and how to upgrade slums in a way that doesn't negatively impact the

livelihood of slum dwellers. The framework has been adopted by the National Housing Authority, which in 2017 set up a Slum Upgrading Unit to guide work in slums, provide housing solutions. The framework marks a shift in the government's approach to slum upgrading. Previous attempts at relocation failed because the slum dwellers, unable to earn a living, returned to their previous settlements. The framework addresses this issue by focusing on livelihoods in addition to housing and infrastructure needs.

Program to support slum communities in Greater Monrovia has profiled over 84 slum settlements using various techniques, including digital coding of structures and households, questionnaires, and GPS to capture boundaries and service points. Communities can share this data with local authorities when calling for improvements in their living conditions and in identifying priority interventions. As of the end of 2018, 179 saving groups have been mobilized with over 4,970 registered members in 35 slum communities.

As a vital component of the government's efforts is to build the capacity of Liberian institutions to increase access to affordable housing for low-income households. In 2018, a hazard, vulnerability, and risk assessment were finalized to detect the housing challenges for people living in slum communities.

Informal economy petty traders

Petty traders in Monrovia have long complained of police harassment and its impact on their ability to earn a living, and addressing this issue was an agreed priority of the government. In partnership with the Federation of Petty Traders and Informal Workers Union of Liberia and local government authorities, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is trying to address this. In 2018, Monrovia City Corporation and FEPTIWUL signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that stipulates a mapped area for traders to tend their stalls and trade without harassment. So far, 529 secure trading sites have been allocated for informal workers where they can operate without harassment. This agreement is a clear sign of a new and positive approach from the city authorities towards the petty traders, viewing them as contributors to the economy rather than nuisances to be managed and moved on.

Solid waste management

Focusing on solid waste collection, management, and waste-to-energy the government has focused on services as a means of generating work and energy within Monrovia's economy. With support from the European Union €5.9 m (US \$7 million) three studies have been undertaken to develop a detailed understanding of the problem and the strategies possible. The first will address recycling and composting, looking at issues such as what percentage of the waste can be composted or recycled, and construction feasibility of sorting stations. A second study will focus on the vertical and horizontal expansion of Community-based Enterprises engaged in the primary waste collection beyond Monrovia to Paynesville and the townships of Greater Monrovia. A third will study waste-to-energy initiatives that can be applied to Liberia.

Even on a day with perfect weather, primary waste collection is a challenge for the local authorities and residents of Monrovia. The MCC and the Paynesville City Corporation lack the funding and capacity to collect all the garbage from households, so it has placed large dumpsters known as skips in some areas of the city. Residents either dispose of their waste wherever they can, or they hire someone to take it to the nearest skip – typically a Community-based Enterprise (CBE) licensed by the city to collect waste from households.

GOAL 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production pattern



Hazardous waste and chemicals

Liberia's healthcare waste management requires the issuance of national legislation accompanied by policy documents, enforcement mechanisms, and the appropriate infrastructure to manage healthcare waste. Because Liberia lacks a comprehensive and legal framework regarding defining hazardous healthcare waste; the consequences affect hospital administrators, doctors, nurses, waste handlers, patients, the general public, and the environment. The assessment by the Ministry of Health (2009) revealed that the country lacks the resource capacity to empower regulatory bodies to monitor and ensure compliance in the healthcare waste management sectors.

Because there are no standardized systems for medical waste management in Liberia, most health care facilities create their method of waste disposal. Hospitals rely on incinerators and health facilities rely on burial pits or open-air burning for the disposal of healthcare waste. Even the controlled disposal of wastes on a secured landfill site is not viable if the wastes are not segregated adequately. Disposal of the placenta and other pathological waste in non-engineered pits could also contaminate groundwater, the source of drinking water for several communities in Liberia. Many health care workers and the public are not familiar with the risk associated with healthcare waste; therefore, they carelessly ignore the conventional practices for handling waste.

For example, mercury waste is a subcategory of hazardous waste that is often not handled properly by health care workers in developing countries. There may be instances where mercury is simply swept outside of consultation rooms and laboratories without notice, thus exposing patients, waste handlers, and hospital staff to such contamination. This unsafe handling practice of health care waste is common in developing countries and does occur in Liberia. This situation can create an incredibly high potential for the spread of infections through run-offs during rains and contamination of underground water.

Liberia is a signatory to several international conventions and agreements of relevance to healthcare waste management. The country is a signatory to the Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-boundary-Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (1989), Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPS), and Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa (2003). The resolutions of these international conventions provide the technical guidelines for the appropriate management of waste. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) reveals that the technical guidelines of these international

conventions on the management of waste have so far not been implemented (United Nations Environment Program 2007).

Sustainable tourism

Liberia possesses a rich culture, history, great biodiversity in fauna and flora, the most beautiful waterfall and lake in the tropics. It has 350 miles of uninterrupted coastline, some of the most endemic species in the world, and having one of the best surfing spots in the world. The tourism sector with its huge potential can generate billions in revenue for the government and at the same time create thousands of jobs for Liberians both in the private and the public sectors. Tourism is a powerful tool that has been used by very poor and underdeveloped countries to advance their development. For example - Cape Verde was able to use tourism as a development tool to lift itself from a poor and least developed country to a developing country and Liberia can take lessons from them to develop.

Liberia has developed the "Liberian National Export Strategy on Tourism 2016-2020" as a way of diversifying the Liberian economy. The strategy is based on an understanding that the overreliance on the mining sector is neither sustainable nor reliable. When the prices of minerals plummet on the world market Liberia experiences budget shortfalls and the economy starts to experience negative growth. Instead, the strategy aims to invest more in sustainable tourism.

Eco-tourism can maintain Liberia status as a biodiversity hotspot, **reduce** deforestation and at the same time generate huge revenue from tourists, researchers, and academicians that are interested in the ecosystem of Liberia and also for those that love nature. Taking into consideration that 42% of the remaining upper guinea rainforest in West Africa lies within our borders gives **Liberia** a competitive advantage to become a major player in the eco-tourism market globally.

The tourism industry is labor-intensive and stimulates SME growth and investment. Tourism has been used in other countries as an economic driver for growth which can widely support poverty reduction. Tourism also has an important spillover effect, spurring growth in closely related sectors and subsectors such as agriculture, furniture manufacturing, foods and beverages, and infrastructure development. The more vibrant tourism industry in Liberia is achievable and will act as a means of enabling economic development while improving employment and overall socio-economic development.

Fossil fuel subsidies

All fossil fuels consumed in Liberia are imported. Liberia has some offshore oil blocks from the continental shelf to water depths of 2500-4500 meters. The geology of the Liberian basin is complex and finding oil will be extremely difficult and expensive. Since 2011, multinational oil companies have received licenses for exploration activities. Anadarko Petroleum, African Petroleum, Chevron, and ExxonMobil signed production sharing contracts (PSC) with the Liberian government. Some of these companies subsequently began exploratory drilling; 10 wells have been drilled so far.

African Petroleum announced that it has discovered a total of 32 meters (105 feet) of net oil pay in two zones in Liberia. ExxonMobil finally began drilling on November 22, 2016. ExxonMobil found no oil and announced on December 19, 2016, that there is not enough oil in the well to get more than the money required to invest in extracting the oil from the well. However, there was enough evidence in the rock samples that were extracted from the seafloor to keep Exxon investigating other spots in the block with cheaper exploration tools rather than drilling which can cost as much as \$1m a day.

Several oil companies have relinquished oil blocks, including Anadarko, Repsol, Tullow, and recently African Petroleum. Market challenges and lack of interest in the Liberian oil basin due to the history of no discoveries of oil in commercial quantities in the basin

GOAL 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts



As the climate changes, countries like Liberia face tremendous challenges in building resilience against shocks. Rising sea level, soaring temperatures, and increased rainfall hit the most vulnerable, particularly rural population, the hardest. People's livelihoods in both agriculture and fisheries suffer from flooding, erosion, and irregular weather patterns. more than half of Liberians live below the poverty line and climate change could exacerbate the situation

National Legislature of Liberia ratified of the Paris Accord on Climate Change in 2018. The Senate took the decision based on a recommendation by its Foreign Relations Committee, which said that the instrument is in the interest of the state. "... Liberia stands to benefit financial and technological support in maintaining low climate resilience through effective adaptation and greenhouse gas emission reduction,"

The National Climate Change Policy and Response Strategy(2018) articulates the government visions and aspirations for establishing a framework through which concrete actions are directed towards addressing climate change issues across the country.

The long-term strategy of Liberia is to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. The strategic options for mitigation considered under the INDC are the energy sector (electricity, transport) and the waste sector. The Waste Sector focuses on solid waste disposal on land. In 2000, the waste sector accounted for about 0.60% of Liberia's national total CO₂ eq emissions. A significant subcategory is CH₄ emissions from solid waste disposal sites (SWDS) on land, which contributed 91.7%. CH₄ mitigation targets will include landfill recovery, waste incineration with energy recovery, composting of organic waste, controlled wastewater treatment, and recycling and waste minimization.

The energy sector is the highest contributor of GHG in Liberia emanating mainly from the use of traditional fuels such as firewood, charcoal and palm oil, and the use of fossil fuels, especially petroleum products. To reduce the reliance on traditional fuel and increase the use of modern and renewable energy sources, the National Energy Policy (2009) was developed with a set of goals targeted at maximizing efficiency, minimizing costs, and adverse environmental impacts as a principle of extending energy access to all Liberians.

Most recently, Liberia's Initial National Communication (2013) reinforces the National Energy Policy with additional long-term targets and related activities, which includes:

- Reducing GHGs by at least 10% by 2030
- Improving energy efficiency by at least 20% by 2030
- Raising share of renewable energy to at least 30% of electricity production and 10% of overall energy consumption by 2030
- Replacing cooking stoves with low thermal efficiency (5-10%) with the higher-efficiency (40%) stoves.

Vulnerability and adaptation assessments conducted have revealed that Liberia is faced with climate change and variability leading to extreme events, which harm agriculture, forestry, health, energy, and other sectors. Climate change impacts are marked by irregular patterns of rainfall, flooding, high temperature, and coastal erosion. These factors result in crops and livestock losses that intensify food insecurity and loss of income. For the most part, women and children are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. However, their unique knowledge and perspectives also provide opportunities for inclusive, equitable, and efficient adaptation responses and coping strategies. The limited supporting infrastructures increase the vulnerability of the population. Coastal areas in Liberia are the most populated and economically vibrant areas. Sea erosion continues to pose increasing threats to the shorelines of coastal cities including major infrastructures and investments. It can also lead to displacement, loss of lives and properties and can severely undermine national security.

The three priority areas for adaptation based on Liberia's NAPA are:

- a) Agriculture- Enhancing resilience to increasing rainfall variability through the diversification of crop cultivation and small ruminants rearing
- b) The building of a national hydro-meteorological monitoring system and improved networking for the measurement of climatic parameters; and
- c) The building of coastal defense walls to reduce the vulnerability of urban coastal areas.

The long-term adaptation initiatives will include fishery, health, and transport, all with an integrated gender-responsive approach to ensure progress toward efficient and effective adaptive capacity and resilience.

The Government aims to fully implement the National Environmental Policy by 2030 by enhancing environmental laws enforcement, compliance monitoring laboratory, information dissemination, and data management system. So far, the Environmental protection agency has completed training for 130 new environmental inspectors which will help to improve environmental inspection, water quality testing, monitoring, and reporting. The EPA in collaboration with the UNDP has also established three environment-related master programs at the University of Liberia which will build a pipeline of skill environmental professionals to protect Liberia's environment for the future.

The government developed and pitched a US\$30m project proposal to the Global Climate Change Fund (GCF) to help West Point adapt to the effects of climate change. A Nationwide climate risk & vulnerability assessment for coastal areas was also launched (Greenville, Harper, Cestos, Grandcress). 1,000 meters of coastal revetments in New Kru Town were constructed to reduce the threat of sea erosion faced by Borough of New Kru Town. Key infrastructures in the area including the D-Tweh High School and Redemption Hospital are now protected. Through these investments, the government is ensuring the impact of climate change is mitigated for Liberians.

EPA and Green Ecovillage Network (GEN) signed MOU for Green Ecovillages Construction which will also bring to reality the ecotourism strategy developed by the FDA. The program will focus on communities that want to regenerate their natural environments, preserve cultural heritage, increase social resilience, and improve livelihoods.

On the environment, climate change adaptation and mitigation work, the following progress had been

reported:

- Climate vulnerability and risk assessment for the coastal zone of Liberia is ongoing
- \$30M project proposal on Monrovia Metropolitan Coastal Project has been concluded and presented to Global Climate Change Fund (GCF) by August 12, 2019; under the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan for the Monrovia Metropolitan Area and 3 Hot spots identified; based on climate rationale, only one (West Point) may be targeted for GCF funding;
- Nationwide climate risks & vulnerability assessment for coastal areas was launched (Greenville, Harper, Cestos, Grandcress)
- Syllabi for a graduate program in environment & climate change at University of Liberia
- Identified organizations into plastic recycling in Liberia and conducted a regional training into plastic recycling to benefit both women and youths as an innovative approach; at the training, stakeholders were elated especially about the business opportunities in Plastic recycling after a plastic recycling company displayed their business plan.
- A draft feasibility scoping report on the development of an integrated tool to transform waste to Energy in Whein Town and the new Cheesemanburg landfills as an innovative approach has been produced.
- A loan agreement with the WB/SDI for construction of a mini dam in Nimba County is nearly completed.
- Energy needs assessment of the health facilities including (infrastructure, availability of electricity, average hours of interruption; and other relevant indicators critical for creating a baseline was conducted. Thirteen (13) Health facilities assessed in Lofa, River Gee, Gbarpolu, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Bassa, and Bong Counties are about to benefit from solar power facilities (solar equipment has been procured and budget submitted for installation).
- Construction of 1,000 meters of coastal revetments in New Kru Town which now reduced the threats of sea erosion faced by Borough of New Kru Town. Key infrastructures in the area including the D-Tweh High School, Redemption Hospital, etc. are now protected. Job created for more than 50 Liberians; Government particularly the MME and MPW engineers' capacities were enhanced for coastal engineering; Two Latrines (4 compartments each) were constructed at 2 ends of the revetment to improve sanitation in the area.
- The Safeguards Information System (SIS) development was funded from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) to assist Liberia effectively and efficiently to report environmental information to the United Nations Frameworks Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The SIS is meant for providing information on how the UNFCCC Reducing Emission from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD+) 'Cancun' safeguards are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the national REDD+ Strategy of Liberia. Is an easy-to-use system, building on existing information systems, ensuring that information is accessible in an appropriate format for different stakeholders to meet their needs
- The State of the Environment (SoE) Report is an environmental requirement for every country to develop the outlooks of the country's environment. It presents the health of the environment as well as the many inter-linkages of societal issues that impact the environment and how countries propose to deal with those impacts in every five (5) years. The first SoE report was in 2006. The next SoE was to be published in 2011, but due to the lack of funding, it was not possible to do the same. Through the Norwegian funds, the second SoE was developed.
- Free Prior Inform Consent (FPIC) is national guidelines for community engagements, especially so, forest-dependent communities for would-be investors who would want to engage communities for loggings, conservations, etc. Community Consultations Guidelines is to make forest resources users comply with Section 2.2€ of the Community Rights Law (CRL) of 2009. These guidelines will assist Liberia to conform to this requirement and help standardize community consultations involving the use of forest resources. This is the first time Liberia has developed a national

guideline for community consultation.

- The EPA of Liberia to further implement the National Environmental Policy has established its presence in 10 of the 15 counties and recruited and trained 60 young college graduates for deployment in the counties as environmental inspectors.

GOAL 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development



The fisheries sub-sector contributes 3% of the real GDP. Liberia's coastline and the continental shelf has 20,000 sq. km of the fishing ground and currently produces about 24,000 tons of marine fish annually. Liberia's fish consumption capacity is 58,000 tons, with about 34,700 tons being imported and 350 tons exported. The Government invested in fish landing and cold storage infrastructure and facilities to be operated by the private sector in Robert sport and Monrovia. Another landing and cold storage is being developed in Grand Bassa County as a hub for fishing along the coast.

The sector provides income for women and youth through fishing cooperatives. Women make up approximately 70% of those making a living in the fishing industry. The average cooperative income is estimated at and work opportunities for 44000 Liberians and 114 landing sites in the nine coastal counties are provided. Twelve fishing cooperatives are registered and supported by the Cooperatives Development Authority. The sector has the potential to supply fish products to ECOWAS countries, the European Union through Registered of exporters, and the United States under the Africa Growth Opportunity Act.

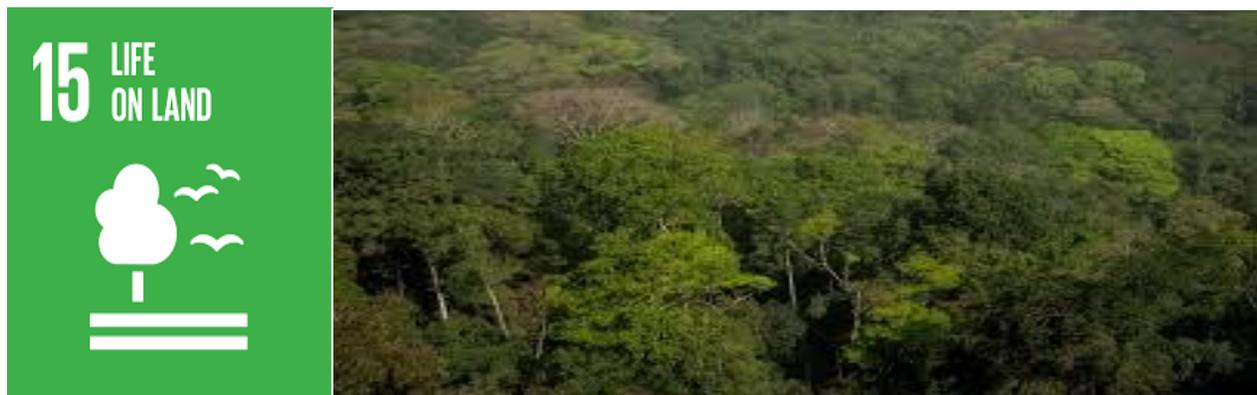
Industrialization of the fisheries sector has been hindered by weak regulations and the continual illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. Moreover, the labor force is unskilled and the quality of the infrastructure for processing and preservation is poor. Limited use of modern fishing technology and the high cost of electricity undermines productivity and profitability. Over the long term, the development of Liberia's marine resources will be threatened by overharvesting, habitat destruction and pollution, and incursion by fishing vessels from other countries.

In this regard, the Government intends to support artisanal communities to increase domestic market supply from 24,000 tons to 48000 tons annually by 2023. However, the provision of over 400 outboard motors to artisanal fleets under the Liberia-Japan cooperation program is expected to significantly increase local production. This supply will come largely from semi-industrial, and artisanal sub-sectors. The government will facilitate private investment in the construction and operations of a modern fishing harbor complex with facilities for the repair and maintenance of fishing vessels as well as for storage,

preservation, and processing of fish. This will provide job opportunities for low-income domestic fishermen and women, increase their capacity and income, and facilitate exports.

To make the sector more vibrant and profitable, the Government will tackle the unregulated fishing by establishing a multi-year plan for robust fishery monitoring and surveillance systems. The Sustainable Fisheries Partnership agreement with the European Union will be expanded to attract other interested and capable partners. A medium-term business plan will be developed for the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Authority.

GOAL 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss



Liberia is home to globally significant forests and most of its people depend on them for their livelihoods. By 2023, Liberia will have effective institutions and systems in place for sustainable management and utilization of forest resources as well as the preservation of the environment for biodiversity.

The forestry sector contributed between 8-11 per cent of the real GDP from 2012 to 2017 and remains one of the major sources of income, employment, and livelihood in Liberia. The annual revenue generated by chainsaw milling alone is estimated at US\$31-41 million, or about 3-4 per cent of GDP. Approximately 24,000 workers are employed in the industry. The demand for charcoal continues to grow at approximately 4 per cent per year with a potential annual market value of about US\$25 million going largely to small producers. Commercial timber processing contributes about 10 per cent of GDP with an estimated annual value of US\$88 million in 2016.

The industry has performed below its potential due to a combination of poor infrastructure, complicated processes, poor data quality, limited downstream processing, and challenges from local communities for full benefits from the Forest Management (FMC) and Timber Sales (TSC) production contracts. The sector is faced with a high deforestation rate averaging 0.46 per cent per year⁵⁶ and the economic costs of forest depletion increased from 0.5 to 32 per cent as a share GNI between 2005 and 2015.

Furthermore, a combination of shifting cultivation practices, unregulated chainsaw milling, unregulated charcoal production for urban markets, encroachment by commercial and artisanal miners, and weak governance of forest resources hamper sustainable forest management. The lack of adequate logistics and technical skills also hinder the growth potential.

Nevertheless, considerable progress has been made since 2005 in reinforcing the capacity of the Forestry

Development Agency (FDA) and establishing the regulatory framework for sustainable forest management through the passage of the National Forestry Reform Law (NFRL) in 2006 and the Community Rights Law (CRL) in 2009. However, a combination of weak enforcement and institutional capacity at the FDA undermines the effort to raise productivity and manage forest resources in an environmentally sound and sustainable manner.

Liberia exported round logs worth US \$2.6 million in 2017, which is equivalent to 7,321 cubic meters of logs. The total value of exports is projected to rise to US\$12.1 million. Given the foregoing, the government will focus on the human and institutional capacity of the sector to enhance productivity and promote value addition in wood products. Emphasis will be placed on forest contract and concessional enforcement to promote the effective distribution of benefits via Community Benefit-Sharing Mechanism (CBSM), spur sustainable economic development, and empower communities living and working in the forest.

The government will improve the policy, legal and institutional framework for forestry management; strengthen its monitoring and law-enforcement capabilities, enhance the transparency of its operations, and bolster accountability in the overall governance of the forestry sector. Regulations on drivers of deforestation and environmental degradation will also be enforced.

The government will continue to implement forest products enterprise development policies for chainsaw and sawmill regulations, and for regulations on biomass and third-party access and abandoned logs. The government will support sustainable fuel-wood and charcoal production while creating alternatives for domestic energy sources and establish information dissemination and data management repository system. To reduce deforestation and environmental degradation, alternative livelihood for forest dependents and local communities will be created in select areas.

Currently, the government is working with a High-Level National Target to Increase the proportion of environmentally protected areas by 30%. Accordingly, the government has launched two National Parks: Grebo-Krahn National Protected area and the Gola National Park thereby increasing the total hectares of protected areas and national parks to 411,000. To support these environmentally protected areas, the first National Wildlife Confiscation and Anti-Poaching Unit was established to combat illicit trade in wildlife and wildlife parts. Also, 21,800 tree species were planted on 50 acres of degraded land in Foya, Lofa County to combat the spread of desert from the Guinean Savanna Belt. These interventions will ensure the preservation of Liberia's forests and protection of the unique wildlife that resides within them.

The aim is to increase the contribution of the forestry sector from 9% to 12% of real GDP by empowering communities and women's groups to derive sustainable livelihoods from and around forests and the ecosystem services they provide. The Forestry Development Authority has granted community forest status to fifteen (15) Communities which will now allow these communities to commence commercial logging operations on nearly 200,000 hectares of forest land over the next 15 years thereby creating jobs and improving the lives of forest-dependent people. Additionally, affected Communities have the right to all carryout biodiversity conservation practices with the guidance of the FDA. Seven sawmills have been registered with the Forestry Development Authority. In addition, the Forestry Development Authority officially took over the management of the Chain of Custody Operations from SGS (Société Générale de Surveillance), a contracted service provider, saving the Government of Liberia USD 700,000. These interventions will help increase forestry output and contribution to government revenue.

Natural resource management

The management of natural resources comes with risks as well as opportunities. There are opportunities to use the natural endowments to attract investment and promote greater economic development and

risks of political and social instability caused by the mismanagement of natural resources. Mining has been one of Liberia's major sources of real GDP. The sector has different categories of mining activities, including artisanal/small-scale miners (ASM), medium-size domestic enterprises, large-scale mining, and exploration companies.

There are approximately 1293 mining operations in the country, of which 1142 (88.3%) are ASM, 65 (5%) are medium size, 78 (6%) are exploration companies, and 8 (0.6%) are large-scale enterprises. The ASMs are also involved in the extraction of gold and diamond. However, the development of these operations is limited because of a lack of resources and infrastructure. Consequently, there is inadequate information available on the ASMs and medium-sized enterprises in detailing their processes and economic activities. Nevertheless, the compilation and research of this information is a necessary activity. The government is committed to improving the capacity for more effective management of the resources to produce wealth and generate revenues.

Liberia also has significantly high levels of species endemism and accounts for 42 percent of West Africa's remaining Upper Guinea Forest--a humid coastal rainforest belt and a global **Biodiversity Hotspot** that stretches across the other West African countries of Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Guinea. Liberia's forest ecosystems are home to the highest populations of elephants in the region and over 225 timber tree species, 2000 flowering plant species, 140 mammal species, 600 bird species, 75 amphibian and reptile species and over 1000 species of identified insects which must be conserved, utilized equitably and managed sustainably⁵⁸. A countless number of flora and fauna, which science has yet to discover, remains within the country's resource-rich and diversified ecosystems.

The **concessions model** used to exploit mineral resources has not yielded the expected dividends to communities. The export of raw materials, including the lack of relevant information on values for decision making by government institutions, expose Liberia to price distortion and puts communities at a disadvantage in the distribution of the benefits of their natural resources. The weak legal and regulatory framework, as well as intuitional oversight, lead to revenue loss for government and income loss for citizens who are doing artisanal mining.

Going forward, the government will encourage Corporate Social Investment with strong Local Content Development Framework and Strategy for local benefits, and Free Prior Informed Consent for **community engagement for all concessions to reduce/mitigate potential conflict**. The government will improve the management of natural resources and conservation of biodiversity for inclusive and sustainable development while generating lawful revenues for development. A major focus will be placed on the strengthening of regulatory mechanisms to provide **greater transparency and to cater to the welfare of small-scale miners while safeguarding the environment**. The government will establish a compliance monitoring Global Information System laboratory. A National Benefit Sharing and Conservation Trust Board and Fund will be established.

The government will also review and improve the regulatory system in compliance with mineral production strategies with an emphasis on strengthening small-scale mining to enable quality job opportunities and to build the capacity of vulnerable and unskilled extreme poor segments of the population to harness opportunities in the private sector for natural resources. Nevertheless, government will improve the enforcement of regulation on artisanal, small scale and large skill mining activities through robust monitoring; and review concessional agreements for compliance with laws and regulations especially those that benefit the local communities.

Government also intends to promote governance framework to implement **Sustainable Natural Resource Management (NRM)** through enhanced stakeholder's participation, cross sectorial cooperation, coordination, coherence and synergies on natural resource related issues at all levels through a natural resource governing committee. Through this framework, government will facilitate inter-sectorial

planning and coordination, MEAs, and climate change in national development programs, wetland, waste and disaster risk management, and promote the development of national Green Economy strategy.

To stabilize and improve the investment climate, especially around natural resource development, greater attention will be paid to economic governance reforms but also to improving social cohesion. By combining these efforts, strengthening local economic governance structures and improving local capacity to engage more effectively with investors and state institutions, the prospects for both greater stability and the sustainable management of Liberia's natural resources will improve.

To produce these outcomes, the government will mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance Sustainable Natural Resource Management (NRM) including but not limited to the enhancement of natural resource-based economy, as well as improving the livelihoods of natural resource-dependent communities.

GOAL 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels



Peace and Reconciliation are to promote a cohesive society for sustainable development. It focuses on ending fragility and addressing the root causes of conflict in promoting a cohesive society for sustainable development by increasing civic trust and coexistence, civil engagement, and satisfaction with state service delivery; and decreasing violent tendencies in Liberia to create a space for all positive cultures to thrive. This mechanism is being achieved based on Liberia's score on the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index in measuring performance.

This sector successfully established the Land Authority, Gender Unit on land issues at the Land Authority, and the passage of the Land Rights Act to promote access to land and human rights, land tenure security, land administration, and governance, and support inclusiveness and participation in local government planning, implementation and decision making. It conducted Peace/Palava Huts forums to foster togetherness in the fight of serious crimes against girls and women, particularly SGBV; strengthened County Peace Committees at district and county levels to promote social cohesion, peace and reconciliation among women group, youth group, elderly and traditional council to reduce conflicts; and conducted Peace and Reconciliation Dialogues and Civil War Memorial construction for promoting peace and reconciliation.

The sector also developed empowerment programs for youths and women to transform disadvantaged youths and women into productive citizens for the promotion of social cohesion, peace, and integration into their respective communities. Moreover, it developed a youth leadership program to empower young leaders to become future leaders and foster democracy that engenders social justice, transparency, integrity, gender equality and responsibility, and human social capital development in Liberia.

At the heart of its achievements, bad road conditions, limited coordination amongst ministries, agencies, and commissions to communicate and share development information, inadequate logistics combine with inadequate funding has been key constraints and have affected the implementation immensely. However, Development Partners including the EU, UNDP, USAID, WFP, FAO, ILO, OHCHR, UN Women, UN Peacebuilding Office, and others have greatly supported components of the sector's strategies and continue to assist in numerous forms.

The government has set itself an ambitious target of improving the rating of the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (SCORE) from 66% to 80%. This involved designing and implementing youth recovery and women's empowerment programs focused on entrepreneurship and social, cultural, and economic activities. The Government of Liberia in collaboration with Socio-Economic Empowerment of Disadvantaged Youth (SEED) designed and executed an empowerment program to transform the energy of disadvantaged youth into productive activities and influence behavior change for social cohesion and integration into their respective communities. The program considers three (3) phases: (1) Selection, Orientation and Rehabilitation (2) Capacity Building, Vocational Skills-training & Social Reintegration and (3) Job Creation. The program provided an opportunity for beneficiaries to be rehabilitated, acquired vocational skills to earn living, reintegrate into families and communities, and participate effectively in local conflict prevention mechanisms. The program established three (3) drop-in centers and strengthened the capacity to provide psycho-social, mental, and SRH services to 670 Zogos/Zogesse in Montserrado County. The centers have medically screened 1,319 persons who have benefited from the orientation sessions, 626 persons representing 93.4% of the 670 Zogos/Zogesse have received psychosocial support services of which 215 represented females and 411 represented males, and 223 persons representing 35.62% of 626 Zogos/Zogesse were enrolled in 6-month skills training program.

Also, 1,972 persons representing 394% above the target of 500 persons benefited from sexual and reproductive health services; including the distribution of 144,000 pieces of condoms while 169 persons received care for Malaria, Typhoid, Anaemia, Scabies, and Respiratory infections including tuberculosis. The program also reunited some of its beneficiaries with their families and communities. Some are presently working while 223 disadvantaged youth are attending vocational skills training. Some of the challenges encountered by the beneficiaries are the raiding of hide-outs/hotspots by Police and the Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency (LDEA) that caused beneficiaries to be constantly on the run, and the stock-out of essential drugs at all health facilities in the country; thereby negatively affecting drugs and supplies intended for the beneficiaries.

To improve the SCORE Index rating for Civic Trust and coexistence from 52% to 70% (disaggregated by county, gender), the government invested in restructuring Palava Hut/Peace Hut engagements to create awareness of national frameworks that are more appropriate for the resolution of serious crimes – particularly SGB. These engagements awareness created on national frameworks– particularly SGBV. The EU SGBV Spotlight Project under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSPP) conducted awareness on SGBV national frameworks in five counties: Grand Gedeh, Nimba, Montserrado, Lofa, and Cape Mount. SGBV Data was also collected by the Ministry in these counties.

Further, the government invested in using Palava Hut/ Peace Hut forums to create awareness of economic opportunities in line with the PAPD approach to “clustering economic development. The Rural Women Economic Empowerment Project under the MGCSP created awareness for economic opportunities for market women and is also conducting Saving Loan Association (SLA) and business development training for Market women in six counties: Maryland, Sinoe, Bong, River Gee, Lofa, and Montserrado. The Project is further giving loans to Rural Women to establish small businesses in targeted communities that will enhance their capacities to earn income for economic growth and sustainable development.

Towards peace and reconciliation, the government has invested in the construction and design of a Civil war memorial. In partnership with the Government of Liberia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Women (UN Women) supported the conduct of 42 peace & reconciliation dialogues across 7 counties building. Issues identified were placed into five categories: namely, Security and Rule of Law, Lack of Social Cohesion, Accountability, Violence against Women, and Economy Insecurity. These issues will be used to inform the development of each county reconciliation plan; the construction of 5 of 14 memorial sites that are underway – the five mass graves sites identified, title deeds obtained and sites validated; design of blueprints of the 5 memorials completed, and the redesign of Duport Road completed; supported the conduct of a National Economic Dialogue with peace and reconciliation as one of the themes. The outcome from the National Economic Dialogue on peace and reconciliation was the recommendation for establishing war and economic crimes court in Liberia as well as implementing the TRC report.

To promote social cohesion, the Government of Liberia in collaboration with CRS- USAID Connect for Peace (C4P) project is working closely with existing structures including County Peace committees- at the district and county levels to promote social cohesion, peace, and reconciliation among the women group, youth group, elderly and traditional council. This collaboration was successful in the conduct of training and deploying of 30 youth agents of peace in the 15 counties to carry out peer education on peace and reconciliation issues.

The GOL has successfully resolved, through efforts of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Peacebuilding Office, land disputes in Lofa, Gbarpolu, Bong, Rivercess, and Sinoe Counties. The resolved disputes include:

- An 82-year old boundary land dispute involving Sarmodu in Quagboni District in Lofa
- Two land boundary disputes and harmonization dialogues successfully held between Fuamah District in Bong and residents of Jungle James Camp in Gbarpolu Counties
- Land boundary disputes between the residents of Gee-troh Chiefdom in Rivercess and Sanquie District in Sinoe Counties

Towards an increased public understanding of the Criminal Conveyance law, land rights, and administrative policies, the Ministry of Internal Affairs through the Peacebuilding Office in collaboration with other stakeholders have developed three policy briefs on Constructive Citizenship, Good Governance, and Violence Tendencies in efforts to reduce violent tendencies in Liberia.

Towards strengthening and increasing the use of the Early Warning System the Ministry of Internal Affairs has established the Liberia Early Warning and Response Network (LERN) Platform. This functions as an Early Warning System with Early Warning Working Groups and the deployment of 119 reporters across the country. The network has also offered the capacity building for the County Peace Committees through the provision of training in information gathering and reporting and the provision of scratch cards and stipends to at least 3 persons in each district.

Towards youth recovery and women's empowerment programs focused on entrepreneurship and social, cultural, and economic activities, the government conducted inclusive Civic and Political Participation for Disability and women's groups. The Ministry of Internal Affairs through its Peacebuilding Office in collaboration with the Irish Aid Project, through its implementing partner ZOA, conducted a program for Inclusive Civic and Political Participation for the Disabled and Women's Groups in Grand Cape Mount and Margibi Counties. This program aimed at integrating women and disabled into political systems through civic education.

Rule of law and Access to justice

The Justice sector including Human Rights institutions aims to work for all including the poor and most marginalized are incorporated in the national ownership of access to the justice and rule of law initiatives. It functions through the Justice System and ascribes to national policies concerned with justice and human rights and ensures that justice, human rights, and the rule of law prevail for all in the society.

Major challenges in strengthening rule of law in Liberia continue to be poor public confidence in the justice system and lack of equality before the law, which also fuels petty corruption at all levels in the justice chain. Also, scarce financial resources, weak administrative procedures, and human capacity deficits, are also important impediments. According to MFDP in Liberia, the national budget allocation for the justice and security sectors dropped from US\$ 94.9 million in 2016/17 to US\$ 83.9 million in 2017/18. Almost three-quarters of the total budget (71 per cent) for justice and security are spent on salaries. Liberia has a dual legal system in which both customary and statutory laws are formally recognized by the national legislation. The large majority of Liberians, especially in rural areas, never come in touch with the formal justice system. Finally, improved rule of law and access to justice are highly dependent on the decentralization of services related to justice and security. The implementation of the portfolio in terms of rule of law is limited by the lack of progress, as well as political will, in decentralization reforms.

This sector has managed to contribute to the increment of adjudication rate, reduction of pre-trial detainees, access to justice, the effectiveness of court management and coordination system, increase access to human rights, and confidence in the justice system. Between January 2018 and June 2019, 63.28% of cases were adjudicated. This represents 13.28% incremental rate adjudicated thus far due to the support to the court system with the deployment of 6 public defenders and 116 magistrates in the justice system. The rollout of court inspectorate offices, the development of practical guidelines on legal reform and parliamentary oversight, the production of a final mapping exercise of the security sector coupled with the completed construction of the 7th and 8th Judicial Circuit Courts, training of formal and informal justice actors have all contributed to the increment of the adjudication rate.

The sector was also successful with the passage of the Land Rights and Local Government Acts, which sets the foundation for citizens' access to land rights, human rights, and basic social services, and be decision-makers in the management of their land resources and to benefit from its proceeds and also creates an opportunity for inclusiveness and participation into local administration. Moreover, it reviewed existing policies and ensures the rational enactment of set policies to improve service delivery in the justice system while ensuring that the benefits of justice encompass the poor and vulnerable as equally as the rest of the society.

The Court System of Liberia adjudicated a total of 14,647 cases out of 23,146 cases on the docket from January 2018 –June 2019. This accounts for an adjudication rate of 63.28% in both the Normal Court System and the Magistrate Sitting Program and also represents 13.28% incremental rate. In 2018, 9,744 cases were adjudicated in the Normal Court System representing 64.16% of the 15,188 cases recorded on the docket. 5,080 cases representing 33.45% were pending while 364 cases representing 2.39% requested

appeal. Additionally, fast-tracked cases on the Magistrate Sitting Program accounted for 595 cases of which 528 were adjudicated representing 88.74% and 3 were transferred representing 0.50%. 64 fast-tracked cases remain pending representing 10.76%.

The govt aims to increase public satisfaction with the quality of a judicial system or rule of law available to their household from 69.1% to 85% by increasing the number and capacity of public prosecutors, judges, public defenders, legal aid practitioners, corrections officials, and social workers; increasing the gender composition of the personnel. The Government has increased access to justice through the Judiciary with support from the Swedish Government through the UNDP recruited, trained, and deployed six (6) additional Public Defenders (PDs) and provided initial six (6) months salaries covering June – November 2019. This achievement has brought the number of PDs to 41 out of the required 152 PDs needed across the court system throughout the 15 counties of Liberia, which represents 27% progress. To date, out of the 41 PDs deployed, 14 counties now have 2 PDs each of which total 28 while Montserrado accounts for 13 PDs due to the high caseload. The sustenance of salary payments for the newly assigned 6 PDs will be done through the GOL's budgetary allocations as of December 2019.

The Government through the Judiciary has also successfully deployed 116 Magistrate through its Judicial Institute. These Magistrates are receiving allowances while awaiting placement on GOL Payroll. Additionally, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) procured and delivered two vehicles and six motorbikes to the Judiciary to enhance mobility and transportation needs of the judges and public defenders.

The President, through nominations from the Judiciary, has appointed 2 Judges for the newly established Court E in Bong and Nimba Counties. The requisite staff of approximately 20 personnel have also been hired to support the appointed judges. It has been agreed that the UNDP will fund the first six months salaries of both the judges and their requisite staff for the first six months while the sustenance thereof will be done through GOL budgetary allocations.

In collaboration with the Government of Liberia with support from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Women (UN Women) enhanced the capacity of oversight bodies of relevant committees and legislative drafting bureau of the Liberian Legislature and Law Reform Commission with the relevant tools on human rights-based legal review and law drafting in discharging their mandates to ensure proposed laws, policies and bills are gender-sensitive and conform to human rights standards and to address triggers of conflict through appropriate legislation to sustain the peace. As a result, a draft practical guideline on legal reform and parliamentary oversight was developed and submitted to DCAF for review and inputs.

Finally, the final mapping exercise of main security sector oversight actors interacting with the committees on security in the National Legislature was produced pending finalization for printing, publication, and dissemination to the security-related committees of the 54th Legislature.

The renovation and expansion work of the 15th Judicial Circuit Court in River Gee County is ongoing with renovation progress at 50% completed while the expansion is pending awaiting the completion of the renovation. Bad road condition as a result of the rainy season has contributed to the interruption in completing the renovation works couple with delay in funding. The 8th Judiciary Circuit Court in Nimba County has established the SGBV Court with the completion of construction, furnishing and equipping of Court E. The 9th Judiciary Circuit Court in Bong County has resolved to use a portion of the Administrative Building to accommodate the establishment of the SGBV Court. These courts will increase access to justice for survivors of rape and other domestic violence.

In partnership with the Government of Liberia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported improving the availability,

accessibility, and appropriateness of justice, security and protection services for women and girls, by sustainably enhancing the investigation and prosecution capacity of the Women and Children Protection Section (WACPS) and the SGBV Crimes Prosecution Unit, but also paving the way for the establishment of additional divisions of Criminal Court E in Bong and Nimba counties. 19 cases were assigned to Criminal Court E, 13 were tried and convictions secured.

The Judiciary Strategic Plan has been drafted pending funding for validation. UNDP and OHCHR supported the development of an integrated five-year strategic plan for the Liberia National Police (LNP), Liberia Immigration Service (LIS), and National Security Council (NSC) by hiring a national consultant who worked closely with the three security agencies. The costed five-year integrated strategic plan provided strategic directions and implementation frameworks for the LNP, LIS, and NSC in the implementation of the new LNP and LIS Acts (2016) and Regulations and Administrative Instructions. In addition, the program reinforced the role of the security councils at county and district levels, including by supporting the deployment of 15 liaison officers and strengthening their linkages with the National Security Council, as well as the ECOWAS Early Warning Office.

Amid all the anticipated system structuring and functioning, bad road conditions, inadequate logistics, short term of court to adjudicate cases on the docket coupled with inadequate funding have been key constraints and have affected the implementation hugely. However, Donor Partners including the UNDP, Swedish Government, and others have immensely supported components of the sector's strategies and continue to assist in numerous forms. Assurances and initiatives provided by the Partners are expected to be undertaken for sustenance by the government.

Police and security of citizens

The Security and National Defence is to provide security forces that are more professional and responsive to the needs of all. It focuses on ensuring that security services are available nationwide including to the most vulnerable people and in the hardest to reach areas. It also aims to ensure that security forces remain professional and responsive to the needs of the Liberian people.

This sector successfully established Security Council Offices in 14 counties and reactivated County and District Security Councils to enhance operationalization for robust and stronger community engagement across the country. It established Community Policing and strengthened Security Sector Radio Communication Network at the county level. The sector also trained 53 security sector actors from the Liberia National Police (LNP) and the Liberia Immigration Services (LIS) in Curriculum Development and Fire Safety and completed the review of LIS Gender Policy for Equal Opportunities to address gender issues and promote gender equality for all. It provided several additional training including training for Liberia Drug Enforcement Agency (LDEA) interacting with drug-users/abusers, Global e-Learning IT training, and Motor Vehicle Safety Investigative training for the Liberia National Police (LNP), and other specialized training for 773 security sector personnel.

The Security Sector developed a five-year strategic plan for the Liberia National Police (LNP), the Liberia Immigration Services (LIS), and the National Security Council (NSC) to implement its strategic objectives for effective and efficient delivery of services. Moreover, it established the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) to address complaints emanating from civilians in support of the sector; reactivated Policy Management Board, and strengthened the Civilian Oversight Mechanism of LNP and LIS; amended National Security Strategy; and established LIS Small Arms Control Unit.

In the core of its achievements, inadequate budgetary support, limited personnel capacity, and capacity building, limited salary, bad road condition, centralization of security services combine with inadequate logistics have been key constraints and have affected the implementation enormously. However, Development Partners including the UNDP, UNHCR, OHCHR, UN Women, WFP, ILO, UN Peacebuilding

Office, and others have greatly supported components of the sector's strategies and continue to assist in numerous forms.

Towards operationalizing National Defence Act, Liberia National Police Act, Liberia Immigration Service Act; Operationalizing a civil oversight board for each security sector, the Liberia National Police (LNP) and The Liberia Immigration Services (LIS) have prepared 14 Administrative Instructions (7 for LNP and 7 for LIS) through the Security Sector legal/law reform program with intentions to enhance the operation and service delivery of the sector. These administrative instructions have been published and signed by the President of Liberia awaiting instructions to be printed into pocket-size manuals for officers of both paramilitary institutions.

The government aims to reduce crimes by increasing numbers and capacity of community police and maintaining a gender balance in the membership. Towards this training have been provided to 53 security sector actors from LNFS and LNP and completed the review of the Gender Policy for Equal Opportunities by the Liberia Immigration Services (LIS). The Liberia Immigration Services (LIS) has completed the review of its Gender Policy for Equal Opportunities, which will address gender issues and promote gender equality for all.

The GOL established Security Council Offices in 14 counties and reactivated the County and District Security Councils to enhance the operationalization for robust and stronger community engagement across Liberia. The Liberia National Police, working closely with communities, established the Community Policing at the county level to alert them on criminal movement within their communities, which has significantly reduced crime rate nationwide.

The Security Sector in support of the decentralization process strengthened the Security Sector Radio Communication Network at the County level. In continuation of the security sector relationship to its citizens, the conduct of vehicular and foot patrol within the major streets of Monrovia and its environs remains a high priority to ensure safety.

West Africa Police Information System-Interpol training was conducted in March 2019 for Liberia National Police (LNP) personnel to strengthen their capacity. Vigorous crackdown and arrest have been made for notorious arm robbers and drug dealers as a result of training. They have been investigated, charged, and prosecuted.

To improve public satisfaction with their protection against crime/ their safety (% of people satisfied and very satisfied disaggregated by county, gender) from 69.4% to 85%, the govt aims to increase the percentage of women recruited into the security sector. Accordingly, the govt recruited, trained, and placed 30% female in decision making positions at the Liberia Immigration Services (LIS), balance 20% of female recruitment pending due to funding. The Public Safety Bill, Bureau of Correction Bill, Fire Service Bill were passed. The govt is drafting and enacting law for the medical examiner office and reviewing and domesticating Arms-Trade Treaty.

The Security Sector has established the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) to address complaints emanating from civilians in support of the sector. Towards protecting the rights of women and girls, the govt is developing and implementing a positive communications campaign, increasing the number of women recruited, and equipping security sector personnel with the necessary skills. This is being done by conducting Global e-learning IT training for LNP

Inclusive and transparent governance

Towards more effective and inclusive state institutions conformed to the values, codes, and standards contained in the key instruments of the African Union pertinent to governance on the continent (APRM,

Abuja Declaration 2003), the government is endeavoring to make sure that state institutions conform to the values, codes, and standards in the key instrument of the African Union pertinent to governance on the continent. To build a more inclusive nation and a more capable state, the government has decided to promote a positive change in attitude by fostering the full participation of citizens in national affairs and nurturing inspirational leadership across all levels of society. Key strategies for success, on the part of the government, include the ongoing improvement in accountability in the public sector, putting in place an enabling legal and regulatory framework that is driving private sector growth, strengthening existing fiscal instruments and increasing local government and citizens' participation in local administration through fiscal and administrative de-concentration. Internal reports are also pointing into similar direction; according to a 2018 BTI Country Report on Liberia, the nation was ranked 37 out of 129 countries on governance index (a score of 5.84), and 41 on political transition (a score of 6.55)¹²

The on-going exercise for the creation of a Civil Service Commission (CSC) with more levels of independence intends put in place user-friendly e-governance across all MACs that will support record management, Personnel Action Notices (PAN) processing, performance appraisals, regular citizen survey, and civil service testing. The CSA has put in mechanisms to further clean the CSM system in preparation for the management of the one payment system for the Government of Liberia. Also, there has been a payroll audit conducted by GAC and the CSA looks forward to implementing recommendations and to ensure that its biometric ID Cards continue to be a check and balance payroll cleaning tool.

Towards building and piloting a Citizen Feedback Mechanism (CFM), the Government of Liberia through the office of the Cabinet Secretariat is conducting a national wide training on the use of an online platform that will improve service delivery by compiling, analyzing, and responding to Citizens' perceptions of public services standards in 5 pilot County Service Centres (CSCs)-Nimba, Bomi, Grand Bassa, Sinoe, Grand Gedeh. The system aimed at building capacity for effective management, oversight, monitoring, and evaluation of the citizen feedback mechanism developing and sharing knowledge within the region on Liberia's experiences. The CFM is a national mobile and online platform for direct, (near) real-time exchange between the citizens and the government of Liberia on the delivery of public services. Through the CFM, citizens will share their concerns and experiences regarding the delivery of public services with Liberian Government Ministries, Agencies, or Commissions (MACS), and receive relevant timely feedback and redress from these entities.

The Government of Liberia commits to working with its partners on enhancements to the National Biometric Registry (NBR). NBR interventions can, directly and indirectly, support other key sectors of government in critical areas. Some of the key benefits of meeting the NBR benchmarks will be supported by the CSA, MOA, and the MFDP in minimizing payroll padding and human resource interventions in the MACs. To date, only 22,312 representing 0.5% of the current population have been inputted in the National Biometric database. The NBR will require more funding, institutional and manpower development, and infrastructure to meet its target of 50% inputs by 2023.

An effective ICT platform and the biometric system can also support the National Election Commission around Election reforms concerning improved data integrity and removal of anomalies in data collection. A fully deployed National Identification Registry (NIR) can help reduce the likelihood of duplicate or triplicate data registration and other election irregularities which is a source of Conflict. The single window used to process multiple requests is inadequate for the range of services that may include driver licensing, vehicle registration, marriage licenses, birth registrations, business registration, etc.

The govt aims to increase citizens' and residents' registration in the national biometric database from 0.5% (22,312) to 50% by establishing, maintaining, administering, and implementing the National Biometric Identification System (NBIR). The government is fully aware that, to make the states more capable, e-governance must play a central role. To this end, the National Identification Registry (NIR) is undertaking a payroll cleaning-up and biometric information for all public servants. Currently, the following have been achieved:

- Over 65,000 government employees from 110 MACs enrolled
- Over 160,000 citizens enrolled
- Foreign resident ID issuance launched
- Now enrolling in all fifteen counties and six locations in Monrovia
- Mass public awareness commenced

Towards improved overall service delivery and wage bill management in the Public Sector through an established Civil Service Commission (CSCm), the government seeks to complete the public-sector modernization project to standardize civil service employment, clean payrolls, and review mandates and functions across the public sector. Additionally, this intervention will seek to improve competitiveness and equity in the civil service pay levels and ensure incentive-based rewards in response to performance and productivity. In the wake of Government commitment to strengthen public sector effectiveness, she has embarked on interventions seeking to improve competitiveness and equity in the civil service pay levels and to ensure incentive-based rewards in response to performance and productivity. In so doing, a harmonization process was introduced. The wage bill team clearly defined the grading system in three categories with the CSA grading as a guide: generic, health, and education. Education and health got a distinct grading system because they are paid according to qualifications while the remaining ministries, agencies, and commissions (MACs) are generic and are paid according to positions. It is worth noting, however, that local government officials specifically town chief, clan chief, paramount chief, tribal governors, and mayors, are also given unique grading to distinguish them from the generic grades. Executives are presidential appointees.

The generic is broken down in four categories: Technical Administrative Support (TAS) 1-4, Professional (P) 1-4, Director (D) 1-2 (Assistant, Deputy & Director proper) and Executive (E)1-3 presidential appointees which consist of chairmen, commissioners, executive directors, assistant superintendents, assistant ministers, superintendents, deputy ministers, and minister proper. Health grades (HE1-HE10) ranges from a dresser to specialize doctors while education runs from (TE1-TE5) high school to masters. There is also a breakdown of the education grades to accommodate community colleges, technical institutions, teacher training institutions, and universities. It was essential to so because we believe the grading should be holistic.

To achieve all of the above, a circular from the Chief Executive was issued instructing all spending entities to submit their personnel listings as per the format sent to them by the wage will committee through the MFDP by email to avoid any form of manipulation. The spending entities consist of **107** MACs with an estimated number of **66,538** staff. Additionally, the National Identification Registry Identification Numbers are being used by the GoL in helping to solve the issues of ghost

Henceforth, the Government has completed the Harmonization process and produced a fact sheet that can be used as a reference point. Beginning July 1, 2019, all Public/Civil Servants began to receive harmonized salaries according to schedule and a One Pay system was achieved. This one pay system represents phase II of the Pay Reform process with Phase I been the work done in previous years to set up a policy on Grading and Classification, Job Description, etc. Phase III will require a roadmap which furthers clean the payroll by removing Pensioners from the active payroll, regularizing the status of employees in Civil Service Positions according to the CSA Standing orders and central management of Payroll and personnel records and employment services as a control to the wage bill. As the CSA becomes

a Commission, the Government can sustain its hiring and wage bill controls.

A total of about 66,538 persons are currently on the central government payroll. 85% of the employees mainly teachers, health workers, security officers, etc. were protected from downward adjustments, while 27% of the 56,338 (the protected value) got pay increase since July 2019 at the same time 15% got affected by the downward adjustment. Please see the fact sheet below for detail.

Anti-corruption efforts

The government is working closely with partners in strengthening anti-corruption instruments that include the National Code of Conduct, the passage of the Corrupt Offense and the Whistle-blower Acts, the possible development of a fast-track corruption court, and increasing the functional mandates of the LACC to have direct prosecutorial powers. The Government will build the capacity of LEITI, NBC, and other anti-graft institutions to monitor forest management and agricultural concessions as well as mineral development concessions and fisheries.

As a commitment to reducing corruption, the government will strengthen transparency institutions. Moreover, the government commits to implementing the following anti-corruption measures to increase its corruption perception index:

1. Periodic audits of all government institutions and full implementation of all recommendations to strengthen controls and reduce corruption.
2. Utilization of e-procurement to improve efficiencies, foster transparency, reduce recurring costs, and automate processes.
3. Mandate review of the LACC to give direct prosecutorial power to quickly investigate and prosecute corruption cases
4. Establishment of a fast-track anti-corruption court to speedily prosecute corruption cases.
5. Passage of the Whistle-blower Protection Act to encourage more Liberians to freely report issues of corruption.
6. Full implementation of the Code of Conduct including Ombudsman for enforcement.
7. Full implementation of the Freedom of Information Law (FOI) for openness in government processes relating to budgeting, procurement, and expenditure.

Some of the policy measures under this sector is ensuring the completion of audits and implementation of these audit recommendations to deter corrupt and other fraudulent practices. Additionally, violators are investigated, prosecuted, and public officials are prevented from corruption.

Liberia's score on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index dropped from 37 out of 100 in 2016, to 32 in 2018 (Transparency International 2018). In comparison to 2015, the overall bribery rate dropped from 69% to 53% in 2019. More people felt that the government was doing a good job of fighting corruption (40% in 2019 compared to 18% in 2015), and more people felt that they could make a difference in the fight against corruption (52% in 2019 compared to 43% in 2015). To ensure conformity, the government has made improvements on the anti-corruption indicators which include free speech, independent media, political dissent, open and engaged civil society, and openness in government budgeting, and public procurement.

Towards increasing the total number of cases persecuted by LACC, through MoJ from 6 to 30, the govt mandated a review of the LACC to give direct prosecutorial power to quickly investigate and prosecute corruption cases; Programs around the establishment of a fast-track anti-corruption court to speedily prosecute corruption cases; program around encouraging more Liberians to freely report issues of corruption. The achievements in strengthening anti-corruption and integrity institutions can be seen clearly from the unprecedented increase in the number of corruption cases investigated and completed

by the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC); as well as the increased in the number of convictions and prosecution of corruption cases.

In this regard, the govt aims to increase internal audit presence in government from 85% to 99% by strengthening the IAA to expand internal audits in all 107 MACs and through capacity building of more internal audit staff for effective audits and reporting. Issues relating to accountability has been hallmarking for this government. As part of such efforts, several interventions have been made towards internally auditing various MACs in order to sew a seed of sanity. Amongst them, the following has sufficed:

- A Baseline Training was offered for new staff (especially auditors to be assigned at various MACs): Eighty-seven (87) new staff/auditors were trained by in-house senior managers on various topics of audit and compliance. The training also focused on the ten key priorities of the IAA, to include payroll and personnel management
- The Internal Audit Agency (IAA) Training Department conducted a one-day intensive leadership training for Departmental Heads, Sector Directors, and Directors of the Agency. The objective of the training was to explore important leadership theories & styles and their inherent strengths and weaknesses. The presentation examined situations and contexts that may require the application of leadership styles. Participants were also exposed to styles that the leadership literature has found to be most effective in leading organizations and teams or addressing organizational problems
- A Consultant was hired through a competitive process to conduct training for Fifty auditors in preparation for the Certified Internal Auditor Examination. The training was funded by the AFDB under the IPFRMR II. Examinations are still pending due to payment arrangements being made by the Project office at the Ministry of Finance and Development planning
- A consultant was also hired to conduct the Certified Government Auditing Professional Training for Twenty (20) auditors. Because of the overwhelming expression of interest, Forty-five (45) auditors benefited from the intensive two weeks training. The objective of the training was to prepare senior and junior internal auditors to sit and pass the online Certified Government Auditing Professional exam. Internationally recognized, the CGAP training will develop the knowledge, acumen, and leadership ability of these auditors and demonstrate IAA's strong commitment to professionalism in the practice of internal auditing in Government. The auditors were unable to sit the examination because the examination is not available now. The consultant certificated the Forty-five (45) auditors who were trained. The training was funded by the UNDP under the Strengthening National Capacities for Development Effectiveness (C4DE) Project at the MFD
- An Effective Report Writing Training was conducted by the Agency to review tips for writing clear and succinct audit reports. The auditors were trained on conveying messages in reports that are quickly understood to be discussed. This training was conducted for all Sector Directors, Directors, Audit Supervisors, Audit Managers, Senior and Junior auditors, and Heads of Agencies.

To enhance transparency in public procurement, the govt aims to establish an e-procurement system, linked to IFMIS, deployed to 50 MACs. To enhance openness and adherence to the PPCC processes, make procurement more accessible to Liberian business and individuals providing goods, works, and services, the aims are to simplify and streamline of the procurement process. To promote e-governance to improve business processes and productivity, an IT Consultancy Firm is to be hired to design and build an e-procurement platform and conduct e-procurement training and study tours to 3 countries to observe and learn about the workings of the established e-procurement systems. To date, the Public Procurement and Concessions Commission (PPCC) has completed the TOR of the Consultancy Firm, Scope of Service as well as qualification requirements to be included in the REOI documents for the selection of a shortlist of

consultants to participate in the submission of proposals for the development and design of a national public, e-procurement platform. The Commission has received funding from the African Development Bank to visit Rwanda, the Republic of Georgia, and Botswana for study tours to these countries and to learn from their experiences using e-procurement. During these visits, a team of 3 PPCC staff are expected to participate in one-week e-procurement training in Kigali to expand their knowledge in this new IT and internet technology soon to be introduced in Liberia. At least 15 staff of the Commission are expected to participate in total.

Additionally, the process is underway to source consultants to amend and upgrade the PPCA 2010 and accompanied Regulations regarding the Commission's desire to migrate to electronic procurement. To date, the Commission has on November 8, 2019, launched the monitoring of 100 public and subsidized entities 2019/2020 procurement processes; also, at least 4 large spending procurement entities 2018/2019 fiscal year activities will be reviewed beginning November 2019 up to February 2020 with UNDP and GOL support.

Besides, the PPCC along with the LACC has Conducted orientation procurement/anti-corruption training and awareness for over 150 new county administrators and institutions using GOL's funding to procure goods, works, and services in 2019. Furthermore, training with the private sector has been held for 150 Liberian-owned as well as foreign-owned businesses registered in Liberia to enhance their efficiency and create awareness on their rights in the public procurement sector.

Compliance with International, Regional, and National Human Rights

Protection for human rights is enshrined within the Liberian Constitution. Articles 5 through 21 provide for the protection of civil and political rights including liberty and freedom from discrimination, torture, and slavery. The rights to a fair trial, freedom of thought, expression, religion, assembly, movement, privacy, family, and equal opportunity to work are also protected by the Constitution.

Although Liberia has had a chequered history regarding the promotion of Human Rights, the nation is a founding member of the United Nations and signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Consequently, since 1966, Liberia has signed and ratified almost all human rights treaties. In recent times, several steps have been taken to promote and protect human rights. Most of these actions have been at the legal and policy level and aimed at promoting public awareness of human rights. At the policy level, the government has ratified several international treaties, conventions and optional protocols and has also domesticated a few including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2012. The National Commission on Disabilities (NCD) has been designated as the Secretariat for the CRPD and is responsible for leading the treaty reporting and implementation processes for the CRPD. In 2013, the Government also adopted a national strategy on the implementation of the CRPD. Liberia signed the Optional Protocol to the CRPD and favorably considers its ratification.

Human rights monitoring, and investigation capabilities, have also been strengthened and country reports have been submitted to the Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review (second circle) covering the period 2010 – 2014, the CEDAW, and the CRC. Regarding the rights of children, the Children's Law was passed in 2011 enshrining the rights of children to be protected from involvement in armed conflicts and violence, sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation, and harmful work in line with the Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Additionally, in 2014, Liberia also launched its Five-Year National Action Plan in the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings and established a National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force co-chaired by the Ministries of Labour and Justice. Furthermore, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare has placed a

moratorium on international adoptions due to concerns about the trafficking of children and has submitted a proposed Child Adoption Act to the Legislature to improve the regulation of international adoptions

Regarding awareness-raising, the Independent National Commission on Human Rights has conducted several training initiatives in human rights for the rule of law and security officials, aimed to improve the protection of human rights in the execution of their work. INRC also conducted public awareness campaigns and education initiatives, targeting traditional leaders and elders, on harmful traditional practices.

Liberia's commitment to human rights is captured in the National Human Rights Action Plan, which aims to guide all Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions on their role in protecting and promoting human rights. However, policy and legal reform are not enough for the effective protection and promotion of human rights.

Several constraints hinder the full enjoyment of human rights provided for under the law. Weakness within the administration of justice has led to excessive pre-trial detention and poor prison conditions. Likewise, limited knowledge amongst duty-bearers and rights-holders about human rights has led to reduced accountability for the promotion and protection of rights. This situation is further exacerbated by harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), trial by ordeal, and accusation of witchcraft, which continue to be practiced contravening human rights protection under the law

Children's Rights: Trafficking of children continues to be a concern and related laws are not properly enforced. Impoverished and vulnerable children from rural Liberia continue to be trafficked to cities and are often severely exploited. Although the parents of these children are enticed by the promise of better education and livelihood, once in the city, children are usually not allowed to enroll in schools. Instead, they are engaged in street selling, and other forms of exploitation, including commercial sexual exploitation.

Women's rights: Although article 11 of the Constitution of Liberia guarantees fundamental rights and freedoms for all, irrespective of sex, the institutional and legal framework for the protection of women's rights is lacking. There is no explicit definition of gender discrimination in either the Constitution or Liberian legislation. Liberia has also not ratified the Optional Protocol on Violence Against Women. The progress report on the implementation of the National Gender Policy highlights the low quality of service provided by legal institutions (including for survivors of GBV), the under-representation of women in the justice sector, corruption, and the lack of protection of the rights of women. Liberia's SCORE index ratings show that tendencies towards sexual and gender-based violence are concerning.

The rights of persons living with disabilities: Although the National Legislature ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2012, persons living with disabilities continue to experience discrimination. Primary, senior secondary, and tertiary institutions do not have the necessary infrastructure to accommodate persons with physical or mental disabilities. Health facilities are also often ill-equipped to deal with special needs.

There is very limited protection for socio-economic rights: Access to health services remains a challenge especially in rural communities and for patients with special needs including vulnerable or marginalized groups. Health facilities are still a distance away from many communities and road conditions have further compounded the problem. Education is not readily available and accessible for all. The quality of education is often dependent on one's finances with privately owned schools providing higher quality

education than state institutions on average. The right to housing is under threat due to land grabbing and environmental degradation such as coastal erosion and flooding. All interventions will emphasize the human rights approach to sustainable development. To build a peaceful, stable, resilient, and inclusive nation embracing our triple heritage and anchored on our identity as Africans is dependent upon the protection and promotion of the full spectrum of civil, political, social, economic, and cultural rights. Providing some form of income security to an additional one million Liberians over the next six years through sustained and inclusive growth is dependent on the enjoyment of socio-economic rights.

The government aims to improve Liberia's compliance with International, Regional and National Human Rights obligations and reporting on implementation by 80% by drafting and implementing a new and costed Human Rights Action Plan (2019-2023) to outline new government priorities and ensure better coordination between duty-bearers on their roles in the multi-sectoral approach to protecting and promoting human rights. A National Human Rights Action Plan was developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, Governance Commission and Independent National Human Rights Commission with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to ensure adherence to international human rights standards, promotion of human rights, coordination, and implementation through the multi-sectoral approach. An evaluation of the plan has been conducted and a report of evaluation has been submitted to Geneva in support of obtaining the approval of the plan.

The Land Rights and Local Government Acts were passed into law to provide a unique opportunity for all citizens including women, youth, disadvantaged and vulnerable people to have access to land rights, human rights, and basic social services, and be decision-makers in the management of their land resources and to benefit from its proceeds. Also, they provide a distinct breakthrough for increasing local government and citizens' inclusiveness and participation in local administration through fiscal and administrative de-concentration. The Local Government Act provides the legal regulatory framework for decentralization and local governance reform in Liberia. The Land Rights Act is being implemented by the Land Commission while the Local Government Act is being implemented through the Liberia Decentralization Support Program (LDSP) in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

In partnership with the Government of Liberia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Women (UN Women) enhanced the capacity of INCHR, TJWG, and CSO at National and Subnational level for the implementation of the TRC recommendations through the establishment of a Transitional Justice Unit at the INCHR to monitor and report on transitional justice issues and concerns; reactivated the Transitional Justice Working Group (TJWG); conducted Law Reform retreat which identified four bills, including Witness Protection, Whistle-Blowers, Affirmative Action and FGM Bills, for advocacy; a trained pool of women on CEDAW legal review and law drafting, which have outlined a proposed Legal Aid Bill and an Anti-Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Bill to lobby Lawmakers for buy-in. Advocacy plans have also been developed to influence these Bills. All of these will support the creation of a platform for seeking redress to outstanding transitional justice grievances & opportunity to repair and restore broken relationships at the community and national levels, as well as address the structural and systemic gaps in the PALAVA Hut program.

In partnership with the Government of Liberia, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported twenty-six (26) local CSOs/CBOs to raise legal awareness, provide legal aid and assistance, build the capacity of both formal and informal justice actors, and to actively monitor the performance of the various justice and security institutions in the counties. As a result, twenty-one (21) victims/survivors of SGBV have pushed their cases

through the justice system, including through the provision of legal aid services to 518 pre-trial detainees at police and prisons. Also, 628 monitoring visits were made to justice and security institutions in the counties.

The Government of Liberia in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Women (UN Women) supported the conduct of a national colloquium to raise awareness and galvanize civil society to campaign for the implementation of the TRC recommendations including the establishment of War and Economic Crimes Courts; supported the Liberia National Bar Association to draft Bill for the establishment of war and economic crimes; supported the conduct of 42 peace & reconciliation dialogues across 7 counties building. Issues identified were placed into five categories: namely, Security and Rule of Law, Lack of Social Cohesion, Accountability, Violence against Women, and Economy Insecurity. These issues will be used to inform the development of each county reconciliation plan; the construction of 5 of 14 memorial sites that are underway – the five mass graves sites identified, title deeds obtained and sites validated; design of blueprints of the 5 memorials completed, and the redesign of Duport Road completed and supported the conduct of a National Economic Dialogue with peace and reconciliation as one of the themes. The outcome from the National Economic Dialogue on peace and reconciliation was the recommendation for establishing war and economic crimes court in Liberia as well as implementing the TRC report.

The INHRC has successfully deployed 15 monitors in the 15 counties across to convey human rights messages and monitor activities concerning human rights. They are to also report on human rights issues to enhance the reporting mechanisms required for meeting international human rights standards. The INHRC has prepared, validated, and submitted Liberia's Report on Human Rights to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) to ensure compliance with international human rights standards and obligations and is expected to make full representation at the 3rd UPR Cycle in May 2020.

Illicit arms

Trafficking of weapons and ammunition, primarily for hunting purposes and illicit mining activities, is ongoing. Despite the lifting of the arms embargo in May, the country lacks an adequate legal framework or means to register and track weapons and ammunition. There have, however, been recent steps to address this, including the passage of the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act (FACA) by the Legislature on 17 May 2016, bringing Liberia a step closer to the operationalization of the 2008 ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons

The Liberia National Police (LNP) and the Liberia Immigration Services (LIS) have reactivated the Policy Management Board and Civilian Oversight Mechanism at both security agencies. National Security Strategy amended and awaiting approval by the President of the Republic of Liberia. The Liberia Immigration Services has established the LIS Small Arms Control Unit.

Detainees without trial

The Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation (BCR) has implemented the rehabilitation of prison infrastructure at the Bomi Prison Facility (roof rehabilitation), the Grand Cape Mount Prison Facility (rehabilitation of two (2) cell blocks for female inmates and provision of safe drinking water), and the Monrovia Central Prison Facility.

A proposal was made for an amendment to the Criminal Procedure Law to incorporate plea bargaining to reduce the rate of pre-trial detainees, which will also help to reduce cases on the docket. The amended

Law is awaiting validation and subsequent submission to the Legislature for passage into law. Training on Probation was organized for 25 BCR Probation Officers and deployment of some of these trained officers has been made successful to the leeward counties. The Judiciary in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice has embarked on engagements and discussions with relevant national stakeholders and International Partners (UNDP and others) to re-establish the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Framework which was initially piloted to aid in the reduction of cases on the court docket, reduction of pretrial detainees and an alternative medium of adjudicating specific characterized cases in the judicial system. The Bureau of Rehabilitation and Corrections (BCR) has organized and provided vocational training of various sorts to inmates as part of its rehabilitation program to aid inmates fortunate for release from custody to get reintegrated into society with skills for livelihood to ensure that they refrain from ills in the society.

Free and fair Elections

Based on the National Election Commission (NEC) experiences from previous elections as well as observers and stakeholders' recommendations, the NEC developed a new electoral cycle based on its six-year strategic plan for the period July 2018 through June 2024 with five thematic pillars, the first being Legal Framework, and the NEC has since been involved in the electoral law reform process in preparation for the 2020 Senatorial and 2023 General elections. Consistent with the Powers and Duties of the Commission as expressed in Section 2.9 (c) of the New Elections Laws, "To propose to the National Legislature for enactment, an amendment to, and repeal of, any provision of the Election Law" the Commission constituted a Technical Working Group (TWG) to review recommendations by observer organizations, in addition to the Commission's own experience. The term of reference of the TWG was to review recommendations and develop a road map that will lead to a comprehensive reform of the electoral process. During the review process, the TWG documented a total of 144 recommendations from observer organizations with both constitutional and statutory implications. The TWG considered 84 of the recommendations proffered. Of the 84 proposals, the group recommended to the Board of Commissioners 59 for further review and action by the Commission. Additionally, the TWG recommended that 15 proposals be referred to other institutions like the Liberia National Police and other pro-democracy organizations for consideration and declined 10 recommendations either because they were being implemented or were not amendable.

Based on the above, the NEC, with support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) carried out Nation-wide Regional Consultations around Liberia with a Civic Voters' Education Awareness Phase to inform the general population of the relevance of Electoral Reform in Liberia, which lasted between **June-July 2019** covering four regions that embodied the entire Country.

Upon completion of the CVE Awareness Phase, the first regional Consultation was held in Tubmangburg, Bomi County, covering delegates from Bomi, Gbapolu, Grand Cape Mount and Monsterrado counties, with representatives from the House Committee on Elections and Inauguration, serving as observers to the process as well as a Coordinator hired by the UNDP.

Similarly, this implementation strategy was replicated for the remaining consultations held in Gbarnga, Bong County, and covered stakeholders from Lofa, Nimba, and Bong counties; in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh, the consultation covered stakeholders from RiverGee, Maryland and Grand Kru Counties, finally in Grand Bassa, covering stakeholders from Margibi, Rivercess, Sinoe, and Grand Bassa counties respectively.

Targeted groups included: Heads of Civil Society, Community based Organizations, Heads of Religious Institutions (Pastors/Imam), Heads of Youth/Student Organizations. Heads of Women Organizations, Heads of Professional/Academic Institutions, Heads of Disabled Organizations (Blind and Physically

challenged) Heads of Media Institutions. Heads of Business organizations/Marketing Association, Heads of Vehicle and Motorcycle Unions, Superintendents, Statutory Superintendents, Districts/Townships Commissioners, Paramount and other Chiefs

The Ministry of Internal Affairs through its Peacebuilding Office in collaboration with the Irish Aid Project, through its implementing partner ZOA, conducted pre-election campaigns involving political parties, NEC, youths, motorcyclists, women's groups and persons with disabilities with a focus on minimizing electoral conflicts and conduct of a more peaceful and transparent election process during the upcoming mid-term elections to be held in October 2020.

Civil society engagement

The enabling environment for CSOs remains relatively favorable and Liberia's legal and policy frameworks recognized the importance of civil society to exercise their role as watchdog and to demand accountability from the State. However, separate legislation for CSOs as set out in a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the CSOs and the government, has not been implemented successfully. CSOs networks and platforms are organized around themes such a women's rights, persons with disabilities, human rights, transitional justice, integrity and anti-corruption, and elections. Cohesion within and across some of the CSOs networks is weak, resulting in fragmentation which limits the potential for collective voice and effect of advocacy. The institutional capacities of the local CSOs remain weak to develop and pursue strategies and to manage transparent budgets. Part of the capacity weakness is caused by the transition of many CSOs from providers of services in education, health, water and sanitation, agriculture where the State was unable to provide these basic needs to the citizens. As the State's capacity increases, CSOs are transitioning to more watchdog function which requires new skills in evidence-based research, advocacy, policy analysis, political dialogue¹³, to name a few. The human rights-based principles and norms have not taken root fully in the operations of many CSOs. As a result, issues affecting minority groups remain side-lined in the mainstream CSOs. This includes the LGBT population who have separate networks of their own.

GOAL 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development



Estimates show development partners' share of the total expenditure on the AfT development plan rose from 64 per cent in FY2012/2013 to 76 per cent for the Fiscal Year FY2014/2015. Overall fiscal balance, without grant support, rose from negative five per cent (-5%) to negative eighteen per cent (-18%) between the two fiscal years.²² In response to the outbreak of EVD in 2014, an additional US\$0.9 billion had been committed to fighting the outbreak in Liberia by the end of the fiscal year. While this illustrates

the level of commitment of partners to the successful transition of Liberia from a failed state to a stable political and economic development environment, this made Liberia one of the most highly dependent on donor support in Africa.

Support came in multiple forms including direct budget support, directly executed projects, and technical assistance. The health sector benefited from interventions executed through multiple modalities, including a pool fund mechanism and a Fixed Amount Reimbursement Agreement (FARA). Under these arrangements, performance contracts were granted to nongovernmental organizations to operate health delivery points. The eventual collapse of the health care system in the face of the EVD outbreak brought into question the efficacy of these forms of aid in building critical systems for the country; and highlights the urgent need for a new partnership model for ODA.

The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation monitoring framework consists of 10 indicators based on the Busan commitments for more effective development cooperation and on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. The midterm review of the AfT returned mixed results on those indicators. On the extent of use of the AfT results framework, the review confirmed that all the partners derive and linked their priorities to those of the AfT. On the proportion of funding disbursed and covered by indicative forward spending, disbursement rates on projected funding reached 83 per cent in FY2014/2015--up from 57 per cent in FY2013/2014. On per cent of aid that is untied, reports show that less than 10 per cent of ODA was untied by the end of FY2014/2015.

To achieve the intended outcomes, the availability of on-time funding is critical. Factors delaying disbursements fall into two general categories--approval and processing formalities at the ODA source and the ability of the sector implementing agencies to deliver on the pre-conditions for release of funding.

PAPD PILLAR AND SECTOR	QUARTER I&II 2019-20 TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS
Governance and Transparency	1,03,38,414.48
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT	31,87,624.81
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	15,59,586.82
TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	55,91,202.85
Power to the People	4,27,54,307.06
EDUCATION	82,20,583.41
HEALTH	2,57,68,052.18
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	87,65,671.48
Sustaining the Peace	15,36,698.73
SECURITY AND RULE OF LAW	15,36,698.73
The Economy and Jobs	12,84,92,832.99
AGRICULTURE	3,15,56,825.24
ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT	2,57,09,588.38
INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE	6,01,769.26
INFRASTRUCTURE AND BASIC SERVICES	7,06,24,650.12
Grand Total	18,31,22,253.27

DONOR TYPE	QUARTER I&II TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS
Bilateral	3,97,71,950.78
Multilateral	14,33,50,302.48
Grand Total	18,31,22,253.27

Improved Tax Administration

The government intends to adopt a more effective domestic resource mobilization strategy to increase tax revenue and minimize tax fraud. Key among the various tax initiatives are the direct bank transfer tax payment system for all domestic taxes, an electronic single window system for accelerating international/cross-border trades and increase efficiency by reducing time and the cost to import/export traders, and Electronic Cash Register for GST administration to automate and track the accounting and reporting process of businesses

The government, however, aims to transition Goods and Services Tax (GST) to Value-added Tax (VAT) to scale up the revenue base. The VAT is based on consumption thereby providing a stable revenue base imposed on a broader range of businesses. Moreover, it is simpler to administer. The government will improve monitoring systems for revenue collection, tax education, and increase its manpower strength through some form of fiscal decentralization of taxes and full implementation of the various tax laws.

Public Financial Management Effectiveness

As an initial step, the government commits to amending the current Public Financial Management (PFM) Act and expanding the use of the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMIS), for effectiveness in budgeting, fiscal management, budget control, financial oversight, financial controls, revenue mobilization and ensuring transparency in procurement, budgeting, and public expenditure. The Integrated Financial Management System (IFMIS), currently deployed on 55 of the 107 MACs, will be used as a medium for tightening payroll control, improving accounting procedures, reporting, and strengthening tax administration. By 2023, at full effectiveness, the government would have deployed IFMIS to an additional 15 MACs, making a total of 70.

To increase the Revenue/GDP Ratio, the government set a high-level target to Improve tax compliance and increase domestic revenue collection from 14% to 20%. Towards this, the establishment of a national single window was initiated. Procurement is nearly complete for the national single window. The establishment of the single window and tax mechanisms will improve tax compliance and increased domestic revenue nationwide. Citizens will have increased access to needed tax collection services and the government will see an increase in domestic revenue generation. **Further, to increase domestic revenue, a process of decentralization of vehicle license registration services was initiated.** The automation of the vehicle registration process (one-stop-shop at the Central Office) has improved service delivery in the transportation sector and increased domestic revenue. In addition, the process has been enhanced by the decentralization of motor vehicle driver licensing in five counties (Margibi, Nimba, Bong, Grand Gedeh, and Grand Bassa).

Trade

To jumpstart the moribund economy in 2008 and generate the revenues needed for the ambitious development agenda at the start of the PRS period, however, the government reverted to granting concessions and generous tax incentives to attract desperately needed foreign direct investments (FDI). These took the form of mineral development agreements (MDA's), agricultural concession agreements

(ACA's), Forest Management Contracts (FMC), Timber Sales Contracts (TSC), and Private Use Permits (PUP's) for small producers. The National Investment Incentive Code was updated in 2010; and generous tax waivers were offered for the development of tourism and trade infrastructures. These incentives attracted commitments of US\$16 billion in FDI to be realized over 25 years.

Development is going partially in the right direction and Liberia showed improvement in the World Bank doing business indicators for 190 economies around the world; however, Liberia is still underperforming in comparison to its immediate neighbors. To support economic diversification, Liberia has passed into law Special Economic Zones (SEZ) aimed at attracting investments to improve value addition on raw materials. Liberia made some progress regarding access to credit by adopting new laws on secured transactions that establish a modern, unified, and notice-based collateral registry. 2017 was Liberia's first full year as a WTO member and has so far implemented 42 out of 104 WTO commitments and 16 out of 48 mandatory notifications have been sent to the WTO.³⁶ This means Liberia has made important advances but still have work to do, to be an active part of the multilateral trading system.

To open new and expand existing cross-border trade opportunities in the sub-region, the government will improve Liberia's favorable position as a transport and re-export trade corridor by reducing its trading across borders distance to frontier (DTF) score of 72.23% to become comparable to its closest neighbors, Cote D'Ivoire, Guinea and Sierra Leone at 45.85%, 53.76%, and 51.01% respectively. The first Special Economic Zone (SEZ) will open in FY2021/2022.

Statistical capacities

The government is cognizant of its responsibility under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which encourages member states to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven. The government intends to seek support from partners for these reviews and to integrate SDG, AU2063, and ECOWAS 2020 measurements, monitoring, tracking, and reporting into the national M&E plan and the NSS.

In this regard, the government intends to establish dedicated coordination units, strategies and action plans, and accountability systems; beginning with a gap analysis or baseline study to assess existing policies elaborated under the PAPD concerning the global and regional commitments, and to identify areas where additional progress is needed. Properly monitoring change across 169 SDG targets will stretch even the most well-resourced NSS. Moreover, the 2030 Agenda notes the special situations faced by countries in conflict and post-conflict situations. Therefore, a minimalist approach focused on a fewer set of global and regional development goals could be the best option for alignment going forward. Defining and reaching an agreement on the elements of this approach will be a key goal of the baseline study.

The National Statistical and Spatial Data System in Liberia has improved since its start-up in 2008 but is constrained by a range of socio-economic statistics and spatial data issues. Significant data gaps exist despite the 2008 Population and Housing Census, the wide range of statistical surveys that have been conducted, significant administrative reports and records utilized, and the substantial number of statistical outputs produced. The integrated National Statistical and Spatial Database have not been fully utilized despite the call for full use of statistical systems under the Statistics Act of 2004. The formal National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) to support compatible spatial data across agencies is yet to be fully developed. In 2017, Liberia received a score of 60 out of a possible 100 on the World Bank Statistical Capacity based on selected international standards. This rating is nearly equivalent to the average of 60.5 for Sub-Saharan African countries. This new score showed a significant improvement from 46.7 out of 100 in 2014.

Despite the improvement in WBSCI indicators, the NSS lacks human and physical capacity including information and communication technology (ICT), for regular data collection, compilation, standardization, analysis, storage, and dissemination. Primarily, limited dissemination of available statistics is particularly observed at LISGIS and the other statistics producing institutions of the NSS.

Some capacity has been developed in data collection and statistical analysis over the years but in the face of the additional complexity of delivery commitments, there is now a renewed focus on strengthening the NSS. Under the PAPD, the NSS will expand its output range and improve standards to better and more fully meet the needs of users and especially those needs relating to monitoring and evaluation, policy formulation, and evidence-based decision making around the national, regional, and global development agendas. The objectives, strategies, and specific plans for statistical development can be found in the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics II.

Partnerships

Regional Integration: Government's development diplomacy is anchored on strong bilateral and multilateral cooperation and regional cooperation for shared prosperity. Liberia plays pivotal roles in regional global organizations including the Mano River Union (MRU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN). In 2016, Liberia became the Chair of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS for the first time. Currently, Liberia heads the Secretariat of the MRU, the Administrative and Conference Commission of ECOWAS, and the Peace and Security Council of the AU.

In addition, Liberia joined the world trade organization (WTO) in December 2015 and is working on its WTO post-Accession Implementation Support program. There are several preferential trade windows to exploit such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) of the United States (US); the Economic Partnership Agreement through ECOWAS, Voluntary Partnership Agreement on forest products, and Everything but Arms (EBA) with the European Union (EU); the 97% Export Tariff reduction with China and bilateral agreements with several countries to expand exports.

Public-Private Partnerships: PPP investments will be done through a careful analysis of the potential of joint ventures between government and private firms to finance infrastructure projects in the form of build, own, operate and transfer (BOOT), or build, operate and transfer (BOT), or build own and operate (BOO). Successful PPPs will reduce pressure on investment expenditures on the government's budget and create jobs for youth and women under infrastructure investment activities. The existing contract for the construction and operation of the Freeport of Monrovia by APM Terminal will be examined to draw lessons learned. Going forward, the government will establish a PPP unit and build the capacity of MACs for PPP negotiation, contracting, and management to ensure that the country benefits from these arrangements.

Business Development Services (BDS): Government will facilitate private sector capacity building through public-private partnerships with a consortium of private, civil society and donor partners, to provide development and incubation services for Liberian owned businesses. The capacity-building initiative will provide an opportunity for SMEs to learn and adopt innovative strategies through training, coaching, technical assistance, access to market, access to finance, and trade facilitation programs.

Aid partnerships

The inflow of ODA over the past decade placed Liberia in the top four receiving countries in the world. The post-EVD period saw stagnating growth in revenues and domestic debt which was around 14% and 10% of GDP respectively, declining donor transfers and grants from 60% to 20% and from 5% to 2% of

GDP respectively, and rising external debt at middle debt distress and volatile net remittance flows registering net outflows in 2013. While revenue increased modestly after a decline from FY2014 to FY2016, debt (external and domestic) rose significantly. Figure 7.1 shows the trend in major financing sources of government from FY2012 to FY2018 (projected).

ODA funding includes direct budget support, pool fund, off-budget aid project/program aid, and trust fund modalities. As can be seen in Figure 1.2, grants as a per cent of GDP are expected to fall from 15 to 8 per cent of GDP over the PAPD period, while domestic revenue will rise to 14 per cent with potential for an additional 4 per cent rise to 18 per cent with more robust DRM efforts driven by the flagship projects. The Government will continue to strengthen relationships with cooperating partners both on a bilateral and multilateral basis to ensure that the priorities of the country are comprehensively

Domestic and External Borrowing

Over the past decade, the return of foreign investors to the natural resource sectors was critical to spurring growth in the economy and revenue for the government. Given the current global price outlook for Liberia's primary export commodities, the short-term prospects for major inflows of FDI are limited. Government intends to prioritize borrowing to fill the financing gap for infrastructure investment projects.

Private Sector Partnerships

Emphasis will be placed on harnessing the potential of the private sector to finance potentially profitable priority infrastructure investment projects to ease pressure on the National Treasury and borrowing. Fully private sector financing are possible avenues that will be explored including equity participation and management arrangements for SOE's--drawing on the experience with these modalities in the telecommunications sector, Liberia Electricity Corporation, and the Freeport of Monrovia.

Liberian Government commits to continuing engagement with bilateral and multilateral development partners to produce the outcomes of the PAPD. Likewise, the government commits to transparency in accounting for all revenue and expenditure in keeping with the Public Financial Management Act of 2009. The objective is to integrate ODA into the Medium-Term Fiscal Framework more meaningfully--on a plan, budget, appropriation, treasury, procurement, accounting, reporting, and audits.

Integrating ODA into the MTFE will ensure the comprehensiveness of fiscal information to improve the link between policy, planning, and budgeting across the whole of government institutions and priority sectors. This will ensure that priorities identified in the PAPD drive choices made in-country partnership strategies during the planning phase and the establishment of annual budget priorities. This integration will also improve fiscal discipline, strategic prioritization, and efficiency in the use of all public resources. Future funding obligations, especially of counterpart or recurrent cost of ongoing projects shouldered by donors, will be fully recognized and anticipated. The likelihood of achieving long term targets will increase

Only 12.2 per cent of aid flowed through budget support in FY2015/2016--a decline of 2.2 per cent over the average of the preceding periods. Approximately 55 per cent of aid flowing through budget support was grant funding. The remainder (45%) took the form of loan financing or Fixed Amount Reimbursement Agreement (FARA).

The government intends to put forward an updated aid management policy in line with the requirements of the 2009 PFM Act. The government will also revise the partnership policy for non-profit organizations. The government also intends to reach an agreement on a mutual accountability framework to maximize the impact of ODA on the national development agenda.

Civil society and private sector actors have also been instrumental to strengthening access to justice.

Nevertheless, several constraints impeding equitable and equal access to justice remain, including:

- **Inadequate access to statutory systems in rural areas:** Insufficient numbers of police officers, prosecutors, judges, public defenders, and lawyers limit access to statutory systems in rural areas. These constraints are exacerbated by dual statutory and traditional systems which can at times be in conflict. Furthermore, as demonstrated through the SCORE index ratings, a mistrust of the justice system by those who have felt excluded in the past leads to the underuse of available statutory provisions
 - **Lack of public confidence in the ability of the formal justice system to uphold the rule of law:** the formal justice system has historically been the preserve of urban elites. It is still seen, by Liberia's poor, as inaccessible and unreliable, favouring the interests of those with power, and entrenching the marginalisation of those without. Unfortunately, this perception is further exacerbated by rampant corruption; impeding efforts to strengthen state-society relations and to build a society based on justice, rule of law and human rights.
 - **Excessive pre-trial detention:** 64% of all those detained by the state have not been to trial. Pre-trial detention remains a major concern from both an access to justice and human rights perspective. Excessive pretrial detention undermines the respect for the rule of law by reinforcing the perception that the justice system is unfair. Inadequate detention and rehabilitation facilities, and an under-resourced judiciary are two key causes of this problem.
8. **High prevalence of SGBV and HTP:** During the civil war, rape and other forms of sexual violence were an integral part of the pattern of violence that was inflicted upon targeted communities, creating a culture of impunity for SGBV, which has left a lasting legacy. The nation is still trying to come to grips with the magnitude and the complexity of the problem and much more needs to be done to reduce impunity for SGBV crimes and to provide better support to victims.
 9. **Adequate Alternative Dispute Mechanism Programs:** ADR Programs have not been sustainably resourced. These initiatives not only help to resolve disputes and mitigate conflict, they can also help to reduce pre-trial detention.
 10. **Insufficient consideration given to the special needs and rights of children:** The child justice program which coordinates child justice issues including legislative advocacy, policy formulation, child labour and child trafficking issues, issues affecting children who come into contact and into conflict with the law, diversion and detention issues, and general child protection remains severely underfunded and under-resourced. As a result, the Diversion Program, aimed at channelling juveniles in conflict with the law to specially designed programs, is only available in eight counties. In the absence of such programs, juvenile courts, and rehabilitation and detention centres, children are held in adult prisons. The Child Justice Program is only available in seven counties meaning children in the remaining eight counties do not have access to justice.
 11. **Consistency and Sustainability of Justice:** The justice system suffers from chronic capacity constraints in terms of basic infrastructure and material resources and acute shortages in human and financial resources. To combat this problem, several justice sector initiatives, including those related to juvenile justice and sexual and gender-based violence, are funded by international partners and non-governmental organizations. However, when these funding sources are withdrawn, vulnerable Liberians are left with inadequate access to justice.
 12. **Access to justice for women:** Women, especially those in rural areas, continue to encounter hurdles when trying to access and indeed achieve justice, particularly in relation to SGBV. A lack of awareness and understanding that women's rights are fundamentally human rights further exacerbates this situation.

Reducing Corruption

A perception survey by Transparency International (2017) ranked Liberia 122 out of 180 countries

worldwide with a 26% increase in corruption from 0.37. In 2012, Liberia ranked 75 of 174 countries representing the highest CPI ranking to date. The government commits to attain the 2012 ranking or above by improving on the anti-corruption indicators which include free speech, independent media, political dissent, open and engaged civil society, and openness in government budgeting, and public procurement.

Exploring the reach of technology for development

The expansion in ICT through cell phone technology and access to mobile money services were cited as critical forms of inclusion drawing remotely located customers into the formal financial system--some for the first time. Stakeholders identified the growing number of local FM radio stations as important to keep the communities informed and engaged in governance and economic development issues.

More than 60 per cent of farming households, about 264,00953 households are engaged in cassava cultivation. The government will enhance cassava value chains by increasing access to inputs, especially for female farmers who are concentrated in subsistence farming. It will intensify research and development (R&D) on appropriate production technology and processing along the value chain, empower smallholder organizations, and foster an entrepreneurship mindset for farmers' cooperatives.

The annual vegetable requirement of Liberia is 36,500 metric tons. This demand is expected to rise to 41,261 metric tons over the PAPD period. The government will also support the use of appropriate production technology and the processing of multiple crops to improve productivity and a continual supply of vegetables. technology will include equipment, assorted improved seeds, and planting material, as well as storage facilities. The government will embark on a targeted duty-free policy on agriculture equipment and products to sustain incentives for improved technology use.

Post and Telecommunication

The main players in the telecom sector are postal and courier services and three private GSM mobile network operators (Lonestar Cell MTN, Orange formerly Cellcom, and Novafone), the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, Liberia Telecommunication Authority and Liberia Telecommunications Corporation.

Progress has been made in developing the necessary framework for the expansion of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)/telecommunications and postal services and infrastructure. In 2007, the National Legislature passed the Telecommunications Act. The Act liberalized the sector and enabled growth and compliance with acceptable regional standards. Within the framework of the Act, the Ministry of Postal Affairs serves as the policy institution, the Liberia Telecommunications Authority was created to serve as the regulatory arm, and the Liberia Telecommunications Corporation remained the national operator. In 2011, the first fiber optic cable, Africa Coast to Europe, landed in Liberia to facilitate the construction of a backbone infrastructure to increase accessibility, reliability, and affordability of telecommunications services. A Metro-Monrovia Ring is under construction and, when completed, will improve connectivity and reduce the cost of telecommunications services in the Greater Monrovia area. The total number of postal facilities around the country has increased from 12 to 24. The Ministry has also launched the National Postal Address System and completed phase one of the project that numbered approximately 2666 (0.313%) structures and vacant lots in Congo Town.

Despite the progress, weak policy and regulatory regime, and inadequately trained personnel available to companies and organizations in the industry remain major constraints to growth. Limited telecommunication/ICT infrastructure, especially in rural/ remote areas, leave communities marginalized. The growing issues of cybersecurity and high costs for telecommunication services require due attention from Government and operators.

The government intends to make Liberia a technology-enabled society with telecommunication/ICT playing a fundamental role in job creation and improvement in the quality of life for all citizens. To improve productivity and enhance revenue generation, the Government will integrate science and technology across all areas of development. The government will place 6 ministries and agencies on e-government platforms to improve productivity and service delivery through ICT solutions; and will increase access to the e-government platform to incorporate all government ministries and agencies.

The focus will be on the improvement of infrastructures and the regulatory framework for operators in the sector to double ICT access and coverage. This will provide opportunities for private sector growth and product expansion, particularly for education, services, health, agriculture, and manufacturing industries. Access to technology will boost youth and women's entrepreneurial abilities, improve their skills, and create jobs. The government will expand the fiber optic infrastructure, including industrial installation to cover 30% access to the fiber-optic backbone and ensure universal access and services to marginalized communities, women, rural dwellers, and physically challenged populations. The government will roll out a national postal address and mail delivery system in all 15 counties

E-governance and ICT to improve business processes and productivity

ICT will be mainstreamed through the expansion of e-governance services and the automation of processes to minimize human inputs. Specifically, the government will integrate and interface the IFMIS system with key PFM databases that include the current project management modules, budget management, Commonwealth Secretariat's Debt Recording and Management System (CS-DRM), e-procurement system, CBL transaction on behalf of MFDP, and Tax Administration System (TAS). E-governance via ICT will enhance tax revenue via improved tax administration, enhance budget management and expenditure through the effective use of the IFMIS database, support the National Biometric Registry in the execution of its mandates, and support e-procurement, asset management, and elections systems in Liberia.

CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

As is apparent from the foregoing description of the progress so far against the 17 SDGs, Liberia has prioritized some goals ahead of others, ensuring that programmatic investments are strategic and offer the best opportunities for moving levers of development that can transform Liberia in the medium to long term.

The PAPD was developed and launched in 2018 with the goal of improving the country's socio-economic growth and reducing poverty. Since the start of the implementation, significant progress has been made. The education sector has better access to the internet along with free education in all public schools and universities. The health sector has seen upgradation of equipment and doctors' qualifications in specialized medical fields. Additionally, over 75km of primary roads and 43km of urban roads have been constructed, and 65km of water pipeline has been laid. More than 40 institutions have now graduated to e-governance platforms to improve performance. Notwithstanding, includes absolute poverty, the legacy of entrenched inequality, widespread infrastructure deficits, and economic deprivation which remain barriers to sustainable peace, growth, and sustainable development are bound to further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, assessing the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on the PAPD implementation is fundamental to the revision of the entire PAPD purposely to objectively provide the needed information for government and its development partners to reprioritized, set new goals and targets base on key findings and lessons learnt that will lead to a successful recovery from the crisis and ensure that no one is left behind.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: Alignment between indicators of the current five-year national plan and the SDGs

Pillar/Sector Goal	Link to SDGs & Agenda 2063	Current Indicators	Baseline	PAPD Target	Data Source
Pillar 1: Power to the People					
Pillar Goal: To empower Liberians with the tools to gain control of their lives; reaching the furthest first and leaving no one behind	Development Outcome: 1.1. Achieving a more inclusive and higher quality formal education, TVET, and adult learning with greater access to ICT				
Sector: Human Capacity and the Knowledge-Economy	SDGs 4.2.1, 4.2.2 Agenda 2063	1.1.1.1 Ratio of school-age children going to classroom (3-5 years/Early Childhood Education) by gender, children with disabilities, rural/urban areas & county	104.1 (2019)	1.1.1. ECE (Ages 3-5): Reduce ECE student to classroom ratio below 50:1 in all counties	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)
Sector Goal: 1.1.1 Expanding universal access to quality, relevant Education, Technical Vocational Training, and to Information and Communication Technology	SDGs 4.7.1 Agenda 2063	1.1.2.1 Per centage of schools using the standardized curricula by rural/urban areas, county	100%	1.1.2. Rollout standardized curricula and specialized ECE training by 2020	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)
	SDGs 4.7.1, (4.c.1) Agenda 2063	1.1.2.2. Trained teachers (% of total): in early child education who have received specialized training in rural/urban areas, county	50%	1.1.2. Rollout standardized curricula and specialized ECE training by 2021	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)
	SDGs 4.1.1 Agenda 2063	1.1.3.1 Net enrollment rate of primary students (6-12 years) by gender, disabilities, rural/urban areas, county	48% (EMIS 2015)	1.1.3. PRIMARY (Ages 6-12): Raise Net Enrollment Rate (NER) to 65% by 2023	Source of Data : IMES (Annual) EMIS report

SDGs 4.1.1 Agenda 2063	1.1.4.1 Porportion of grade 6 student that achieve basic literacy and numeracy by gender, disabilities, rural/urban areas & county	tbd	1.1.4. Ensure all students achieve basic literacy and numeracy by Grade 6	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)
SDGs 4.1.1 Agenda 2063	1.1.5.1 Net and gross enrollment rate of primary students (13-15 years/JHS) by gender, disabilities, rural/urban areas & county	31.8%	1.1.5. JUNIOR HIGH (Ages 13-15): Raise the Net Enrollment Ratio for JHS to 40% nationwide by 2023	EMIS report, NHPC 2008, HIES 2016
SDGs 4.6.1/4.1.1 Agenda 2063	1.1.6.1 WASSCE results (per centage by gender, public/private schools, division and county)	26%	1.1.6. SENIOR HIGH (Ages 16-18): 70% of WASSCE takers pass with a score of Division 1-6 by 2023	EMIS report, WASSCE Result
SDGs4.3.1Agenda 2063	1.1.7.1 Net enrolment rate of youth and adults by type of specific TVET- programs and Alternative learning (including formal TVET, workplace and community-based TVET)	47%	1.1.7. ADULT LEARNERS (Ages 18-lifelong): Ensure lifelong learning opportunities through TVET and Alternative Learning Programs	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)
SDGs 4.1.1 Agenda 2063	1.1.8.1 Girls out of school, retention & completion rates by age, rural/urban areas, county	tbd	1.1.8. Girls Education: Out of school rate reduce to 10% by 2023, Retention rate increase to >80% by 2023, 12.	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)
SDGs 4.7.1 Agenda 2063	1.1.9.1 Functional National Education Fund Account in recongnized banks in Liberia	0	1.1.9. National Education Development Fund established by 2020	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)

N/A	1.1.10.1: Total amount of private funding spent on the education sector per annual	52%	1.1.10. Leverage private sector support to increase access and improve learning outcomes	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)
SDGs 4.c.1 Agenda 2063	1.1.11.1 Trained teachers (% of total) in: pre-primary, primary and secondary education who have received at least the minimum organized teacher training (e.g. pedagogical training) pre-service or in-service required for teaching at the relevant teaching requirements	69%	1.1.11. By 2023, increase the proportion of appropriately qualified and trained teachers in specific subject matter areas to 60%	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)
SDGs 4.a.1 Agenda 2063	1.1.12.1 Percentage of public schools that meet the minimum quality standards set by the relevant education authority (Ministry of Education)	0	1.1.12. Ensure 50% of public schools meet minimum quality standards for a conducive learning environment by 2023	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)
SDGs 4.2.1 Agenda 2063	1.1.13.1 Proportion of out of school children by age, gender, rural/urban areas, county	Baseline: 17% (School Census 2015)	1.1.13. Reduce proportion of out-of-school children to less than 10% nationwide	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)
	1.1.14.1 Availability of an updated strategy for the improvement in HIL developed (incorporating the six core)	0	1.1.14. Higher Education (3-5 years): Rollout a more structured strategy for improving the relevance of HIL in	School Census (Annual) EMIS (School census report)

				education around six core thrusts by 2020	
Sector: Access to Essential Health	Development Outcome: 1.2. Increased access to quality essential health and reduced overall morbidity/mortality with special focus on HIV/AIDS, TB, malaria, and major RMNCAH outcomes				
Sector Goal: Improving wellbeing for all through intensified collaboration with development partners and the private sector	SDGs 3.1.1 Agenda 2063	1.2.1.1 Maternal Mortality Ratio: Proportion of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births (number) [Definition: The number of deaths due to birth- or pregnancy-related complications per 100,000 live births.]	725 (World Bank estimate 2015)	1.2.1. Maternal mortality ratio: 476 per 100,000 live births by 2023 (Revised)	Liberia Demographic Health Survey
	SDGs 3.2.1 Agenda 2064	1.2.2.1 Rate of under-five deaths per 1,000 live births	75 (UN IGME 2018)	1.2.2. Under 5 Mortality ratio: 42 per 1000 live births by 2023 (Revised)	Liberia Demographic Health Survey
	SDGs 2.2.1 Agenda 2063	1.2.3.1 Percentage (Number) of Children aged (6-59 months) who weight for height is <-2 zscore to >=-3zscore	35,5 % (CFSNVA 2018)	1.2.3. Under 5 Malnutrition: Reduce stunting to 10 % by 2023 (Revised)	Liberia Demographic Health Survey
	SDGs 3.3.3 Agenda 2063	1.2.4.1 Malaria prevalence rate (% total)	45% 2016	1.2.4. Malaria prevalence reduced to 23% by 2023 (Revised)	Malaria Indicator Survey, Liberia 2016

	SDGs 3.3.1 Agenda 2063	1.2.5.1 Incidence of HIV/AIDS: Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population by sex, age	2,300/40,000 (0.06) or 6/100 incidence prevalence ratio.	1.2.5. Tbd (New)	MOH annual HIV estimates (UNAIDS SPECTRUM)
	SDGs 3.7.1 Agenda 2063	1.2.6.1 Contraceptive Prevalence Rate	20.2 (DHS 2013)	1.2.6. Contraceptive Prevalence Rate increase to 31% by 2023 (New)	Liberia Demographic Health Survey
	SDGs 3.8.1 Agenda 2063	1.2.7.1 Share of rural population (%) living within 5 km of a health service delivery (disaggregated by gender, sex, etc)	tbd	1.2.7. Rural population living beyond 5KM of health service delivery points with health services: 75% (Look Up)	Liberia Demographic Health Survey
	SDGs 3.d.1 Agenda 2063	1.2.8.1 National coverage of outbreaks response within WHO recommended response time (24-48 hours) after notification	100%	1.2.8. 100% of outbreaks responded to within WHO recommended response time (24 to 48 hours) after notification	IDSR Health Statistics
	SDGs 3.8.1 Agenda 2063	1.2.9.1 Per centage of the public facilities reporting no stock out of essential medicines	44% 2016	1.2.9. 90 per cent of public facilities reporting no stock out of essential medicines by 2023	SARA Survey
	SDGs 3.8.1, 3.8.2 Agenda 2063	1.2.10.1 Healthcare cost through out of pocket payment (%)	0	1.2.10. Out of pocket payment for health care: 35% by 2023 (Look Up)	Liberia Demographic Health Survey
Sector: Women Empowerment	Development Outcome 1.3. Gender equality entrenched as a cross-cutting issue leading to more empowered women and girls and clearer understanding among men and boys to act as champions				
Sector Goal: Enhancing inclusiveness of women and girls to	SDGs 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 10.2.1, 3.8.2 Agenda 2063: 6.17.2.2, 6.17.2.4,	1.3.1.1 Number of women empowered nationwide per county/rural/urban by 2023	tbd	1.3.1. 375,000 women to be empowered across the 15 counties over the next 5 years	MOGCSP Annual Reort

reduce inequalities in political, social, and economic life	SDGs 4.1.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.1	1.3.2.1 Number of vulnerable girls (a) enrolled, (b) retained and (c) completed primary and secondary school by 2023	Tbd	1.3.2. 50,000 vulnerable girls enrolled, retained and completed primary and secondary school by 2023	MOGCSP Annual Reort
		1.3.3.1 Per centage of women having access to productive resourses and opportunities in (a) agriculture, and the (b) informal sector (enterprises & trade)	Tbd	1.3.3. Based on the overall figure for empowering women, adopt a phased-increase in the number of women in employment in the urban areas; improve access of women to productive resources and opportunities in the agricultural and informal sector (enterprises and trade)	MOGCSP Annual Reort
	SDGs 5.5.1, 5.5.2, 16.7.1, 6.17.1.3 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.3	1.3.4.1 Share of women (%) in leadership, elected or appointed (in cabinet positions, legislative, judiciary, local governments)	Tbd	1.3.4. Increase political participation of women at the national and local levels to raise levels by 30%	MOGCSP Annual Reort
	SDGs 5.6.2, 5.6.1, 3.7.2, 3.7.1, Agenda 2063:1.2.1.4	1.3.5. Share of women and girls (%) having access to health services	Tbd	1.3.5. Improved access to health services by -women and girls	Liberia Demographic Health Survey
	SDGs 16.2.3, Agenda 2063:1.2.1.5	1.3.6.1 Incidence of SGBV by county, urban/rural area (per centage)	Tbd	1.3.6. Incidence of SGBV reduced by 50% by 2030 through the provision of appropriate support services & access to justice systems	MOGCSP Annual Reort

		1.3.7. Share of women (%) in the peace and security sectors	Tbd	1.3.7. Increased participation of women in peace and security	MOGCSP Annual Reort
	SDGs 16.2.3, Agenda 2063:1.2.1.7	1.3.8.1 Per centage decrease in the gender inequality gap in the infrastruture and bacis services sectors	Tbd	1.3.8. Address the inequality gap in the infrastructure sector and basic services	MOGCSP Annual Reort
Sector: Youth Development	Development Outcome 1.4. Increased and improved access to integrated services for Youths and Young Adults				
Sector Goal: Transforming the demographic dividend into a driver for growth and transformation	SDGs 8.b.1, 8.5.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.9	1.4.1.1 Share (number) of youth (15-35) benefited from youth empowerment schemes, who found employment (by gender, age, disabilities and county,)	Approx. 3612 (2018 Annual Report, YOP)	1.4.1. 20,000 targeted youth aged 15-35 half of which are women to benefit from labour and income generating programs and opportunities by 2023 (Revised)	MYS Annual Report
	SDGs 8.6.1, 4.4.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.10	1.4.2.1 Share (number) of youth enrolled in productive public works and life skills training by (age and gender)	Approx. 8110 (TVET, 4,000 enrolled as of July, 2019; YEOP, 1,000, Cadet, 11, ASRH, 3000.)	1.4.2. 12,000 young people enrolled in productive public works and life skills training by 2023 half of which are women (Revised)	MYS Annual Report
		1.4.3.1 Number of national sports academies providing (a) grassroots sports programs, (b) athletic programs, and new learning opportunities for coaches by rural/urban	There are currently 0 sports academies run by Government in the Country,	1.4.3. Six sports academies established throughout Liberia—at least 4 in poor regions of the country	Annual Report
Sector: Social Protection	Development Outcome 1.5. Expansion to the social safety net through social assistance, scaled-up cash transfer, and inclusion through work opportunities for the most vulnerable and extremely poor groups and regions				

Sector Goal: Improved social protection system for effective and efficient service delivery	SDGs 15.6.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.10	1.5.1.1 Number of workers enrolled in or covered by NASSCORP by 2023 (30% women)	187,000 (Apr. 2019)	1.5.1. 200,000 workers enrolled in NASSCORP scheme by 2023; 30% of whom are women	NASSCORP Database
	N/A	1.5.2.1 Proportion of employment injuries that result in claims	Approx. 1,800 (2017)	1.5.2. 50% increase in Employment Injury claims by 2023	NASSCORP Database
	SDGs 1.a.2, 1.a.3, 1.a.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.12	1.5.3.1 Gross Public Investment in Social Protection	tbd	1.5.3. Public investment in Social Protection increase 0 to 4% GDP by 2023	MOGCSP Annual Reort
	SDGs 2.1.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.13	1.5.4.1 Number of under-deserving school going students receiving school meals by gender, county	tbd	1.5.4. 300,000 students receiving school meals by 2023 – half of whom are girl students	MOE Annual Report
	SDGs 1.3.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.14	1.5.5.1 Number of emtremely poor and food insecure households receiving social transfers (50% females)	4,000	1.5.5. 10,000 Extremely Poor and Food Insecure Households of which 50% are female headed households and 10,000 individual beneficiaries of which 50% are women receive cash transfers by 2023 (Revised)	Social Registry Database
	SDGs 1.3.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.15	1.5.6.1 Number of households with complete data records registered in the Social	tbd	1.5.6. 200,000 Households with complete data records registered in the Social Registry – 30% are female-headed households	Social Registry Database

		Registry Database			
	SDGs 1.b.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.16	1.5.7.1 Number of beneficiaries receiving cash-nutritional benefits/packages disaggregated by women and children	tbd	1.5.7. 12,000 pregnant women and children receive cash-nutritional benefits by 2023	Social Registry Database
	SDGs 1.3.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.17	1.5.8.1 Number of people with disabilities receiving disability allowance per county, urban/rural	Approx. 50	1.5.8. 500 disabled people receive disability allowance (Revised)	NASSCORP Database
	SDGs 1.3.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.18	1.5.9.1 Number of persons receiving old-age non-contributory pensions (full take up)	Approx. 5,500	1.5.9. 10,000 people receive old-age non-contributory pensions by 2023 (full take up) (Revised)	NASSCORP Database
		1.5.10.1 Ratio of social workers to the total population	94,300	1.5.10. 80,000 people for every social worker by 2023	MOGCSP Annual Reort
Pillar 2: Economy and Jobs Pillar Goal: A stable macroeconomic environment	SDGs 17.13.1, 17.1.1, 17.15.1, 17.14.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.20	2.1.1.1 Average annual real GDP growth rate	3.2	2.1.1. By 2023, increase annual GDP growth from 3.2% to 5.8%	Macro-fiscal Indicators Report

<p>enabling private sector-led economic growth, greater competitiveness, and diversification of the economy</p> <p>Sector: Creating the Right Policy Environment</p> <p>Sector Goal: Effective fiscal governance and prudent monetary and financial sector management for macroeconomic stability and job creation</p>	<p>SDGs 17.3.1</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.21</p>	<p>2.1.2.1 Average contribution of mining activities to the overall real GDP (annually)</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>2.1.2. By 2023, increase mining contribution from 10% to 15% of real GDP (Revised)</p>	<p>National Accounts Survey</p>
	<p>SDGs 8.5.1, 8.3.1, 1.a.1</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.22</p>	<p>2.1.3.1 Number of jobs created per annual in the formal and informal sector</p>	<p>tbd</p>	<p>2.1.3. 325,625 jobs to be created</p>	<p>Labour force survey</p>
	<p>SDGs 17.1.2, 17.3.1, 17.18.1</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>2.1.4.1 Level of compliance with tax policies/regulations (per centage)</p>	<p>14 (2018)</p>	<p>2.1.4. Improve tax compliance and increase domestic revenue collection from 14% to 20% of GDP</p>	<p>Macro-fiscal Indicators Report</p>
	<p>SDGs 17.1.1, 17.3.2</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>2.1.5.1 Per centage increase in revenue generation</p>	<p>14 (2018)</p>	<p>2.1.5. Improve tax compliance and increase domestic revenue collection from 14% to 20% of GDP</p>	<p>Macro-fiscal Indicators Report</p>
	<p>SDGs 17.1.1, 17.3.2</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>2.1.6.1 Fiscal deficit/GDP ratio</p>	<p>23%</p>	<p>2.1.6. Contain fiscal deficit at less than 5% GDP</p>	<p>Macro-fiscal Indicators Report</p>
	<p>SDGs 16.6.1</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>2.1.7.1 Debt to GDP Ratio</p>	<p>27.10%</p>	<p>2.1.7. Contain debt sustainability to less than 60% debt to GDP</p>	<p>Macro-fiscal Indicators Report</p>
	<p>SDGs 8.10.2, 8.10.1, 9.3.2</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>2.1.8.1 Proportion of adult population (18 above) having bank accounts Proportion of adults with</p>	<p>2.8 million mobile wallets (2018) while 35.7% of population having access to</p>	<p>2.1.8. Maintain affordable and convenient financial services across the country and ensure that 50% of the adult population have bank</p>	<p>Central Bank CPI Statistics</p>

		access to mobile money services		accounts and access to basic financial services	
	SDGs 10.5.1, 10.1.1, 10.c.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.1.9.1 Number of commercial bank branches and automated teller machines (ATMs) per 100,000 adult	3.17 commercial bank branches per 100,000 adults, while there are 2.71 ATMs per 100,000 adults (2018)	2.1.8. Maintain affordable and convenient financial services across the country and ensure that 50% of the adult population have bank accounts and access to basic financial services	Central Bank CPI Statistics
	SDGs 8.1.1, 17.13.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.1.10.1 Liberia inflation rate	23.4	2.1.10. Maintain and sustain single-digit inflation consistent with acceptable sub-regional standard (ECOWAS Convergence Criterion)	Central Bank CPI Statistics
	SDGs 8.1.1, 17.13.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.1.11.1 International reserves to Imports	2.7 months of import cover (2018)	2.1.11. Increase and maintain international reserves for at least 3 months imports	Central Bank Monetary Survey, Balance of Payments Survey
	SDGs 8.1.1, 17.13.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.1.12.1 Number of currency used on the market	NA	2.1.12. Achieve a single Liberian dollar currency in line with ECOWAS objective	NA
	SDGs 8.1.1, 17.13.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.1.13.1 Foreign exchange depreciation rate (year-on-year)	20.3% exchange rate depreciation y-on-y (2018)	2.1.13. Maintain foreign exchange depreciation (year-on-year) below 20% and de-dollarize by 2023	Central Bank Exchange Rates

	N/A	2.1.14.1 Number of counties having Business Registry centers	8	2.1.14. By 2023, increase number of counties with business registries from 8 to 15 counties	MOC Annual Report
	SDGs 10.5.1, 10.1.1, 10.c.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.1.15.1 Liberia rank in doing business	174 (2019)	2.1.15. Doing business rank from 174 to 152/190 (Revised)	World Doing Business Statistics
	SDGs 10.a.1, 16.4.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.1.16.1 Business transaction cost and time	tbd	2.1.16. 10% and 50% reduction in transaction cost and time	MOC Annual Report
	SDGs 10.b.1, Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.1.17.1 Ratio of regional trade to total international trade	10 (2011)	2.1.17. By 2023, increase regional trade from 10% to 20%	External Trade of Liberia Report
Sector: Increasing Competitiveness of Existing Industries	SDGs 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 8.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.1.1 Agriculture Sector contribution to real GDP	26 (2019)	2.2.1. By 2023, increase agriculture contribution from 26% to 35% of real GDP	National Accounts Survey
Sector Goal: Competitive and diversified Agricultural and Forestry Sectors	SDGs 12.3.1, 2.5.2, 2.5.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.2.1 Level of post harvest loss	tbd	2.2.2. Reduction in post-harvest loss by 50%	Agriculture baseline survey/Comprehensive Food Security Survey

SDGs 5.a.1, 5.a.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.3.1 Total number of women farmers, agro-business incubators and in agriculture value-chain	tbd	2.2.3. Double the number of women farmers, agro-business incubators and in agriculture value chain	Agriculture baseline survey/Comprehensive Food Security Survey
SDGs 2.1.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.4.1 Per centage decreased of population in food insecure regions	18% (2018)	2.2.4. Reduce number of food insecure regions by 50%	Comprehensive Food Security & Nutrition Survey (CFSNS)
SDGs 2.4.1, 2.3.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.5.1 Proportion of farmers having access to agriculture extension services	tbd	2.2.5. 75% of farmers accessing extension services and the level of productivity	Comprehensive Food Security & Nutrition Survey (CFSNS)
SDGs 2.4.1, 2.3.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.6.1 Average landholding and productivity	tbd	2.2.6. 75% of farmers accessing extension services and the level of productivity	Comprehensive Food Security & Nutrition Survey (CFSNS)
SDGs 2.3.2, 2.3.1, 5.a.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.7.1 Proportion of women farmers adopting new and innovative technology	tbd	2.2.7. 75% of women farmers adopting new and innovative technology	Comprehensive Food Security & Nutrition Survey (CFSNS)
SDGs 2.3.1, 2.3.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.8.1 Share (number) of out-grower farmers	tbd	2.2.8. 10,000 of out-grower farmers in sub-sectors	Comprehensive Food Security & Nutrition Survey (CFSNS)

		2.2.9.1 Fisheries Sector contribution to real GDP	3 (2019)	2.2.9. Increase fisheries contribution from 3% to 6% of the GDP	National Accounts Survey
	SDGs 2.b.1, 2.b.2, 2.a.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.10.1 Share (per cent) of agriculture investment from large concessions	0%	2.2.10. Community or land ownership of large concessions. Community ownership of 5% share of investment of large concessions	Concessions Economic Impact Survey
	SDGs 15.1.1, 15.1.2, 15.4.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.11.1 Level of achievement of NEP		2.2.11. By 2030, full implementation of the National Environmental Policy	EPA Annual Report
	SDGs 15.4.1, 15.2.1, 15.c.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.12.1 Proportion of environmentally protected areas	13%	2.2.12. Increase environmentally protected areas by 30%	EPA Annual Report
	SDGs 15.6.1, 15.2.1, 15.1.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.13.1 Contribution of forestry contribution to the overall real GDP	9 (2019)	2.2.13. Increase forestry contribution from 9% to 12% of real GDP	National Accounts Survey
	SDGs 15.9.1, 15.a.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.2.14.1 Proportion of woody biomass	99%	2.2.14. By 2023, reduce woody biomass to 80%	EPA Annual Report

<p>Sector: Transforming the Infrastructure</p> <p>Sector Goal: Productivity increases through infrastructure</p>	<p>SDGs 9.1.1, 9.a.1, 11.2.1</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>2.3.1.1 Kilometers of roads constructed and paved</p>	tbd	<p>2.3.1: By 2023: 517 km roads connecting all county capitals, 200km of urban roads, 83km secondary road constructed and paved</p>	MPW Annual Report
	<p>SDGs 9.1.1, 9.a.1, 11.2.1</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>2.3.2.1 Kilometers of roads maintained (primary, secondary and urban)</p>	tbd	<p>2.3.2: 4,184.7km of primary, secondary and urban roads maintained</p>	MPW Annual Report
	<p>SDGs 9.5.1, 9.5.2</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>2.3.3.1 Number of material testing facilities constructed</p>	tbd	<p>2.3.3. Constructed material testing facilities in 5 regions</p>	MPW Annual Report
	<p>SDGs 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.2.1</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>2.3.4.1 Proportion of the population having access to electricity</p>	10 (2013)	<p>2.3.4. Increase electricity access by 30% (LEC customer connections/normalisation to 2000 per month (24,000 per annum from January 2020) Revised</p>	LEC Statistics
	<p>SDGs 7.b.1, 7.a.1, 7.3.1</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>2.3.5.1 Total megawatts of Liberia electricity power generation capacity</p>	134 mw (213,338 MWH)	<p>2.3.5. Generation from 134 mw to 270 mw (Increase available electricity from 213,338 MWH in 2019 to 1,155,778 MWH in 2023. This increase includes 744,600 MWH from the CLSG interconnection) Revised</p>	LEC Statistics

SDGs 7.b.1, 7.b.1, 7.3.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.6.1 Cost of electricity per kilowatt-hour	0.37	2.3.6. Reduce cost from 0.36 to 0.25kwh	LEC Statistics
SDGs 7.3.1, 7.a.1, 7.2.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.7.1 Electricity transmission and distribution coverage	511	2.3.7. Increase transmission and distribution from 511km to 2150km Revised	LEC Statistics
SDGs 9.1.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.8.1 Revenue (%) generated from flights and vessels operations (passengers, containers, cargoes)	tbd	2.3.8. Flights and vessels passengers and containers of ship per year Volume and value of cargoes increase in revenue by 25%	NPA Annual Report
SDGs 11.1.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.9.1 Number of housing units constructed, urban/rural	2055	2.3.9. 2000 affordable housing units 80 rural housing units	NHA Annual Report
SDGs 6.1.1, 6.6.1, 6.5.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.10.1 Share of rural/urban population (%) with access to basic water services	73 (access to improved water sources) (2013)	2.3.10. By 2023: 85% access to basic water services	Demographic Health Survey
SDGs 6.4.2, 6.4.1, 6.5.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.11.1 Share of rural/urban population (%) with access to managed (improved) drinking water collection points	4% urban and 0% rural	2.3.11. 30% access to safely managed water points (Revised)	WASH Sector Performance Report
SDGs 6.2.1, 11.6.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.12.1 Share of rural/urban population (%) with access to basic sanitation	17% (improved non-shared sanitation facility) (2013)	2.3.12. 47% access to basic sanitation (Revised)	Demographic Health Survey

SDGs 6.2.1, 11.6.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.13.1 Share of rural/urban population (%) with access to sanitation facilities (onsite, offsite, solid waste)	1% in 2019	2.3.13. 60% access to safely managed sanitation (Revised)	Demographic Health Survey
SDGs 6.a.1, 6.5.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.14.1 Proportion of district WASH plan approved	0% (2017)	2.3.14. 100% district WASH plan approved	WASH Sector Performance Report 2017
SDGs 6.b.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.15.1 Per centage of communities declared open defecation free	23% urban and 61% rural	2.3.15. 100% of community open defecation free (Revised)	WASH Sector Performance Report 2017
SDGs6.a.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.16.1 Human capacity level (%) of staff in the WASH Sector	20% source to be provided by NWASH	2.3.16. 50% human capacity in WASH sector (Revised)	WASH Sector Performance Report 2018
SDGs 9.c.1, 17.6.2, 17.8.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.17.1 Proportion of the population having access to the fiber optic backbone	18%	2.3.17. 30% access to fiber optic backbone	NTA Annual Report
SDGs 9.b.1, 17.6.1, 17.8.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.18.1 Number of MACs on e-government platform	8	2.3.18. 6 ministries and agencies on e-government platform	tbd
SDGs 17.6.2, 17.6.1, 17.8.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.3.19.1 Per centage of ICT access and coverage nationwide	75%	2.3.19. Double ICT access and coverage	NTA Annual Report

Sector: Sustained Medium to Long Term Economic Growth Sector Goal: Increasing economic competitiveness while expanding markets	SDGs 8.2.1, 9.5.2, 9.5.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.4.1.1 Total amount of subsidies to State Owned Enterprises	13.63M (2017)	2.4.1 Reduce subsidies to SOE by 50%	MFDP SOE Unit Annual Report
	SDGs 10.b.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.4.2.1. Per centage of private equity investment	0%	2.4.2. 10% private equity investment in SOEs	MFDP SOE Unit Annual Report
		2.4.3.1. Proportion of development expenditure contributed by private sector or national capital markets	27.5%	2.4.3. tbd	Fiscal Expenditure Report
		2.4.4.1 Manufacturing Sector to real GDP	6.6	2.4.4. Increase contribution of manufacturing from 6.6% to 12% of real GDP;	National Accounts Survey
		2.4.5.1 Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment	tbd	2.4.5. tbd	Labour force survey
		2.4.6.1 Per centage growth in the share of labour intensive manufacturing output	tbd	2.4.6. tbd	MoC Annual Report
	SDGs 17.16.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.4.7.1 Number of Liberia's diplomatic missions globally	28	2.4.7. By 2023, increase Liberia's diplomatic presence from 28 to 31 Missions	MoFA Annual Report
	SDGs 8.a.1, 17.6.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.4.8.1 Level of economic integration and trade	tbd	2.4.8. Improve economic integration and trade	MoC Annual Report

	SDGs 10.7.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.4.9.1 Per centage increase in e-visa and passport issuance	tbd	2.4.9. Increase e-visa and passport issuance by 75%	MoFA Annual Report
	SDGs 10.6.1, 10.7.1, 10.3.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	2.4.10.1 Per centage increase Liberia's presence in international organizations	tbd	2.4.10. Increase Liberia's presence in international organization by 40%	MoFA Annual Report
Pillar 3: Sustaining the Peace Pillar Goal: A more peaceful and united society that enables economic transformation and sustainable development Sector: Ending Fragility and the Root Causes of Conflict Sector Goal: Promoting a cohesive society for sustainable development	SDGs 16.7.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	3.1.1.1 Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (SCORE) rating	66% (2016)	3.1.1. Liberia's Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (SCORE) rating improves from 66% to 80%	Liberia Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (www.scoreforpeace.org)
	SDGs 16.7.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	3.1.2.1 SCORE Index rating for civic trust and coexistence disaggregated by county, gender (per centage)	52% (2016)	3.1.2. SCORE Index rating for civic trust and coexistence improves from 52% to 70% on (disaggregated by county, gender) Note: Especially targeting improvements in civic trust and coexistence in River Cess, Nimba, Sinoe, River Gee, Lofa and Grand Cape Mount improves from below 5 to 7	Liberia Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (www.scoreforpeace.org)
	SDGs 16.1.3 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	3.1.3.1 SCORE Index rating for violent tendencies disaggregated by county, gender (per centage)	19% (2016)	3.1.3. SCORE Index rating for violent tendencies decreases from 19% to 5% on SCORE Index (disaggregated by county, gender)	Liberia Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (www.scoreforpeace.org)

<p>Sector: Justice and Human Rights</p> <p>Sector Goal: Justice Systems work for all including the poor and most marginalized / National ownership and sustainability of access to justice and rule of law initiatives</p>	<p>SDGs 16.b.1</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>3.2.1.1 Per centage increased in compliance with international, Regional and National Human Rights obligations and reporting on implemmentation</p>	<p>66% (2016)</p>	<p>3.2.1. By 2023, Liberia's compliance with International, Regional and National Human Rights Obligations and reporting on implementation is improved by 80%</p>	<p>INCHR</p>
	<p>SDGs 16.3.1</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>3.2.2.1 Share of people that are satisfied with the quality of judicial system or rule of law available to their household (% of people satisfied and very satisfied, disaggregated by county, gender)</p>	<p>69.1% (2016)</p>	<p>3.2.2. Share of people that are satisfied with the quality of judicial system or rule of law available to their household (% of people satisfied and very satisfied, disaggregated by county, gender) from 69.1% to 85%</p>	<p>Liberia Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (www.scoreforpeace.org)</p>
	<p>SDGs 16.6.2</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>3.2.3.1 Annual rate (per centage) of adjudication of cases</p>	<p>50% (2016)</p>	<p>3.2.3. Increase adjudication of cases rate from 50% to 75%</p>	<p>Judiciary Annual Report</p>
	<p>SDGs 16.3.2</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>3.2.4.1 Proportion of BCR detainees held without trial</p>	<p>65% (2016)</p>	<p>3.2.4. Proportion of BCR detainees held without trial decreases from 65% to 20%</p>	<p>MoJ Annual Report</p>
	<p>N/A</p>	<p>3.2.5.1 Number of counties covered by juvenile diversion program</p>	<p>5 (2018)</p>	<p>3.2.5. Juvenile Diversion Program available in 8 counties (baseline 5)</p>	<p>MoJ Annual Report</p>
	<p>SDGs 16.2.2, 16.2.1, 16.2.3</p> <p>Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,</p>	<p>3.2.6.1 Per centage change in the number of crimes against children (disaggregated by county)</p>	<p>65%</p>	<p>3.2.6. 10% reduction in crimes against children</p>	<p>MGCSF Annual Report</p>

Sector: Security and National Defense Sector Goal: Security forces are more professional and responsive to the needs of all	SDGs 16.1.1, 16.1.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	3.3.1.1 Per centage change in the number of violent crimes (disaggregated by county)	70%	3.3.1. 10% reduction in violent crimes	MoJ Annual Report
	SDGs 16.1.4 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	3.3.2.1 Share of people that are satisfied with their protection against crime/ their safety (% of people satisfied and very satisfied, disaggregated by county, gender)	69.4% (2016)	3.3.2. Share of people that are satisfied with their protection against crime/their safety (% of people satisfied and very satisfied disaggregated by county, gender) increases from 69.4% to 85%	Liberia Social Cohesion and Reconciliation Index (www.scoreforpeace.org)
Pillar 4: Governance and Transparency Pillar Goal: An inclusive and accountable public sector for shared prosperity and sustainable development	SDGs 17.1.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23,	4.1.1.1 Per centage growth in domestic revenue per annum	21.8% of GDP 2015/2016	4.1.1. Improve tax administration for revenue-generation increases of at least 10% per annum	PEFA Self-Assessment Report
	SDGs 17.1.1, 17.1.2, 16.6.1, 16.6.2, 12.7.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.2.1 Per centage complete of PFM systems interfaced by 2023	CS-DRM; Freebalance V7 and TAS integrated (2014-2015)	4.1.2. 4.1.2. A complete integration and interfacing of key PFM databases – PM modules, Budget management, CS-DRM, e-procurement system, CBL and TAS by 2013 (Revised)	PFM Report
	SDGs 16.9.1, 17.19.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.3.1 Per centage of Liberian citizens and residents registered in the national biometric database	0.05% (2018)	4.1.3. By 2023, Increase citizens and residents' registration in the national biometric database from 0.05% (22,312) to 50%	National Biometric Data Center (NIR), NPHC 2008
Sector: Building a More Capable State Sector Goal: More effective state institutions					

conformed to the values, codes, and standards contained in the key instruments of the African Union pertinent to governance on the continent (APRM, Abuja Declaration 2003)	SDGs 16.6.1, 17.15.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.4.1 Per centage of government spending entities that process financial transactions through IFMIS: Target 65%.	48% (2017)	4.1.4. Increase financial transaction via IFMIS from 46.7% (50/107) to 79% (85/107) by FY2022/2023 (Revised)	PFM Reform Strategy and Action Plan, 2017 PFM Reform Progress Report, published quarterly on the MFDP website.
	SDGs 16.6.1, 17.14.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.5.1 Extent to which spending is aligned with PAPD priorities in the FY19/20 annual budget and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)	69% (2014-2015)	4.1.5. Spending priorities fully aligned with PAPD priorities by FY2019/2020	PFM Report (2014-2015)
	SDGs 8.5.1, 8.5.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.6.1 An establish Civil Service Commission (CSC)	Civil Service Agency (CSA) in Place	4.1.6. Improved overall service delivery and wage bill management in the Public Sector through an established Civil Service Commission (CSCm)	CSA Act
	SDGs 4.3.1, Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.7.1 Extent to which LIPA services to civil service/public sector capacity building priorities are aligned	32% (2014)	4.1.7. Improved alignment of LIPA services to civil service/public sector capacity building priorities	USAID-GEM Annual Progress Report (2014)
	SDGs 16.6.1, Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.8.1 Total number of county treasury offices (15) by 2023	4 (2018)	4.1.8. Increase number of county treasuries from 4 to 15 counties	MFDP (Fiscal Decentralization Unit PFM Reform Progress Report
	SDGs 16.6.1, 16.6.2 Agenda	4.1.9.1 Per centage increase in service delivery through the County Service Center (CSC)	tbd	4.1.9. Increase by 10% current capacity of service delivery through County Service Centers (CSC)	MIA

	2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,				
	N/A	4.1.10.1 Number of pilot cities successfully organizing local elections for city mayors and city council members	tbd	4.1.10. Strengthened financial and administrative autonomy of 5 pilot cities – Monrovia, Paynesville, Gbarnga, Buchanan, and Ganta	
	SDGs 16.7.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.11.1 Per centage of voter registration and post-voting processes which are automated	tbd	4.1.11. By 2023, Deployment of an integrated management system that will automate the voter registration and post-voting processes	NIR Database, NHPC 2008
	SDGs 8.2.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.12.1 Status of PFM legislation on and BSE decree	tbd	4.1.12. PFM legislation on SOEs is amended and BSE decree is repealed	
	SDGs 11.3.1, 11.3.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.13.1 Avalibility of urban land use policy	tbd	4.1.13. By 2023, urban land use policy to address informal settlement and sustainable cities developed	
	SDGs 1.4.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.14.1 Avalibility of an improved land information management system	tbd	4.1.14. By 2023, Strengthening land tenure security and improved land information management system	

	SDGs 12.7.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.15.1 Per centage of MACs with procurement plans aligned to the annual budget	76% (2017)	4.1.15. By 2023, increase compliance relating to alignment of procurement plans with annual budgets from 76% to 96%	PFM Reform Strategy and Action Plan, 2017
	SDGs 16.6.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.16.1 Deployment of the automated Asset Registration and Management System	Not Available	4.1.16. Automated Asset Registration and Management System deployed by FY2021/2022	USAID-GEM Annual Progress Report (2014)
	SDGs 15.1.1, 15.1.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.1.17.1 Extent to which environmental policies and regulations are implemented	tbd	4.1.17. By 2023, full implementation of the national environmental policy	
Sector: Reducing Corruption	SDGs 16.5.1, 16.5.2 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.2.1.1 Prosecuted cases (% of total): Cases submitted by LACC to the Ministry of justice for prosecution	20% (2017)	4.2.1. By 2023, the cases prosecuted by LACC, through MoJ increased from 20% to 60% (Revised)	2017 APRM Country Review Report - Liberia, National Population and Housing Census 2008
Sector Goal: Greater transparency and accountability among government spending entities	SDGs 16.4.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.2.2.1 Per centage of government agencies audited (external)	75% (2015/2016)	4.2.2. By 2023, increase government agencies audited (external) from 75% to 95%	2017 PEFA Self-Assessment Report
	SDGs 16.4.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.2.3.1 Per centage of MACs with an internal audit presence	52% (2018)	4.2.3. By 2023, increase internal audit presence in government from 52% to 85% (Revised)	2018 IAA Annual Report

	SDGs 16.6.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.2.4.1 Number of MACs using the e-procurement system for procurement purposes	System requirements for e-procurement developed (2017)	4.2.4. By FY2021/2022, an e-procurement system deployed to 50 MACs	PFM Reform Strategy and Action Plan, 2017
	SDGs 16.6.1 Agenda 2063:1.2.1.23, 17.15.1,	4.2.5.1 Number of MACs producing budget execution and financial reports using IFMIS in accordance with the PFM Law	60 (2017)	4.2.5. By FY2022/2023, the number of MACs producing budget execution and financial reports in accordance with the PFM Law increased from 60 to 85 (Revised)	PFM Reform Strategy and Action Plan, 2017 PFM Reform Progress Report, published quarterly on the MFDP website.
	N/A	4.2.6.1 Number of land dispute cases filed in the court system	tbd	4.2.6. By 2023, reduction by 50% from its current position the number of land dispute cases	

ANNEX 3: Liberia SDG Data – baseline and progress³

Sustainable Development Goals and targets	Indicators	Baseline <2015 ⁴	<2020 status
Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere			
1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day	1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)	38.6 (2014)	40.9 (2016)
1.2 By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions	1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, by sex and age	54.1 (2014)	50.9 (2016)
	1.2.2 Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions		
Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture			
2.1 By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round	2.1.1 Prevalence of undernourishment	38.8	37.2 (2017)
	2.1.2 Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)		
Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages			
3.1 By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births	3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio	691	661 (2017)
	3.1.2 Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel	61.1 (2013)	
3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births	3.2.1 Under-5 mortality rate	78.9	70.9 (2018)
	3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate	26.1	24.5 (2018)
3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases	3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations	0.8% incidence	0.6 (2018)
	3.3.2 Tuberculosis incidence per 100,000 population	308	308 (2018)
	3.3.3 Malaria incidence per 1,000 population	200.85	192.59 (2017)
	3.3.4 Hepatitis B incidence per 100,000 population		
	3.3.5 Number of people requiring interventions against neglected tropical diseases		

³ Only those indicators for which data is available are listed

⁴ Unless otherwise mentioned, all data is for the year 2015

3.4 By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being	3.4.1 Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease	17.2	17.6 (2016)
	3.4.2 Suicide mortality rate	6.5	6.8 (2016)
3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol	3.5.1 Coverage of treatment interventions (pharmacological, psychosocial and rehabilitation and aftercare services) for substance use disorders		
	3.5.2 Harmful use of alcohol, defined according to the national context as alcohol per capita consumption (aged 15 years and older) within a calendar year in litres of pure alcohol	5.8 (2016)	
3.6 By 2020, halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents	3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries	33.7 (2013)	35.9 (2016)
3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes	3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods	37.2 (2013)	
	3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate (aged 10–14 years; aged 15–19 years) per 1,000 women in that age group	137.2	135.5(2018)
3.9 By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination	3.9.1 Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution	170.2 (2016)	
	3.9.2 Mortality rate attributed to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene (exposure to unsafe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All (WASH) services)	41.5 (2016)	
	3.9.3 Mortality rate attributed to unintentional poisoning	1.8	1.8 (2016)
Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all			
4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education	4.2.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age who are developmentally on track in health, learning and psychosocial well-being, by sex		
	4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex	157.8	125.1 (2017)
4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy	4.6.1 Proportion of population in a given age group achieving at least a fixed level of proficiency in functional (a) literacy and (b) numeracy skills, by sex	77.0 (Male) 54.0 (Female)	
4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all	4.a.1 Proportion of schools with access to (a) electricity; (b) the Internet for pedagogical purposes; (c) computers for pedagogical purposes; (d) adapted infrastructure and materials for students with disabilities; (e) basic drinking water; (f) single-sex basic sanitation facilities; and (g) basic handwashing facilities (as per the WASH indicator definitions)	56.21302	
Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls			
5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere	5.1.1 Whether or not legal frameworks are in place to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination on the basis of sex	National Gender Policy developed	

		2009 and revised 2017	
5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation	5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18	8.8 before age 15 35.9 before age 18 (2013)	
	5.3.2 Proportion of girls and women aged 15–49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age	44.4 percent (2013)	
5.5 Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life	5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments	11	12.33 (2019)
	5.5.2 Proportion of women in managerial positions		
5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences	5.6.1 Proportion of women aged 15–49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care	67.2 (2013)	
	5.6.2 Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee full and equal access to women and men aged 15 years and older to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education	1. NationalPolicy on Girl Education (2009) 2. Compulsory Primary Education Policy (2011)	
Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all			
6.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all	6.1.1 Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services	71.9	72.9 (2017)
6.2 By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations	6.2.1 Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services, including a hand-washing facility with soap and water	16.6	16.9 (2017)
6.a By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies	6.a.1 Amount of water- and sanitation-related official development assistance that is part of a government-coordinated spending plan	37.99899	
Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all			
7.1 By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services	7.1.1 Proportion of population with access to electricity	15.3	21.4 (2017)
	7.1.2 Proportion of population with primary reliance on clean fuels and technology	0.71	

7.2 By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix	7.2.1 Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption	83%	
7.3 By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency	7.3.1 Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and GDP	25	
Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all			
8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries	8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita	0	1.2 (2017)
8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services	8.3.1 Proportion of informal employment in non-agriculture employment, by sex	90.15(2014)	
8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value	8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees, by occupation, age and persons with disabilities		
	8.5.2 Unemployment rate, by sex, age and persons with disabilities	2.079	3.004 (2017)
8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training	8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training	19.9	16.9 (2016)
8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all	8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider	35% (2017)	
Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation			
9.2 Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries	9.2.1 Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP and per capita	2.1%	1.7% (2018)
9.4 By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities	9.4.1 CO ₂ emission per unit of value added	0.16 (2014)	
Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable			
11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums	11.1.1 Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing	65.7 (2014)	

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts²			
13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning	13.2.1 Number of countries that have communicated the establishment or operationalization of an integrated policy/strategy/plan which increases their ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development in a manner that does not threaten food production (including a national adaptation plan, nationally determined contribution, national communication, biennial update report or other)	Liberia has a national adaptation plan, nationally determined contribution, national communication, biennial update report	
Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development			
14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information	14.5.1 Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas	0.101% (2016)	0.103%(2018)
Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss			
15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements	15.1.1 Forest area as a proportion of total land area	43%	43%(2016)
Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels			
16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms	16.5.2 Proportion of businesses that had at least one contact with a public official and that paid a bribe to a public official, or were asked for a bribe by those public officials during the previous 12 months	56.1% (2017)	
16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration	16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age	24.6% (2013)	
Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development			
17.1 Strengthen domestic resource mobilization, including through international support to developing countries, to improve domestic capacity for tax and other revenue collection	17.1.1 Total government revenue as a proportion of GDP, by source	12% (2013)	

17.2 Developed countries to implement fully their official development assistance commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries; ODA providers are encouraged to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries	17.2.1 Net official development assistance, total and to least developed countries, as a proportion of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee donors' gross national income (GNI)	1094430054	570750000 (2018)
17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources	17.3.1 Foreign direct investment (FDI), official development assistance and South-South cooperation as a proportion of total domestic budget	7.323	
	17.3.2 Volume of remittances (in United States dollars) as a proportion of total GDP	20%	14% (2018)
17.4 Assist developing countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief and debt restructuring, as appropriate, and address the external debt of highly indebted poor countries to reduce debt distress	17.4.1 Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services	8.725	
17.6 Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge-sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism	17.6.2 Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by speed	0.156	
17.8 Fully operationalize the technology bank and science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries by 2017 and enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology	17.8.1 Proportion of individuals using the Internet	7.319	
17.13 Enhance global macroeconomic stability, including through policy coordination and policy coherence	17.13.1 Macroeconomic Dashboard	3.5	

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Government of Liberia, 2008, Population and Housing Census

Government of Liberia, 2014, Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector Policy

Government of Liberia, 2018, Liberian Agricultural Sector Investment Plan (2018-2022)

Government of Liberia, Environmental Protection Agency, 2018, National Policy And Response Strategy On Climate Change

Government of Liberia, 2019, Liberia Electricity Report

Government of Liberia, 2019, Beijing+25 National Review Report

Ministry of Health, Disease prevention and care strategies for HIV, Malaria and TB

Ministry of Health, Government of Liberia, National Action Plan for Health Security (2018-2022)

Ministry of Commerce, Government of Liberia, Annual Reports

Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Liberia, Annual Reports

Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services, 2016, Household Income and Expenditure Survey

Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services, 2013 and 2019, Demographic and Health Survey, Key Indicators Report

Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services, 2018, Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey of Liberia

Liberia Revenue Authority, 2018, Annual report

United Nations, 2020, A UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19

UNDP, 2017, Rapid Integrated Assessment to Facilitate Mainstreaming of SDGs Into National And Local Plans

UNDP, 2019, Human Development Report

UNDP, 2019, Multidimensional Poverty Index

UNDP Annual Reports (2015-19)

UNICEF, 2019, Liberia Country Situation Analysis Report and Annual Reports (2015-2019)

UN-Habitat, Country Reports (2017-19)

World Health Organization, Country Reports (2015-2019)

World Health Organization, Global Health Observatory Data Repository/World Health Statistics

World Health Organization, Global Tuberculosis Reports

World Bank, 2018, From Growth to Development: Priorities for Sustainably Reducing Poverty and Achieving Middle-Income Status by 2030

World Bank, 2019, Liberia Government Constraints to Service Delivery WASH Sector Financing

UN-Women, 2018, Progress report under the Joint UN Programme 'Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women'

UNAIDS estimates (2015-2019)

FAO, 2018, National gender profile of agriculture and rural livelihoods

SIDA country reports (2017-19)

USAID, Annual Reports (2015-2019)

Women NGO Secretariat of Liberia, 2015, NGO Shadow Report to 7th& 8th Periodic Report of Liberia on CEDAW

Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe, 2019, Global Hunger Index Report

Cities Alliance country reports (2015-19)

Centre for Civil and Political Rights, 2018, Report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

International Peace Institute, 2019, Sustaining Peace in Liberia: New Reforms, New Opportunities?

Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2018, Lessons Identified from United Nations Mission in Liberia Support to Rule of Law in Liberia

Maternal mortality and the metempsychosis of user fees in Liberia: A mixed-methods analysis, 2019