



**Civil Society Engagement with the Government of Liberia
on Monitoring the Agenda for Transformation (AfT)
With a Human Rights Based Approach
13-17 November 2012**

Introduction

On CSO-led monitoring of the PRS 1

During the implementation period of the PRS 1, a group of Liberian Civil Society Organisations, with support from UNDP Liberia and the Human Rights and Protection Section of UNMIL, started to monitor the effectiveness of service delivery in Liberia from a Human Rights Perspective. They want to continue doing so under the PRS 2 while improving on their own effectiveness by involving citizens and local organisations more actively in service monitoring, and by strengthening their cooperation with Government in this process. The Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, which is the key Ministry in charge of monitoring the PRS 2 implementation, has already confirmed its interest and willingness to take an active role in this innovative partnership between government and civil society.

Given the weak but gradually improving institutional setting in Liberia and the need to rebuild democratic institutions at the local level, the next phase will focus primarily on the quality of services delivered directly to citizens (like water, health and education facilities) from a Human Rights perspective, as an entry point for dialogue and starting point for improving service delivery mechanisms and their underlying governance practices. It will help in achieving a different citizen-state relationship that is open, mutually respectful and that recognises the importance of active citizenship in building a stable democratic society in Liberia. ***See a brief overview of the proposed project in Annex 2.***

On the launch of Vision 2030 & the Agenda for Transformation

Meanwhile, the government of Liberia is gearing up to launch the “VISION 2030” Mid December , 2012, a new development blue print covering the period 2011-2030. The government has also developed the Agenda for Transformation (AfT), a five-year strategy for the medium-term implementation of VISION 2030.

A key feature in the AfT that is different from its predecessor PRS 1 is the emphasis on results rather than a focus on the implementation of activities or deliverable. This paradigm shift to measuring development results will also require both the technical knowhow (skills set) accompanied by the requisite mindset change by all stakeholder responsible for implementation, as well as the emphasis on measuring ‘change in lives’ rather than only tracking implementation of activities and or deliverables.

Therefore, as the government prepares to launch the VISION and begins the implementation of the AfT, it is necessary to provide civil society organizations wanting to track the implementation an insight and understanding of the Agenda for Transformation to enable them interact with the document from an informed basis. By doing this, they will be exposed to the o of the key components of the AfT, including the new pillar structures, the Result Framework Matrix, the monitoring and evaluation plan and the link to the national budget.

A critical component in the awareness creation for the AfT is its linkage to the development of a second generation County Development Agenda (CDA) which will be a sub-plan for the AfT at the local level that allows for specific interventions as planned for the county for which other development actors can intervene. The CDA will be developed based on wide range consultations at the county specific level. This process when undertaken will also be informed by the results of the country-wide district consultations on the national visioning process, and from the results of CSO-led monitoring.

Rationale for this Strategy Meeting

Coordination between the CSO monitoring project management and the Government has been rather poor in the first phase of the PRS Tracking project, partly because CSOs preferred to work separately from the Government in order to ensure the independence of their monitoring work. As a result, much-needed information held by Government was not forthcoming, when requested by the CSOs.

For this second phase, cooperation between civil society and the Government needs to be formalised and activated from the very beginning. It is important, first, to reach an agreement on a set of indicators agreeable to all, with a view to enabling triangulation between government data and civil society data. Constructive collaboration will also be required in data collection and sharing of findings.

It is in this spirit of collaboration and strategic joint planning that this Strategy Meeting is proposed, as an opportunity for the Ministry (at national and county levels) and Civil Society to:

1. **Familiarize all stakeholders with the AfT**, its formulation process, its content, its M&E framework, the key structures and implementation arrangements between national and sub-national levels, to enable the creation of awareness of the AfT amongst civil society organizations, with particular emphasis on the forthcoming development of a second generation of county development agendas.

2. **Agree on the complementarity of approaches:** Reach a clear understanding of how the data generated by the CSO monitoring process with a human rights-based approach will usefully complement the data to be produced by the official PRS 2 monitoring framework;
3. **Finalize the project's concept note:** Jointly review and fine-tune the draft concept note which has already been developed for the next phase, in light of the most recent developments related to PRS 2 implementation structures and monitoring procedures;
4. **Draft an MoU detailing the Government-CSO partnership:** Formalize their cooperation through a Memorandum of Understanding specifying the rights and responsibilities of each partner, throughout the course of the project.

More specifically, the Strategy Meeting aims to address the following aspects:

- a. Explain the concepts of results-based monitoring, and the various monitoring structures and procedures that government will use to monitor progress on the PRS 2;
- b. Mutually agree on the complementary character of the CSO's monitoring process (i.e. what is its added value) at both national and county levels;
- c. Mutually agree on the methodology and indicators to be used by the CSOs in their monitoring process, with a human rights-based approach and special emphasis on gender sensitivity;
- d. Discuss how that information can and will be made available to government at various levels;
- e. Discuss how relevant government information (baseline data, plans and budgets, monitoring data) will become available to the CSOs;

Duration:

The Strategy Meeting will take place over a period of two days, outside of Monrovia.

Targeted participants:

- Representatives of the four networks of CSOs i.e. the PRS Tracking Network, the Human Rights and Disability Task Force, the Human Rights & Budget Forum , and the Women NGOs Secretariat
- Representatives from the National Civil Society Council of Liberia (NCSCCL)
- Government Representatives from the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs & LDRC
- 4 facilitator – MOPEA
- 5 PILLAR TECHNICAL Advisors– MOPEA
- 3 DRIVERS – MOPEA
- 3 CDO (bong, lofa & bassa)
- 3 M&E (BONG, Lofa, Bassa)
- 5 staff from Sectoral & Regional Planning

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- 5 facilitators
- UNDP
- UNMIL Human Rights and Protection Section
- Trust Africa Liberia

Tentative Agenda for a Strategy Meeting on:
**Civil Society Engagement with the Government of Liberia
on Monitoring the PRS II and the Agenda for Transformation (AFT)
With a Human Rights Based Approach**

| Day 1 – 14 Nov |
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| 1. Arrival & Registration 8:-8:45 am |
| 2. Welcome & introduction (Min of Planning, CSOs, UNDP, HRPS, Trust Africa) 8:45-9:15 |
| 3. Meeting objectives & Overview of agenda over the 3 days and setting the stage (Facilitator) – 9:15-9:45 |
| 1. Overview of PRS 1 Implementation, Coordination & Field Level M&E <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Experiences & constraints b. Best practices & lessons learnt.....9:45-10:15 |
| 2. Question and Answer 10:15-10:45 |
| 3. 10:45-11:00 Coffee break |
| 4. Understanding the Aft:-----11:00-11:45 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Formulation b. Composition (Pillar & Sector Composition) c. Understanding the Results Framework (RF) d. Presentation of the M&E Plan/baselines and indicators e. Data Collection (field based M&E) with focus on Results (measuring change) |
| 5. Question and Answer 11:45-12:30 |
| 6. Lunch 12:30-1:30 |
| 7. Implementation & Coordination Mechanism of the Aft-----1:30-2:30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Presenting the national level coordination mechanism b. Defining the County level coordination mechanism c. Aft Pillar Chair & Co Chair Structure d. Aft Sectors structure e. County Level M&E – Monitoring Aft Sectoral interventions against the Results Framework Matrix (RFM) f. Sector/LMA M&E at County Level g. Data collection (M&E)Tools, Templates, & Frequency |
| 8. Question and Answer 2:30-3:15 |
| 9. 3:15-3:30 Coffee Break |
| 10. Reporting: Using the Rapid Results Approach for Aft implementation Coordination and Reporting. -----3:30-4:30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 90 – day results framework |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Score Card Implementation c. County Level Reporting on the AfT Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Reporting Structure ii. Reporting Tools iii. Reporting frequency |
| 11. Questions and Answer -----4:30-5:00 |
| Day 2 – 15 Nov |
| Breakfast-----8:45 |
| 12. Recap day 1 & Objectives for Day 2 (Facilitator)-----8:45-9:00 |
| 13. |
| 14. Applying an Human-Rights Based Approach to monitoring the implementation of the AfT: Review of basic principles 9:9:30...UNMIL/HRPS |
| 15. Questions and Answer 9:30-10 |
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| Question and Answer 10:11:00 |
| Coffee Break 11:11:15 |
| 16. Presentation of the proposed CSO monitoring methodology & general overview of the project proposal |
| 17. Community-Based Monitoring: Combination of Community Score Cards and Community Service Monitoring11:15-12:00 |
| 18. 12:12:30 question and Answer |
| 19. 12:30-1:30 -----Lunch |
| 20. <u>Group work</u> : <i>What is the added-value of CSO’s monitoring the official M&E framework of the AfT?</i> → Group 1: Ministry staff → Group 2: CSO representatives → <u>Plenary</u> : Do perceptions between the two groups differ? Can we reach a consensus on how we would like CSO monitoring to complement the official M&E procedures? 1:30-3:30 |
| 21. <u>Coffee break</u> 3:30-3:45 |
| 22. 2 nd Generation CDA Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Roadmap b. The Process & Content c. Roles and Responsibilities - MoPEA County Teams, Sectoral & Regional Planning, the LRDC and CSOs.3:45-4:30 |
| 23. |
| 24. Question & Answer 4:30-5:00 |
| 25. |
| Breakfast-----8:00-8: 45 |
| 27. Recap day 2 & Objectives for Day 3 (Facilitator) 8:45-9:00 |
| 28. <u>Group work</u> : <i>What should be monitored by the CSOs, in addition to what the government will be monitoring?</i> -----9-10-45 → Four groups, each one constituted by a mix of government and CSO representatives → Using the AfT M&E framework as a starting point, are there human rights standards and principles (incl. gender sensitivity) that could be reinforced in the framework if existing |

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| <p>indicators were complemented with citizen data from community-based monitoring?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Amongst existing indicators in the official M&E framework, which ones would be best measured using participatory methods such as Community Scorecards and Community Service Monitoring? ➔ |
| <p>29. Coffee break 10:45-11:00</p> |
| <p><u>Plenary</u>: Reach consensus on the design of a CSO monitoring framework which is complementary to the official M&E framework (i.e. agreement on HR/good governance principles and general indicators which can then be applied to various sectors)</p> <p>30. 11:12:30</p> |
| <p>d. LUNCH 12:30-1:30</p> |
| <p>Drafting the Government-Civil Society Partnership: Presentation & discussion in plenary of a draft MoU:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ How will relevant government information (baseline data, plans and budgets, monitoring data) become available to the CSOs? ➔ How will the CSOs involve local government staff in the monitoring process at local level? ➔ At national, county and possibly district levels, what type of platforms for interaction between government and civil society will be established to facilitate an active interaction between stakeholders regarding all aspects of service delivery? ➔ What role exactly will play the desk officer to be appointed in the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs as the focal point for the project, and who will actively interact with CSOs at national level through their project manager? 1:30—4:00 |

Annex 2 – Summary Brief on the Project Concept Note

Project Objective

The objective of this second phase will therefore be to improve the active participation of citizens in the planning and monitoring of service provision by the government in order to:

- Enhance local ownership of the services provided;
- Improve the effectiveness, efficiency, quality and equity of service delivery;
- Improve the responsiveness and social accountability of service providers;
- Enhance the voice and agency of marginalised groups, especially women, youth and person with disabilities to demand for equity in access to services;
- Strengthen democratic processes at the local level.

The project aims to do so by:

- Involving citizens in data collection on service provision to compare and validate regular data collection and performance monitoring by government institutions;
- Enhancing citizens' awareness regarding their entitlements to good quality services, which is an important starting point for improving social accountability;
- Exposing inequitable delivery of services either geographically or between different socio-economic groups;
- Enhancing the capacities of service providers and monitoring institutions to enter into a constructive dialogue with civil society and citizens, to integrate and respond to monitoring data collected by local organisations and to provide citizens proactively with timely and accurate plans and budgets to enable them to monitor progress;
- Strengthening the capacity of civil society organisations at community, district, county and national level to hold government and its service providers accountable and enter into a constructive dialogue on how service provision and the quality of governance could improve;

As a result, both citizens and local service providing institutions are getting prepared for a more decentralized service delivery system that the Government of Liberia is planning to roll out during the coming few years, while good quality data on PRS performance will become available at county and national level that can be used to hold service providing ministries accountable.

Project activities

Given the innovative character of the project and the limited capacities presently available, the project will start in 80 community in 4 counties for the first two years and, if successful, it will be scaled up to a full programme and include all 15 counties in Liberia during its second phase, which will last for an additional 3 years. During the initial phase, the project will focus on water, health, education and agriculture services.

In order to achieve the above objectives, the project will have a civil society and a government capacity development component and a third component that will improve government-civil society interaction at all levels.

A. Civil Society component:

Under this component the capacities of Civil Society organisations will be strengthened to play their roles in the proposed monitoring system and prepare them to interact with government constructively once more functions and resources are delegated to lower levels of government administration. The project will support NGOs at three levels:

- National NGOs will provide technical and mentoring support to county level NGOs and will receive training and support to analyse and utilise data at the national level for policy revision at ministerial level;
- County level NGOs will support and capacitate the 20 community CBOs in their county to do basic data collection and monitor the performance of local service providers, while they will receive training and mentoring support from the national NGOs to analyse data at their level, engage with government at the county level and gain access to and use relevant planning data to conduct service and budget monitoring;
- The 80 community CBOs or community groups will actively monitor, either for a general or from a specific stakeholder group perspective, the quality of ongoing service delivery and report that to the higher levels (both civil society and government). They will receive extensive training and ongoing mentoring support by the county level NGOs as well as from ACDOs.

The project will explore possibilities to make use of social media for data management to speed up data management and improve the response time from service providers.

B. Government component:

On the government side, the project aims to support CDOs and ACDOs as well as departmental staff in the four sector ministries to enhance:

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- Their capacities to monitor services from a Human Rights perspective;
- Their awareness about the rights of citizens to access government information;
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The actual support provided top government staff will depend on the outcome of a capacity needs assessment that needs to be conducted before the finalisation of the project proposal.

C. Enhancing government-civil society partnership:

At national, county and possibly district level, platforms for interaction between government and civil society will be established and supported that will facilitate an active interaction between stakeholders regarding all aspect of service delivery. It is proposed that a desk officer will be appointed in the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs who will be the focal point for the project and who will actively interacts with NGOs at national level through their project manager.

On both government and civil society side appropriate project management structures will be created that will ensure that the project will adhere to the principles of transparency and accountability.