

## **LIBERIA LAND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS COORDINATION MEETING**

January 21, 2021

Time: 11:00 am

### **AGENDA**

1. Opening Remarks
2. Review of minutes from meeting of October 15, 2020 and action points arising
3. Updates from the LLA on activities on key achievements of various projects in 2020
4. (LLAP, ILAMP, LFSP, UN, Tenure Facility)
5. Updates from Development Partners
6. Action Points
7. Closing

**Participants:** UN Women, World Bank, UNDP, Lantmateriet, LLA, Medici Land Governance, EU, FAO

**Chair:** LLA

### **Background**

The meeting is intended to improve coordination and collaboration between development partners working in the land sector of Liberia in order to build synergies and avoid duplication and overlaps during project implementation.

The meeting was chaired by Daniela Gray-Johnson, Project Director at the Liberia Land Authority who proceeded with the review and follow up of action points from the meeting of October 15, 2020.

### **Action Points**

1. Linus suggested that although the USAID/ LGSA project has ended, their participation at development partners meeting will help in identifying gaps that could be useful for the development of future USAID funded projects in the sector. He therefore recommended that USAID is contacted to ensure their participation at future meetings.
2. Linus Pott promised to make contact with FAO to ensure that they participate in the next meeting.
3. The LLA to submit concept note and budget to UN Women to support the validation of the its Gender Integrated Strategy.

For action point 1, the LLA contacted USAID and Mulbah Forkpa of USAID's Liberia Economic Growth, Democracy, Rights, and Governance Office promised to participate in the meetings, however he was on his annual vacation at the time of the meeting and could not participate. For action point 2, Linus contacted FAO and Francesco Romano participated in the meeting. Regarding action point 3, the validation of the LLA Gender Integrated Strategy (GIS), the LLA submitted the concept note to UN Women and the validation exercise is scheduled to be conducted in February 2021.

### **Updates from the LLA**

The LLA reported on its achievements that were supported by various donors and development partners that includes the World Bank supported Liberia Land Administration Project and the Liberia Forest Sector Project, the SIDA supported Inclusive Land Administration and Management Project, the UN supported Sustaining Peace and Reconciliation through Strengthening Land Governance and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms Project and Landesa. The report also highlights achievements of the International Land and Forest Tenure Facility supported Protection of Customary Collective Community Land Rights in Liberia Project (P3CL) and the International Trade Initiative (IDH) that supported 34 communities to complete community self-identification (CSI), which is the first step of the customary land formalization process. *(The consolidated report on achievements will be shared with partners along with the meeting notes for their easy reference).*

### **Medici Land Governance**

Mr. Levi Lewis of Medici Land Governance Project informed the meeting that their project is a systematic land titling pilot project that will be implemented in or around Monrovia to cover about one thousand (1000) residential land parcels. The project which will commence in May 2021, will demarcate, document and provide an open source land information management systems (LIMS) that will recognize and record the rights of Liberian landowners.

### **European Union**

Vera Lellen of the EU thanked the LLA for its achievements in 2020. She said that EU is supporting a project to be implemented by Action Aid, Forum Sid and Den-L. The contract was finalized in December 2020, and the project is expected to commence on February 15, 2021. It will focus on women land rights, enhancing the capacity of CSOs on gender equality and enhancing the capacity of Community Land and Development Management Committees (CLDMC) and Alternative Dispute Resolution. In response, Daniela Gray-Johnson thanked Vera for her update and said the LLA will be reaching out to the EU and implementing partners for more information and engagement on the new project.

### **ILAMP**

Christopher Byren mentioned that some of ILAMP's activities focuses on CSO coordination in the land sector and stressed the need for one major platform for CSOs coordination rather than having multiple forums. He also noted that there is no need to initiate another forum for CSO coordination at the LLA.

### **UN-Women**

Jennifer Mbithi of UN-Women said in addition to what was reported in the achievement updates on the UN Project, UN-Women under the Sustaining Peace And Reconciliation Through Strengthening Land Governance and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms Project in collaboration with the LLA, the National Center for the Coordination of the Response Mechanism (NCCRM) and the Peace Building Office (PBO) contracted the services of a consultant to design a monitoring and evaluation framework for early warning

in land conflict and also conducted training in gender mainstreaming for the Gender Units of the LLA and the National Bureau of Concessions.

### **World Bank**

Linus said there was a need for partners to build synergies for the decentralization of LLA County Offices and said that he was willing to work with the LLA as it engages its partners.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

### **Attendance**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Email</b>
1.	P. Bloh Sayeh	LLA	Vice Chairman	pbsayeh@gmail.com
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3.	Daniela Gray-Johnson	LLA	Project Director	<a href="mailto:gjohnsondaniela@gmail.com">gjohnsondaniela@gmail.com</a>
4.	Jennifer Mbithi	UN Women	Project Specialist-Gender and Land Management	<a href="mailto:jennifer.mbithi@unwomen.org">jennifer.mbithi@unwomen.org</a>
5.	Catherine Waliaula	UN (LMPTF Secretariat)	Programme Coordinator & Head of Secretariat; Liberia Multi-Partner Trust Fund / Peace-building Fund	<a href="mailto:catherine.waliaula@one.un.org">catherine.waliaula@one.un.org</a>
6.	Christopher Byren	Lantmäteriet	Project Manager; Inclusive Liberia Land Administration and Management Project	<a href="mailto:christopher.byren@lm.se">christopher.byren@lm.se</a>
7.	Lincoln Flomo	LLA	M & E Officer	lfscalex@gmail.com
8.	Levi Lewis	Medici Land Governanace Project	Head of Product and Development, MLG	llewis@mediciland.com
9.	Francesco Romano	Food & Agriculture Organization		francesca.romano@fao.org
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# **LIBERIA DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS COORDINATION MEETING**

March 23, 2021

Time: 2:00 pm

## **AGENDA**

1. Opening Remarks
2. Review of minutes from meeting of January 21, 2021 and action points arising
3. Briefing by the Multi-Actor Partners on Land Governance on the upcoming National Land Conference
4. Discussions on LLA decentralization, issues and challenges
  - Upcoming workshop on LLA's decentralization and development of SOPs for county land office
  - Upcoming workshop to finalize five (5) draft guidelines and regulations for the formalization of customary land and
5. Updates/ Remarks by Land Development Partners
6. Action Points
7. Closing

**Participants:** UN Women, World Bank, USAID, Lantmateriet, LLA, Medici Land Governance, EU, FAO, LLA, MAP, UNDP, WWH

**Chair:** LLA

## **Background**

The meeting is intended to improve coordination and collaboration between development partners working in the land sector of Liberia in order to build synergies and avoid duplication and overlaps during project implementation.

The meeting was chaired by Daniela Gray-Johnson, Project Director at the Liberia Land Authority.

## **Presentation on the Multi-Actor Partners on Land Governance and upcoming National Land Conference**

John Kelvin of the Multi-Actor Partners on Land Governance made a presentation on the history, mission and vision of the platform. He noted the following:

- MAP was established in Liberia in 2018, with a vision to improve land governance and responsible agricultural investment. The platform was initiated by the Land for Life Project funded by the German Government and implemented by Welthungerhilfe and its national partner Rights and Rice Foundation.
- The Platform is made up of about 30 CSOs working on land reform in Liberia, international organizations, government agencies including the LLA and EPA, private sector, academia, INGOs, development partners, and community representatives etc.

### Some achievements of MAP

- The formulation of a Steering Committee, which is the governing body and co-convened by the Government is in process. The criteria have been drafted and outreach activities are ongoing.
- The formation of four Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) representing different members based on their expertise as listed below:
  1. Promotion of customary land rights
  2. Dissemination of the Land Rights Act
  3. Women and Youth
  4. Responsible Agriculture Investment
- MAP's communication strategy has been developed and is to be validated;
- MAP supported the implementation of the Land rights Acts and working with all actors for its implementation.

### Upcoming National Land Conference in Liberia

In his presentation, Mr. James Yarsiah explained that the purpose of the upcoming National Land Conference under the theme “Celebrating three years of the Land Rights Act of Liberia” is to review progress made towards the implementation of the Land Rights Act of 2018, highlight challenges, analyze and identify opportunities and make recommendations and commitments to fast track its implementation. The conference is being organized by the Multi-Actor Partners on Land Governance and co-convened by the Liberia Land Authority and Civil Society Organizations in Liberia. The conference was proposed for June 2021, but discussions are ongoing to reschedule to October or November 2021, at a venue outside Monrovia (Buchanan or somewhere else not very far from the capital).

To avoid many actors and presentations and ensure tangible results, the organizers proposed the establishment of eight thematic groups to deliver on the objectives of the thematic areas. The thematic groups are:

1. Mapping of activities of all actors in Liberia's land sector - donors, international development partners and national actors - (incl. geo-referenced map)
2. Status of regulations to implement the LRA
3. Customary land rights formalization
4. Women and Youth land rights
5. Monitoring of progress in land governance
6. Decentralization of land services
7. Linkage of land tenure security to responsible agricultural investment and food security
8. Land sector coordination

The conference will host about 165 participants that will include five participants per county, CSOs, INGOs, International Development partners, donors etc.

The overall budget for the conference is US\$130,000 and the organizers are seeking financial support from donors for the successful hosting of this conference. FAO has pledged US\$50,000 and MAP has committed between US\$10,000-15,000, leaving with a funding gap of about US\$100,000.

Jennifer of UN-Women suggested that MAP shares the budget with partners for review and provide them the opportunity to decide which component they can support.

Christopher Byren of ILAMP suggested that MAP engages with the Swedish Embassy for possible funding.

Francesco Romano of FAO said it was necessary to be sure of commitment from partners for the conference and the timeframe. She noted that if additional support is not ensured, FAO might shift the funding allotted for the conference until the time of the conference is finally decided.

A question was asked whether the meetings would be physical or virtual given the COVID-19 health pandemic and in response Mr. Yarsiah said physical meeting with rigid health protocols was the preferred option.

Ivan Gray of MAP suggested that a budget for a virtual conference be drafted as an option if the health situation gets worse.

### **Discussions on LLA decentralization, issues and challenges**

In her presentation the Vice Chairman of the Liberia Land Authority, Madam Sayeh, informed the meeting that the World Bank funded Liberia Land Administration Project supported the assessment of (11) eleven LLA land offices around the country. The purpose of the assessment was to engage local authorities to find suitable structures and assess staff capacity and renovation needs.

- Based upon the assessment, the LLAP will support the renovation of five county offices (**Bong, Lofa, Gbarpolu, Bomi and Grand Gedeh**). Consultants have been contracted to develop Bill of Quantities (BOQ) and conduct Environmental and Social Risk Mitigation Plan (ESRMP) for the five county land offices which is expected to begin soon.
- The World Bank funded Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP) have committed to support the renovation of two county land offices (**Grand Bassa and Montserrado**)
- The UN supported Sustaining Peace and Reconciliation Through Strengthening Land Governance and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms Project will support the renovation of county land offices in the four project intervention counties (**Cape Mount, Nimba, Sinoe and Maryland**). She however noted that there are issues related to adequate office space in Sinoe and Maryland County. **Both counties have only a room serving as office space.**
- The counties of **River-Gee, Grand Kru, Rivercess and Margibi** have not received support for their effective functioning.

### **Upcoming workshop on LLA's decentralization and development of SOPs for county land office**

The LLA will be hosting a three-day workshop to discuss key issues and get inputs from donors, partners, CSOs and other government institutions on the decentralization of LLA county land offices and the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for these offices. The workshop will be held from March 29-31, 2021. It is expected that the workshop will inform the development of a vision of LLA CLOs and standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Linus Pott of the World Bank suggested that the LLA begins to think about how functions of the LLA that are being carried out by other government agencies will be transferred and suggested that it be discussed during the planned decentralization workshop.

### **Upcoming workshop to finalize five (5) draft guidelines and regulations for the formalization of customary land**

The LLA, in collaboration with MAP is planning a technical session to review, provide inputs and finalize tools, templates, regulations that have been developed by the LLA and other partners for the formalization of customary land. The instruments to be reviewed and finalized are:

- Draft Guidelines for Confirmatory Survey
- Draft Guidelines for the validation of tribal certificates into deeds
- Draft Guide on Boundary Harmonization of Customary Land in Liberia
- Draft Guide for Systematic Land Titling of Customary Land in Liberia
- Customary Land Governance Regulations, developed with the support of USAID/LGSA.

The above-mentioned tools, when finalized will be validated at a National Workshop along with priority regulation for the implementation of the LRA developed with the support of the World Bank funded LLAP and adopted by the Board of Commissioners of the LLA. The priority regulations are:

- Dispute Resolution and Judicial Review of Community Lands
- Inventory of Government Lands and Harmonization of Boundaries;
- Community Lands Use and Management; and
- Community Negotiations of Natural Resources Concessions.

### **Updates/ Remarks by Land Development Partners**

John Dennis of UNDP informed the LLA that he is the Acting OIC for the PBF Secretariat as Catherine Waliaula is no longer serving in Liberia. He requested to receive invitations to Development Partners Coordination meetings and Daniela said that she was sorry for the oversights and assured him that he would be invited to all future meetings. He also informed the LLA of an upcoming review of the Sustaining Peace and Reconciliation Through Strengthening Land Governance and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms Project.

### **ATTENDANCE**

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Email</b>
12	P. Bloh Sayeh	LLA	Vice Chairman	pbsayeh@gmail.com
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