





**FINAL REPORT**

Mid-Term Review

Liberia Decentralization Support Programme UNDP-Liberia

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## Monrovia-11th November, 2016

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**Disclaimer**

This MTE report was prepared by two (2) Independent Consultants:-Cécile Collin and Angelance Browne. The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Monrovia-11th November, 2016

# Acronyms

AWP Annual Work Plan

CDA County Development Agenda

CDD Community Driven Development

CDF County Development Funds

CDO County Development Office

CEO County Education Officer

CNDRA Center for National Documentation and Registry Agency

CSC County Service Center

CSIO County Statistics and Information Office

CSO Civil Society Organization

CSR Civil Service Reform

CST County Support Team

CTA Chief Technical Advisor

DEO District Education Officer

EU European Union

EVD Ebola Virus Disease

GC Governance Commission

GEMS Governance and Economic Management Support Program

GoL Government of Liberia

GPI Governance and Public Institutions

HRBAD Human Rights Based Approach to Development

ICT Internet Communication Technology

IMCD Inter-Ministerial Committee on Decentralization

INHRC Independent National Human Rights Commission

IT Internet Technology

JP Joint Programme

LACC Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission

LDLD Liberia Decentralization and Local Development

LDSP Liberia Decentralization Support Program

LGA Local Government Act

LIPA Liberia Institute of Public Administration

LISGIS Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-information Services

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MACs Ministries, Agencies and Commissions

MFDP Ministry of Finance and Development Planning

MIA Ministry of Internal Affairs

MOCI Ministry of Commerce and Industry

MOE Ministy of Education

MoGCSP Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection

MoHSW Ministry of Health and Social Welfare

MOL Ministry of Labour

MoPW Ministry of Public Work

MOT Ministry of Transport

MTE Mird Term Evaluation

NDIP National Decentralization Implementation Plan

NDIS National Decentralization Implementation Secretariat

NGO Non-governmental Organization

NHRAP National Human Rights Action Plan

NIM National Implementation Modality

NIMAC National Information Management Centre

NPDLG National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance

PFM Public Financial Management

PRS Poverty Reduction Strategy

RBM Result Based Management

ROM Results-Oriented Monitoring

SDF Social Development Funds

SGVB Sexual and Gender Based Violence

SIDA Sweden International Development Agencies

ToRs Terms of Reference

UNDP United Nations Development Program

UNEG United Nations Evaluation Group

UNMIL United Nations Mission in Liberia

UNSCR United Nations Security Council Resolution

UNV United Nations Volunteers

USAID United States Agencies for International Development

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**BACKGROUND**

This Mid-term Evaluation conducted in September - October, 2016 by a team of two consultants, highlights results of the LDSP for the period 2013-2017. The Liberia Decentralization Support Program (LDSP) is a five year Government of Liberia program designed to facilitate the implementation of the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Government. The program supports the decentralization of administrative, political and fiscal governance in Liberia and aligns with the Agenda for Transformation (AfT): Governance Pillar IV - Government and Public Sector Modernization**,** which states: “In partnership with citizens, create transparent, accountable and responsible public institutions that contribute to economic and social development as well as inclusive and participatory governance systems”. The LDSP commenced in June 2013 and is funded by a consortium of donor partners. The total project cost is estimated at US$ 18 million over a five (5) year period. In line with UNDP’s programming approach, its implementation represents a policy shift from direct implementation (DIM) by donor agencies to a national implementation modality (NIM) under which major implementation responsibilities as well as the attendant authorities and accountabilities have been transferred to government institutions led by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and the Governance Commission (GC). Its work plan developed from year to year, defines major program activities for the period of its implementation and presents the outputs and outcomes that LDSP seeks to achieve under each of its five (5) main established outcomes and the core actions that will be implemented towards achieving those outputs.

The primary purpose of the MTE is to capture evaluative evidence of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of current programming under the LDSP, taking into account the objectives of the decentralization policy which can be used to strengthen existing strategies and/or to set the stage for strategic re-alignment. The evaluation will serve an important accountability function, providing national stakeholders and partners in Liberia with an impartial assessment of the results of investments into the decentralization reform. The MTE will assess the development results covering activities undertaken by the LDSP with the objective of identifying lessons learnt and best practices and make practical recommendations for advancement of the programme. The outcome-based evaluation entailed a systematic desk review, collection and analysis of performance information including visits of three counties service centers and data collection in country on the results achieved in terms of key indicators comprising relevance, effectiveness & efficiency, outcomes, key achievements, challenges faced, lessons learned & best practices, and ownership and sustainability. The indicators used to evaluate outputs and outcomes of the LDSP are intended to enhance future programmes in achieving their desired outcomes effectively.

LDSP which is responsible to ensure an equitable access to revenues and State services throughout the country, addresses one of the main conflict driver that led to the 14 years civil war. By so doing, it envisages implementation incrementally in three distinct phases, namely:-Decentralization, Deconcentration and Devolution. The program is highly relevant to the Liberian context with “deconcentration” showing major achievement so far. It involves the transference of responsibility from central agency to political units in the counties by establishing County Service Centres through multiple MACs to help GOL deliver basic services at local levels. Additionally, the passage of the LGA by the Legislature is also a major success for programme implementation. It is worth noting that the LGA have been passed by the House of Representatives and currently under review by the Senate pending approval in January without a clause for election of local officials however, the issue of election of local officials has constitutional implications and as such has been deferred to the constitutional review process.

Overall, the LDSP is a landmark programme initiative launched at an opportune time to strengthen the ongoing decentralization process in Liberia. The project has successfully tested and piloted innovative promising practices for local service delivery, LG capacity development and has facilitated fiscal decentralization through the operationalization of County Treasuries within the County Service Centers. It should be highlighted that elements related to fiscal decentralization are not led by this project but through the Integrated Public Financial Management Reform Programme as such, the extension of this programme is highly recommended.

***Key Findings***

The MTE Team has rated LDSP performance as above average at midpoint of the implementation period ranging from 2013-2017. The Team also notes with satisfaction that the national partners have contributed significantly to this achievement. The MTE team established that most of the outcomes, outputs, indicators, baselines and targets are well formulated, and that they respond to national priorities identified in the AFT and other national development policy documents such as Vision 2030.

***Relevance***

The LDSP was both timely and relevant as it coincided with Liberia’s second democratic elections followed by the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance launched in January, 2012. The NPDLG serves as a key policy of the government aimed at systematically providing guidance to the process of decentralizing power, authority, functions and responsibilities from the central government to local government. The LDSP provides relevant support to Decentralization which is central to the ongoing peace building and reconciliation, governance reforms and facilitates achievements of the planned goal of poverty reduction geared towards contributing and strengthening the local democratic governance poverty reduction program of Liberia. According to the Agenda for Transformation (Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) II), the Government of Liberia is “committed to delivering to the Liberian people an improved system of governance that is more localized and more responsive to the needs and aspirations of all citizens throughout the country.

The LDSP is highly relevant to the country’s context with its interventions closely aligned to the Liberia’s prevailing national priorities in terms of its development goals and objectives as well as its challenges, as manifested in the Vision 2030 Plan. The relevance of the LDSP in terms of its performance is illustrated in the performance matrix located in **(annex 5)** from which it is evidently clear that its strategic outputs and objectives as well as the time frame and implementation mechanism to achieve them are closely linked to Liberia’s Vision 2030 Plan.

Additionally, the smooth implementation of LDSP can be attributed mainly to the relevance of the LDSP to Local Government developments. Considering various outputs under outcomes 1, 2 & 3 of the LDSP which gives high positive rating to integrated service delivery to the citizens based on application of the concept of One Stop-Shop (OSS). The CSCs have significantly improved public access to documenttion services, resulting into some level of security and savings in both time and money for the communities in those counties. CSCs in 4 Counties are presently equipped with the necessary infrastructure and fully operational, while the remaining CSCs are expected to commence operation soon including CSC in Bomi pending official opening by the President. Additional relevance also points to the passage of the LGA, a huge boost in driving the decentralization process.

**Effectiveness**

The MTE found the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the Programme to be satisfactory based on a detailed assessment using different factors such as (a) Reality of Timeframe; (b) Decentralization Reform Programme; and (c) Fiscal Decentralization and Establishment of Effective and Transparent Financing Mechanism for Local Government Service Delivery, etc. The efficiency and effectiveness of the LDSP were mainly evaluated against the achievement of its five strategic outputs. The key findings of the evaluation are summarized and further elaborated in the achievements section**. (See details in Annex 5)** under the various sections of each of the strategic outputs.

The MTE measured the extent to which the LDSP is achieving its desired/planned results outputs, and outcomes. Questions were asked to understand the extent to which the LDSP initiatives were effective in supporting the decentralization agenda in Liberia? The MTE also examined whether the programme has effective monitoring mechanisms in place to measure progress towards the achievement of results and whether the programme is contributing to planned outcomes?

The programme has made significant achievements towards its desired or planned results (outputs, outcomes and impacts which have performed at satisfactory levels). So far, the programme initiatives put in place by the GOL and UNDP have been effective in driving the decentralization agenda in Liberia however, the programme monitoring mechanisms in place to measure progress towards the achievement of results is not very effective and remainsa working progress. It is worth noting that the programme has contributed satisfactorily to planned outcomes and results.

Considering LDSP support to Decentralization process, a Service Center has been established in Bassa which provides critical services such as issuance of birth certificates to children between ages 0-12, marriage certificates and drivers’ licenses to residents. People are now able to access core services some of which are free and cost effective. The establishment of the service center has brought services closer to the people and moving Liberia from being the second lowest birth registration in the world. The LDSP effectiveness has enabled residents in Monrovia to travel to the Bassa, Kakata, or Margibi Service Centers to obtain marriage certificates and drivers’ licenses because they are easily accessible and cheaper, thus impacting on the lives of the people with tangible results.

**Efficiency**

The evaluation initially set out to establish whether resources were efficiently utilised and did questioned if results had been achieved at an acceptable cost and achieved in a timely manner? Whether expenditure were in line with agreed upon budgets and work plans? Were resources both financial and human made available? Were financial and other reports prepared well to reflect transparency and accountability to all stakeholders? However, the MTE as expected, could not actually assess in depth the cost efficiency nor thoroughly examine in details what the budget allocations were for the various activities and how the finances were utilised because in most cases, the budget information was only available in an aggregated form. The evaluation was done based on planned activities and results achieved. The LDSP prepared progress reports that were transparent and provide accountability of how resources were utilised, what was done and what was achieved. In most cases, the quarterly and annual progress reports were well prepared and provided critical information on the activities undertaken and the outputs produced. (Total funds utilised is reflected in the resource section of the reports). Also, all projects Boards are fully operational and results from meetings are key to programme implementation.

The MTE did assess whether the resources were used for intended planned activities and concentrated on the achievement of those results as reflected in the results matrix. Additionally, the MTE was able to assess other factors that relate to efficiency including:-Efforts devoted to institutional capacity development such as, capacity development trainings that were undertaken by the programmes, the utilisation of knowledge and skills obtained from the training programmes.

Capacity development training undertaken by LDSP plus the utilisation of knowledge and skills obtained are evident to the efficient use of resources. Efforts devoted to institutional capacity development were also examined. At mid-term point, the resources were efficiently utilised since there is evidence that most of the intended results were achieved.

The MTE noted that although UNDP has delivered goods and services in line with administrative procedures, its efficiency in supporting local governance initiatives such as the LDSP has been adversely affected by cumbersome procurement processes, a weak field presence and rigid project management. There were frequent complaints from all levels that UNDP procedures have been very long, especially those linked to procurement, causing delays that affected the ability of LDSP to deliver timely against results. The impact and outcome of programme results were hampered by weak monitoring and evaluation due to insufficient investments of time and resources by LDSP and UNDP. Also, the high turnover of leadership within Government resulting to loss of champions and institutional memory who should be responsible to drive the decentralization agenda has impaired the strategic planning process.

**Sustainability**

The MTE assessed the sustainability of LDSP results asking key criteria question to determine whether sustainability was built into the programme? Is LDSP creating conditions that will ensure that benefits continue beyond its life? Is there evidence that ownership is being promoted for those who benefit from the programme and will the GOL continue with what has been started beyond the life of this cooperation with UNDP? Is the programme strengthening the capacity of the GOL and other partners in the areas of decentralization?

Generally, sustainability is a vital issue for any development programme to ensure that outputs and results achieved are sustained for the general well-being of the target population. Decentralization that brings about improved and inclusive public service provision and local development needs to be sustainable in institutional, social, financial and environmental terms. In this regard, some applicable requirements for achievement are as follows:- (a) That LG is participatory, transparent, accountable, and delivers services and development to all citizens in an efficient and effective manner. In this way the citizens and/or state relationship can be rebuilt and strengthened for the long term;[[1]](#footnote-1) (b) that LG should provide the legal and regulatory framework for local revenue generation and expenditure and also mechanism for funds transfer from central to county. This will strengthen local level management of the development process and permit local authorities the revenue and expenditure assignments and permit them to address the needs and demands that local citizens and communities place upon it and; (c) that LG establishes the capacity to address and shape the environmental impact of local development, if the local habitat is to sustain the local communities and improve their development in years to come.

In most cases involving LG programmes like the LDSP, concerns of sustainability have not been adequately factored into the project at the design stage. As to date, the LDSP lacks a clear sustainability plan that is yet to be articulated and implemented as such, there is possibility that the programme could phase out due to donors fatigue. Currently, the programme has created some awareness on decentralization and local government reforms at various level of the Liberian society but it still lacks adequate funding in addition to abrupt political changes in leadership and some challenges that exists especially, as it relates to the revision of the local government structures on which the success of the programme depends that could hamper the continuity of the process. There is no exit strategy indicated in the programme document, detailing for example, how the state will take over the program, or which mechanism would be put in place to sustain the activities without UNDP or other donors’ intervention.

Presently, sustainability of the CSC operations due to lack of adequate funding poses risk to the existing and opening of new centers but so far, most of the stakeholders have rated the level of efficiency and effectiveness of interventions; outcomes, key achievements and the relevance of LDSP as either ‘high or medium’ while views about the level of sustainability and challenges faced were rated as ‘low’. Notwithstanding, sustainability can be better ensured through continued investments in capacity building of different stakeholders and not just Governments at the local level over a long period of time.

Capacity Building

The MTE wishes to highlight that capacity building at all levels must become the cornerstone to successful implementation of decentralization in Liberia as such, the LDSP capacity building initiatives were well received by stakeholders and partners. Significant achievements were reported under this component. In this regard, the LDSP interventions for capacity development were rated as efficient by the team as a result of capacity building provided for independent planning and implementation of activities by LGs at all levels. The evaluation discovered that in order to ensure that capacity building is prioritized in the decentralization process, an assessment was conducted by LIPA to assess the capacity of institutions and staff to implement decentralization which revealed some capacity gaps and challenges both at the central and local levels. Hence, in consideration of the institutional and human capacity gaps, GOL has formulated a 10-year National Capacity Development Strategy. Presently, the Capacity Building Coordination Team is located at the MIA and placed under the direct supervision of the NDIS Coordinator. The team is expected to work closely with all departments of MIA and other capacity building actors (LIPA, CSA, UL, CUGS, Consultants) in facilitating capacity building activities while conducting capacity building needs assessment.

As to date, some capacity building efforts have already been made and they are mentioned under the achievement section, **(annex 5**) of this report. However, considering these significant capacity building achievements and the LDSP own approach to foster the use of knowledge and skills acquired through the capacity development component for actual implementation of planned activities to drive the decentralization process, the MTE discovered the vital need for LDSP to additionally ensure the on-going of more professional capacity development activities at all levels of LG as outlined in the LDIP and as the need arises for smooth programme implementation . It is worth noting that in order to implement decentralization, the requisite capacities must be developed in the rural areas. Currently, GOL is strongly committed to installing a viable local decentralized governance system and to accomplish this goal, capacity building is a significant foundation of the decentralization agenda. Without building the requisite local capacities, the counties will be unable to assume the administrative roles devolved to them. [[2]](#footnote-2)

# Resources

The LDSP total projected cost was US$27 million over a 5 year period. In the fourth quarter of 2015, the cost of the program was revised to US$ $18,490,486.74 **(see table 1 below)**. As at the end of 2015 into this reporting period, resources that supported the activities came from the **European Union (EU), USAID, Government of Sweden and the UNDP.** It is a general consensus that UNDP in collaboration with other partners, will mobilise more resources to fill the funding gap and undertake the remaining project activities.

**Table 1 (Funds Contribution)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Current Agreed Contributions from Partners Amount (US$)** | | |
|  | GOL | 1,000,000.00 |
|  | EU | 5,500,000.00 |
|  | UNDP | 2,500,000.00 |
|  | Government of Sweden |  |
|  | USAID | 1,000,000.00 |
|  | UNMIL (QIPS) | 476,406.56 |
|  | **SUB-TOTAL** | **10,476,406.56** |
| **Anticipated Contributions from Partners**: 6,000,000.00 | | |
| **Grand Total 16,476,406.56** | | |
| **Funding Gap 2,014,080.18** | | |
| **TOTAL COST 18,490,486.74** | | |

Resources utilized according to LDSP expenditure delivery summary for the period ranging from 2013-2016[[3]](#footnote-3), shows that out of a total approved budget of $6,585,924, the total amount utilized was $4,769,489 and the un-spent balance reflects US$ 1,816,435 averaging **72%** for the entire 4 years period. Project delivery rate for 2013 and 2015 was 90%. In 2014 there was a decline of 62% due to the Ebola epidemic.

As to date, with remaining 3 months to end of year 2016, the rate stands at 62%. If all activities totalling US$ 681, 270.00 in the third and fourth quarter work plan are achieved, the trend will have a positive result. Originally, funds allocated for the programme was US$10,476,406 based on the revised programme document. **(See table 2 below).**

**Table 2 (LDSP Expenditure Delivery Summary)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Pillar & Component** | **Approved Budget** | **Total Utilized** | **Unspent Balance** | **% Utilization** |
| **GOVERNANCE & PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS (GPI)** | | | | | |
| **2013** | **LDSP** | **429,928** | **385,642** | **44,286** | **89.70** |
| **2014** | **LDSP** | **1,355,011** | **823,276** | **531,735** | **60.76** |
| **2015** | **LDSP** | **1,959,689** | **1,808,143** | **151,546** | **92.27** |
| **2016** | **LDSP** | **2,841,296** | **1,752,428** | **1,088,868** | **61.68** |
| **TOTAL** |  | **6,585,924** | **4,769,489** | **1,816,435** | **72.42** |

# Lessons learned and best practices

LDSP is a complex programme involving and impacting a broad variety of stakeholders, while reshuffling governance balance. Although several best practices have emerged, the Mid-Term Evaluation also captured some lessons learned as follows:-

* Political leadership is Key to decentralization and hence, it remains key for the adequate engagement of the different levels of political stakeholders, using the various political dynamics put in place in selecting and retaining leadership. Leadership consistency is vital to maintaining “Champions” or “institutional memory” to drive the continuous process.
* High turnover of staff, political leadership in government at all levels, within partners, NGO especially the MIA (six ministers since inception of the program) have adversely affected programme implementation and subsequently sustainability.
* Synergy building by LDSP among various MAC operating at the CSCs have produced positive results and has contributed to the significant success in the deconcentration process.
* Exit strategies are vital to increase ownership and avoid situation that the programme remains an end in itself. There is no exit strategy indicated in the programme document, detailing for example, how the state will take over the program, or which mechanism would be put in place to sustain the activities without UNDP or other donors’ intervention.
* Formulation and implementation of Exit Strategy for the sustainability of all UNDP programmes including the LDSP is paramount. An exit strategy embedded into the LDSP Prodoc implies that the created structures are financially sustainable and capable of producing resources for programme implementation. Generally, applying or setting out an exit strategy at an initial stage of programme implementation identifies all potential barriers to sustainability. The issue becomes primarily predicated upon providing solutions to mitigating potential risks.
* Decentralization is an incremental process and to some extent should be based on the availability of existing structures put in place at counties levels. In this regard, it remains key to ensure that the planned reforms are realistic and can be implemented, anything on the contrary, the process will lose its legitimacy and create unmet expectations which might lead to frustrations and mistrust.
* Transparency and accountability over the public funding mechanisms and decision making processes remain central to ensure that decentralization supports good governance. This involves internal accountability from the local governance structures to the central level, and from the central level to the local government institutions, as well as external accountability of the State institutions to the population which will guarantee State legitimacy.
* Decentralization is a multiple layer process which requires complex stakeholders’ engagement with specific interests as such, it must inter-play with the political dynamics and ensure some reactivity as well as broad but specific approach to the different types of stakeholders’ engagements.
* A joint evolution of the different components of deconcentration of services, fiscal decentralization, and devolution is central to ensure the effectiveness of the reform and avoid possible reverse effects.
* Harmonization of programmes and projects to mainstream decentralization into the government and partners interventions is required in order to have a multiplier effects and impact when done through collaboration, coordination and synergy building.
* Monitoring & Evaluation systems need to be strong. Additionally, effective coordination and clear definition of tasks are required among the various stakeholders in charge with focus around the same performance indicators and systems, taking into account the outcomes and impacts of the programme.
* Decentralization needs to be linked with overall State reforms and capacity building in order to advance the competence of local administrations to effectively manage local affairs, ensure the effective delivery of basic social services and improve the lives of Liberians.

**Best Practices**

A notable innovative product and best practice have resulted from the LDSP. This involves the documentation service through a one-stop shop concept (OSS) of County service centers. A total of 24 basic services are now being delivered by various MACs at the Counties’ level for the first time in the long history of Liberia. The availability of these services varies across the counties based on demand in fulfilment of the Government commitment to reach out to the people. This is a good progress in spreading information and ensuring coordination of activities between central and local government. As to date, 22,000 customers have benefitted from services provided by the CSCs.

Provision of these services has resulted into significant positive outcomes at the grassroots level, including the saving of time, money and the enhancement of social capital with establishment of a strong sense of ownership for the development activities and effective links with Local Governments. These services are outlined in the National Deconcentration platform launched by the president of Liberia on February 18, 2015 in Gbarnga, Bong County to set the stage for the implementation phase of the National policy on Decentralization and Local Governance (NPDLG). Best practices also include:-

* Capacity Building Training provided for local authorities that is designed and delivered jointly with national institutions.
* Training of LDSP Staff in procurement and positioning that staff member in UNDP exclusively to speed up procurement process for smooth programme implementation.

Additional Best practices from the previous LDLD programme which has provided additional support to the LDSP were as follows:-

* Setting up of an M & E Unit within the MIA to support monitoring and evaluation activities.
* Preparation of training manuals on local governance ensuring availability of requisite information, processes and procedures to support local governance activities and promote the overall decentralization agenda.
* Establishment of database on local level projects for smooth implementation.

**Recommendations**

The LDSP was launched at the right time to strengthen the existing decentralization process and the evaluation reveals that while LDSP main objectives and expected outcomes continue to be valid, strengthening the approach and methodology in programme design and implementation will provide the necessary impetus for enhancing the impact of the next phase of the Programme implementation. Hence, the programme should be extended and the following priorities should be taken into consideration, both in terms of content and practices:-

**Government of Liberia**

* Allocate adequate funding to off-set operational costs of the CSC through direct line budgetary allocation to illustrate the GoL commitment to the overall process.
* Ensure political leadership are put in place at the various components of the reform, especially those that could be implemented based on the current regulatory and legal framework.
* Engage in early planning process for elections at local level as per the constitution.
* Establish and ensure effective and efficient functioning of the County Treasuries.
* Ensure integration of decentralization perspective in all the MACs policies, strategies and programmes, and reinforce coordination between the MACs.

**UNDP and Donors:**

* Support civil society at the local level to build their capacity, possibly via local CSOs networks. This should include understanding, analysis and reporting on local governance, accountability, transparency and anti-corruption.
* Mainstream local governance into all its programmatic areas effectively by including decentralization and other cross-cutting issues such as, gender, human rights, etc, in the different programmes.
* Ensure that the INHRC “Blue Print” a document that factors HR into decentralization is embedded or injected into decentralization agenda for Liberia.
* Consider an exit strategy in any future programme design and implementation, otherwise projects risk will become an end in themselves; An exit strategy should be embedded into the LDSP Prodoc implying that the created structures are financially sustainable and capable of producing resources for programme implementation.
* Improve procurement process at UNDP to reduce delays experienced during programme implementation, and support longer term planning.

**LDSP/ MIA:**

* Revise the envisaged reforms to ensure that they can be progressively implemented based on estimated costs and financial commitment of the GoL taking into account the Liberian context while ensuring that the most remote and conflict prone areas get specific attention.
* Ensure that services are deconcentrated in the most remote counties of Liberia.
* Strengthen the outreach on CSC services and decentralization in the various communities, paying specific attention to vulnerable groups, to increase sensitization, awareness on the services provided and encourage people to take ownership.
* Support a participatory planning process for the development and implementation of CDA, Country Treasury and Local Government Reform.
* Strengthen accountability mechanisms at the local level, via transparency over the revenues, expenses, and budgetary allocations. In that respect, the role of the legislative bodies in the funding allocation should be revised to ensure separation of power.
* Ensure capacity development at all levels and conduct a comprehensive series of capacity assessment exercises to determine the overall capacity shortfalls nationwide.
* Design and implement a plan for the reform of local government, including human resources reform and retirement plans that will develop synergy with the Public Sector Modernization and possibly USAID GEMS programme.
* Ensure the design and implementation of an action plan for the Local Government Act, including analysis of the related risks.
* Ensure the inclusion of other Ministries that will play vital roles at the local level, such as the Ministry of Land, Mines & Energy, etc concerning the transfer of competences from the central to the county level.
* Ensure synergies are developed with the Land Reform Commission.
* At the local level, strengthen the integration of youth and women, including those of rural areas, in awareness raising, consultation, and workshops.

**NDIS/MIA/GC/UNDP:**

* Ensure a participatory approach to M&E, strengthen the establishment and use of the Monitoring and Evaluation systems so that the different stakeholders throughout the chain are familiar with the performance indicators and report on them.
* Ensure monitoring at the outcome level, including assessments of CSC on the added value and effects of new services and the evolution of statistics for services that already existed prior to implementation of deconcentration.

**I.0 INTRODUCTION**

## Country Context

Liberia, a very small country situated on the West Coast of Africa, covers approximately 111396 km and has a population of less than 4 million people. Demographically, Liberia is divided into 15 political sub-divisions namely: Lofa, Margibi, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Grand Cape Mount Grand Kru, Maryland, River Gee, Montserrado, Bomi, Bong, Gbarpolu, Nimba, Rivercess, and Sinoe. Monrovia, the capital city, is the largest city and serves as the political, commercial and financial capital of the country. Liberia’s population is 50.1% male, 49.9% female and with a youthful population approximately 52.7% under the age 20 years. The relatively young population, combined with factors such as high rates of teenage pregnancy (32%) and low levels of contraceptive prevalence (11% overall) contribute to the country’s high total fertility rate of 5.9% children per woman.[[4]](#footnote-4)

Politically, Liberia’s emerged as a nation and state in 1847 with a system of governance and public administration highly centralized in Monrovia, a factor which contributed to inadequate legal opportunities for the establishment of systems of participatory local governance that reduced popular participation and local initiative resulting to a big gap in economic growth and development, access to socio-economic opportunities and the general well-being of human between Monrovia and the rest of the country.

The critical issues of exclusion and marginalization of significant portions of society in political governance, over-concentration of power particularly in the Capital, Monrovia, economic malfeasance, ethnic and class animosities and rivalries led to a civil war. However, after 17 years of civil conflict, Liberians have been able to achieve a level of reconciliation that has allowed the society to function peacefully leading to two (2) democratic elections held (2005 and 2011).

According to World Bank classifications, Liberia is a Low Income country. Moreover, Liberia ranks 174 out of 186 in UNDP‘s 2015 Human Development Index. 56.3% of Liberia‘s 4.2 million people live below the poverty line, with 47.9% living in extreme poverty and subsisting on less than US$1 per day. Liberia‘s Low Income status has been exacerbated by many years of civil war, which saw the destruction of major economic and social infrastructure during which time, major infrastructures were badly damaged or destroyed and all economic activity came to a halt and resulted in a major brain drain with significant portion of the intelligentsia and professional class leaving the country. The prevailing situation has been compounded by the twin shocks of Ebola epidemic and climbing world commodity prices for Liberia’s primary exports. These shocks have seen the growth rate decline from a high of upwards of 9% in 2012 to less than 1% in 2015.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Since the ratification of the peace agreement in Accra in 2003, the country has benefited from a relatively stable political and security situation. As a sign of the relative solidity of the peace building process, UNMIL disengaged from the country in June 2016 handing over full security responsibility to national authorities but remains engaged in political advocacy for structural reforms.

Additionally, the 14 years of civil war strongly impacted the country, creating a proliferation of sub-national units, with overlapping and disputed boundaries, with opportunistic staffing and a strong potential for disputes with bordering counties, inter-ethnics tensions between the various administrative entities, families or issues regarding the exploitation of natural resources. Simmering tensions persist in concession areas due to concession agreements which were not adequately negotiated with local communities, leading to inadequate consideration given to communities’ rights of access to land for livelihood and sacred sites..

The LDSP in support of the decentralization process is devoted to playing a pivotal role in structural stabilization of the country, and in addressing some of the challenges mentioned above.

The decentralization process started in 2006 after the stabilization of the country and election of President Sirleaf. As to date, the different administrative bodies constituting the current governance system are all nominated by the President.

According to the World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators, Liberia’s governance indicators as reflected in table 3 below have improved over the past decade indicating obvious progresses while the stabilization of the country still remains fragile.

***Table 3 - Liberia Governance Indicators***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2004 | 2009 | 2014 | Comments |
| Voice and Accountability | 11.1 | 41.7 | 38.9 | N/A |
| Political Stability | 9.1 | 15.,2 | 24.8 | Peak in 2011 with 33.5% |
| Government effectiveness | 2.9 | 7.7 | 7.7 | Peak in 2012 with 12.4% |
| Regulatory quality | 2.5 | 9.6 | 22.6 | Clear progress |
| Rule of law | 0.6 | 15.2 | 20.7 | N/A |
| Control of corruption | 8.3 | 32.5 | 24.5 | Peak in 2007 with 47.1% |

## 1.2 The Liberian Support to Decentralization Program

The Programme commenced in April 2013 covering a planned five years period. Although the original programme document was approved in 2013, it was later revised in November 2015. The programme was originally designed for US$27 million, but was revised at the end of 2015 to reflect a total budget of US$ $18,490,486.74.The agreed contribution from partners was US$10,476,406, a much lower funding amount. Expenditures reflected a lower amount totaling US$ 4.769 million spent, out of the USD$ 6.585 million actually planned.

The Decentralization Policy and Strategy anticipated phased approach to implementation of decentralization (1) deconcentration and (2) decentralization. The LDSP straddles these two phases. The deconcentration phase focuses on service delivery and accountability being linked to the achievement of deconcentration and participation of citizens revolving around the delivery of 45 deconcentrated services from 12 ministries and 2 agencies of government. The latter relates to facilitating the coordination of all GoL Ministries, Agencies and Commission that have any relevance to making decentralization successful through coordination meetings, board meeting and the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Decentralization (IMCD).

The LDSP falls under the UNDP’s GPI pillar and it is one of the priority areas in the Agenda for Transformation, pillar 4 on governance. The LDSP facilitates the strategy, results framework and operational modalities for a five-year programme of support to the decentralization of political, administrative, and fiscal governance in Liberia.

**Table 4:-LDSP-Logical framework is structured as follows:-**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Outcomes** | **Outputs** |
| 1 | De-concentrated services and corresponding resources managed at the assigned level of government. | **Output 1.1:** The MACs of the government of Liberia tangibly and visibly transfer functions, decision making and corresponding resources to the counties according to the de-concentration strategy.  **Output 1.2:** Enhanced coordination, sharing and pooling of resources across units of macs at the county level achieved.  **Output 1.3:** Improved infrastructure to support the de-concentration process.  **Output 1.4:** Citizens are organized and informed to participate in the de-concentration process. |
| 2 | Service delivery and accountability of local government improved. | **Output 2.1:** Capacity for participatory planning, budgeting and managing of development funds as well as revenue collection strengthened with focus on marginalized groups.  **Output 2.2:** Anti-corruption measures (systems and enforcement mechanisms) established and functional at county, city, district and community levels.  **Output 2.3:** Capacity of women and girls to participate in local government as leaders enhanced. |
| 3 | Legal and regulatory framework for decentralization is in place. | **Outcome 3.1:** Efforts to finalize local government act and other requisite legislation sustained.  **Output 3.2:** Civil service reforms aligned with decentralization policy and all signed international conventions that ensure equal access to civil service.  **Output 3.3:** Criteria established for districts, municipalities, chiefdoms and clans to rationalize and restructure them to ensure economic viability and sustainability. |
| 4 | MIA is capacitated to lead and implement decentralization reforms. | **Output 4.1:** Institutional and human capacity of MIA built to coordinate and lead the implementation of decentralization nationally.  **Output 4.2:** GC Capacitated to undertake governance assessment and monitoring strengthen.  **Output 4.3:** ICT and working environment of county administrations improved.  **Output 4.4:** Capacity for concurrent monitoring and evaluation of decentralization implementation established at MIA and the county government level |
| 5 | Programme Management | **Output 5.1:**  Efficient and effective support and coordination of the implementation of the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Government. |

The programme is under the umbrella of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), involving four departments:-The Department of Administration, Planning and Research for the development of County Development Agenda, Urban Management and Operations. The Governance Commission plays the role as lead policy and advocacy partner. Fiscal decentralization which falls outside of the LDSP is spearheaded by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) through the IPFMRP. It includes the creation of county treasuries, and an inter-ministerial approach with support to disaggregation of MAC’s budgets at the local level.

## Previous projects

The LDSP is a successor to the Liberia Decentralization and Local Development (LDLD) programme and the County Support Team (CST) Program. The Liberia Decentralization & Local Development (LDLD) Programme was designed to support the move to decentralize and establish local government with support from UNDP, UNCDF and the European Union (EU). The joint UNDP/UNCDF programmes consisted of two main projects, LDLD & Micro-finance. The LDLD Project addressed decentralization prior to the emergence of LDSP, through the provision of strategic policy advice, legal framework, systems and procedures for local governance by:-

* + - 1. Supporting Government of Liberia (GoL) to establish Liberia’s decentralization policy and its legal framework;
      2. Elaborating and strengthening procedures, processes and systems for effective planning and public expenditure management at the county, district and sub-district levels;
      3. Launching and supporting county/district development fund, which established a generic framework for planning and managing inter-governmental budgetary transfers;

building capacity of local administration through the construction/rehabilitation of temporary County/District Administrative Buildings to restore state authorities and administration (a) increasing administrative, technical and institutional capacity of sub-national administration to deliver essential and basic services, (b) supporting the new emerging decentralized structure at county and district level, and (c) promoting enhanced financial viability, accountability and management, and;

* + - 1. Strengthening County information management, monitoring and data management capacity by:- (a) supporting establishment and well-functioning of County Statistics and Information Offices (CSIOs) and County Development Offices (CDOs), and (b) consolidating and strengthening capacity of the County Administration to monitor and report on protection incidents and PRS/CDA deliverables.

## Purpose of the Evaluation

The evaluation is oriented towards accountability in order to provide relevant information on various interventions of national stakeholders and partners in Liberia including an impartial assessment of the results of their investment into the decentralization reform. As stated in the ToR, the evaluation should capture evaluative evidence of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of current programming under the LDSP taking into account the decentralization policy, which can be used to strengthen existing strategies and/or to set the stage for strategic realignment. The target audience consists of the relevant ministries and institutions in Liberia, UNDP and partners, including the European Union, USAID and other donors.

## Scope of the Evaluation

This evaluation is a mid-term review of the LDSP programme intended to enhance programme implementation while providing strategic provision, directions and inputs to the preparation of the annual workplan 2017 and the next phase of decentralization in Liberia. Specifically, the evaluation will assess progress of programing towards the set objectives namely:-

* Transfer of authority and responsibilities from national to local governments in Liberia including the following:
* Enhance sensitivity, responsiveness and capabilities of local governments and make them accountable to local people;
* Accelerate effective and efficient service delivery and poverty alleviation by developing and strengthening local level planning, monitoring and management capacity and providing access to national and local resources through fiscal decentralization;
* Increase equitable distribution of the nation’s resources so as to ensure a more wholesome process of development and democratic governance; and
* Enhance participatory decision-making to engender peace-building and reconciliation.

Additionally, the evaluation will take into consideration, the performance of its implementation at national and county levels since the beginning of the project in 2013 up to and including October, 2016. Partner’s capacities and synergies with the other GoL’s reforms will also be covered.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Key Evaluation Questions Considering the implementation status of the programme and the resource disbursements made to date, the evaluations will explore the following questions: | |
| **CRITERIA** | **QUESTIONS** |
| ***1. RELEVANCE*** | * *To what extent is LDSP relevant to the strategic considerations of the GoL, in the political, economic and social context of Liberia?* * *To what extent is the LDSP implementation strategy appropriate to achieve the objectives?* * *Has decentralization penetrated the national discourse governance issues and has it influenced national policies?* * *Is the LDSP relevant to the most marginalized people of Liberia, including women?* |
| ***2. EFFECTIVENESS*** | * *What evidence is there that LDSP has contributed towards an achieving the objectives of decentralization?* * *Has LDSP been effective in moving governance at the local level in Liberia? Do these local results aggregate into nationally significant results?* * *Has LDSP worked effectively with other national and international delivery partners to deliver governance services?* * *How effective has LDSP been in partnering with civil society and the private sector to effect decentralization?* * *Has LDSP utilized innovative techniques and best practices in its programming?* * *Has LDSP incorporated anti-corruption and integrity institutions in the implementation of decentralization, particularly in the deconcentration phase?* * *Taking into account the technical capacity and institutional arrangements of the MIA and GC, is the LDSP strategy suited to ensuring that the 2 institutions can lead the decentralization agenda?* * *What contributing factors and impediments enhance or impede LDSP’s performance in this area?* |
| ***3. EFFICIENCY*** | * *Are LDSP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework relevant to achieve the planned outcome? Are they sufficiently sensitive to the political and development constraints of the country (political stability, post crisis situations, etc)?* * *Has LDSP’s strategy and execution been efficient and cost effective?* * *Has there been an economical use of financial and human resources?* * *Are the monitoring and evaluation systems that LDSP has in place helping to ensure that programmes are managed efficiently and effectively?* * *Are there alternative approaches that could achieve better results that the current design of the programme?* |
| ***4.SUSTAINABILITY*** | * *Has the partnership strategy in the governance sector been inclusive, appropriate and effective?* * *Are there current or potential complementarities or overlaps with existing national partners’ programmes?* * *How have partnerships affected the progress towards achieving the outputs* * *Has UNDP worked effectively with other international delivery partners to deliver on good governance initiatives?* * *How effective has UNDP been in partnering with civil society (where applicable) and the private sector to promote good governance in the region?* |
| ***5. PARNERSHIP*** | * *Has the partnership strategy in the governance sector been inclusive, appropriate and effective?* * *Are there current or potential complementarities or overlaps with existing national partners’ programmes?* * *How have partnerships affected the progress towards achieving the outputs* * *Has UNDP worked effectively with other international delivery partners to deliver on good governance initiatives?* * *How effective has UNDP been in partnering with civil society (where applicable) and the private sector to promote good governance in the region?* |
| ***6.GENDER EQUALITY*** | * *To what extent has gender been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the program?* * *To what extent has LDSP support promoted positive changes in gender equality? Were there any unintended effects?* |
| ***7. HUMAN RIGHTS*** | * *To what extent has the programme actively promoted the fulfilment of human rights?* * *In its design and implementation, does it include opportunities to integrate human rights in each outcome of the programme and prioritize the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination?* * *In its design and implementation, does it take into account any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights and were these rigorously assessed and identified with appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into programme rational, strategy, and results and resource framework?* |
|  |  |

# Methodology

## Theory of Change

The evaluation applied a **theory of change’’ (TOC) approach** to examine the root-cause analysis backed by rigorous and credible evidence justifying why the programme priorities are the most appropriate and most likely to contribute to higher level development change. The evaluation as it relates to the Theory of Change Approach is applicable to the LDSP and summarized as follows: That the fulfillment of the Liberian Decentralization agenda, through deconcentration and devolution will contribute to a more equitable sharing of resources and strengthen stability and development. This is the evaluation resolve after a careful review of the programme inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts. However, taking into consideration the UNICEF’s methodological Briefs-Impact Evaluation No. 2, by Patricia Rogers, 2014, the MTE conclusions were derived based on the following 3 reasons:-

(1) That the ‘theory of change’ explains how activities are understood to produce a series of results that contribute to achieving the final intended impacts and that it can be developed for any level of intervention(s):- be it a project, a programme, a policy, a strategy or an organization;

(2) That change satisfies where objectives and activities can be identified and tightly planned beforehand, or where changes adapts in response to emerging issues and to decisions made by partners and other stakeholders and; (3) That change is reflected from inputs to outputs, outcomes and impacts.[[6]](#footnote-6)

## Data collection methods

* As per the ToR,, the evaluation gathered information through the following methods:

**Desk review.** The evaluators started by analysing UNDP and Liberian Government documents, project documents and progress reports as well as national development policies and strategies. Documents from similar and complementary initiatives, as well as the last reports on the specific context of the programme formed part of the analysis. Bibliography is attached in **annex (10)**

* **Focus group discussions:** Duringassessment, the evaluator held meetings with civil servants at national and local levels, as well as with CSC staff on specific issues to ascertain their experience of the project.
* **Semi-structured interview.** An interview guide, based on the evaluation matrix in **(annex 1)**, is attached as (**annex 2)**, as well as the list of interview targets. The interviewees can be classified as follow:
* UNDP Management, staff (Programme, operations, administration, etc).
* State agents at the central and different decentralized levels in the different ministries.
* Other Partners organizations & donors.
* Civil society organizations, political parties, customary authorities.
* External stakeholders working in areas on similar issues: possibly donors, other international organizations (EU, World Bank), research centers and other NGOs.

* **Direct observation.** As, when and where possible, the evaluation reviewed the work related to the project on the ground by attending stakeholders, partners meetings, project activitiesincluding:-(Board meetings, services delivered at the County Service Centers and workshops).
* **Visit to project sites.** The selection of sites visited was done considering two parameters:- (1) Type and level of interventions in the area and (2) Logistical access involving road access and the presence of zonal office.

The evaluation included field visit to three counties: Bomi, Margibi and Grand Bassa where the process initially commenced and several components of the programme are fully operational. Most of the advanced activities of the project are located in Grand Bassa and Margibi. The CSC in Bomi is ready to engage in normal deconcentration activities pending the official opening by the President of Liberia.

The selection of these areas constitutes a best case scenario approach which provides tangible and practical evidence that justifies the analysis done in the mid-term review. Also, it is worth noting that the evaluation took place during the rainy season and the most remote areas were not accessible.

## Approaches

At the UNDP programmatic level, the evaluation took into consideration the following:-

* **Conflict sensitivity:** Considering the Do No Harm principles, the evaluation assessed possible effects of the different programmatic steps of the conflict, including programme implementation and evaluation. This included effects on the conflict, stakeholders, victims, perpetrators, conflict drivers and trends, as well as inclusivity and participation to the process and its ability to include criticisms, mitigate and manage frustrations.
* In addition, the consultants took into account few political & economic challenges that are related to the implementation of the programme. Some feedbacks indicated that the programme could lead to job loss for some individuals, highlighting the need for an incremental approach to prevent some group of the populations from being represented as it would naturally put forward the dominant societal ethnics. The study covered the changes triggered by decentralization as compared with the current and previous governance system involving who will gain and who will lose from those changes and at which levels potential barriers exist and how they can be overcome.
* **Results based management:** The evaluation considered how RBM is integrated in the programming, in order to analyze the level of efficiency, relevance and effectiveness of the various level of results, and their monitoring.
* **Human Rights Based Approach:** The review analyzed how equitable is the access to the programme and its benefits, and how the programme included the needs of the vulnerable groups. Additionally, the study will take into account the demographic and socio-cultural dimensions, in order to identify which groups, including ethnic minorities are excluded from the programme and decentralizations processes.
* **Gender mainstreaming:** During the review, the evaluation focused on disaggregated data by gender when possible, and paid attention to how specific needs and characteristics related to gender have been included.

The evaluation was conducted according to the UNEG norms and standards, as well as UNDP corporate documents. In light of the specific context of Liberia, the region and UNDP corporate strategy, the evaluation was undertaken according to the following principles:

* **Independence & neutrality:** The experts do not have any financial or other ties with the contractor and its members, which could be construed as a conflict of interest. They undertook the review in an impartial and objective manner.
* **Transparency**: The mission was implemented in a transparent manner, keeping the contractor regularly updated on the progress made, as well as potential suggestions of changes, and constraints faced.
* **Triangulation & Evidence based**: The consultants ensured that the findings are related to clear and fact based evidence and triangulated the findings in two ways:- (1) Using different sources and (2) Using different data collection methods.
* **Protection & Non-attribution:** The evaluation team was careful not to put at risk any individual or group of persons while collecting data and ensured that their contribution to the research will not result in any threat to their position or security. This will be ensured by not attributing statements to interviewees, according to the Chatham House Rules.
* **Participatory approach:** the evaluation engaged the project team, CSC, MACs, etc, in the evaluation process for data collection and also for the formulation of recommendations and identification of lessons learned.

## Evaluation steps

The assignment consisted of three interlinked phases:

1. Inception and start up;
2. Data collection (desk review, interviews, survey and field visits); and
3. Analysis and report writing.

The following mode of implementation was proposed.

***Evaluation Phases***

# 2.5. Limitation

Limitations resulted from tight timelines provided to the team in order to thoroughly review many documents that were not readily available. Interviews scheduled with key informants to include IPs, stakeholders, UN Agencies, etc., were either delayed or the informants were not available and hence this impacted on the data collection process. Major limitations on the evaluation were as follows:-

***Large Coverage Areas***: On many occasions, the Team had to split visits to large coverage areas in order to facilitate evaluation process in a timely manner.

***Time available:*** The team spent three weeks conducting evaluation, including field visits, data analysis and preparations for the presentation/debriefing. Considering the numerous persons that needed to be interviewed, most meetings were restricted to one hour. Field visits were relatively short, limiting the number of project sites that could be visited at any one location and the time that could be spent evaluating outputs and assessing local-level outcomes.

***Lack of access:*** Although plans were made to visit relatively remote counties such as Maryland and Grand Kru, this was not possible as the UNDP country office was not able to secure air transportation in time.

***Meta-analysis of evaluations***: Use of prior evaluations, reviews and studies as a means of covering counties and issues that could not be directly assessed by the evaluation team.

* 1. **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The following criteria were used for the MTE-Questions in support of various criteria the following:-

* **Relevance:** Is the programme the relevant/appropriate solution for the identified problem or need? Does the programme address issues of decentralization its design and execution strategy? Is the theory of change sound for programming?
* **Effectiveness:** The extent to which the programme is achieving its desired or planned results (outputs, outcomes and impacts). Has the programme and initiatives put in place by the GOL and UNDP been effective in driving decentralization agenda in Liberia? Does the programme have effective monitoring mechanisms in place to measure progress towards the achievement of results? Is the programme contributing to planned outcomes and results?
* **Efficiency:** In the first two years of implementation were inputs utilized or transformed into outputs in the most optimal or cost efficient way?
* **Sustainability:** Is the programme creating conditions that will ensure that benefits continue beyond its life? Is there evidence that ownership is being promoted for those who benefit from the programme and will the GOL continue with what has been started beyond the life of this cooperation with UNDP? Was sustainability built into the programme? Is the programme strengthening the capacity of the GOL and other partners in the areas of decentralization?

## RELEVANCE

Overall the LDSP is highly relevant to the country’s context with its interventions closely aligned to the Liberia’s prevailing national priorities in terms of its development goals and objectives as well as its challenges, as manifested in the Vision 2020 Plan and also progressively integrated into some national sectorial policies. Although this is not systematic and some key aspects are not included in the decentralization process, LDSP has begun responding positively to issues of marginalization but there is still more to be done.

Integration of conflict sensitivity and adequacy to the Liberian context for the implementation and sustainability of the reform also remained vital issues to be considered. The objectives, expected outcomes and outputs of the LDSP were formulated based upon the experience, including best practices and lessons learnt from the previous Liberia Decentralization and Local Development (LDLD) and the County Support Team (CST) Programmes and other similar initiatives to strengthen local governance. The relevance of the LDSP in terms of its achievements is illustrated in the performance matrix, **(see annex 5)** from which it is evidently clear that its strategic outputs and objectives as well as the time frame and implementation mechanism to achieve them are closely linked to Liberia’s Vision 2020 Plan thus validating its relevance.

### Relevance of the programme to the context and strategic considerations of the GoL and of the LDSP implementation strategy

LDSP operates on the platform of the reconstruction efforts of the GoL after its 14 years of civil war. Power centralization and implicitly inequitable access to the country resources plus the related division between settlers and indigenous, (non-settlers) were identified as some of the main conflict drivers. The need for decentralization was then highlighted in the peace agreement signed in Accra in 2003 and subsequently during the President’s campaign. The programme strategy indicates as a strong conflict driver, the exclusion and marginalization of significant parts of the population. In addition, conflict and instability led to the proliferation of local structures, district and cities. (Example:-more than 40 in Sinoe, some with less than 2000 inhabitants, 18 districts in Gran Kru with population of 57,000). Also, individuals were placed on the State payroll by politicians who were consolidating their electoral base. Hence, the evaluation asserts that decentralization is overall key in the political, economic and social context of Liberia.

The programme is relevant to priorities of the government and people as articulated by the populace in the **constitutional review process.** The implementation details do reflect some limitations in terms of relevance to the context and to the strategic considerations of the GoL are as follows:-

Firstly, the LDSP, in particular appears extremely ambitious given the context. Experiencing difficulties to make progress on the political decentralization front illustrate this to some extent. The LGA includes a total change of the governance system from a highly centralized system, where all administrative positions were appointed by the President, including removal from the district level to a system where elections would take place at every level. (Eg:-Superintendent, District Commissioner, Paramount Chief, Clan Chief, General Town Chief; while County Administrative Officer, County Finance Officer and County Development Officer would all be nominated hereafter). It compromises the immediate interests of all the current political and administrative leaders, who have been appointed by the President and whose future would be uncertain, or in the case of the legislators, who consider themselves as sole bearers that the population support with legitimacy. The MIA also have chain of administrative authorities appointed by the President, whose power will be diminish as a result of the reform.

Secondly, the country is already in a situation, where, according to the constitution, some local elections for mayors, city councils, and paramount, clan and town chiefs are supposed to take place based on the availability of funds. Also, the implementation of the administrative boundaries are to be restructured to deal with overlapping and contested boundary and rationalizes the proliferation of unsustainable sub-national units, which have placed an economic burden on scarce state resources revised for obvious reasons. Increasing the number of elected bodies will be quite difficult to implement, or to sustain, creating risks of negative perception of an ineffectual government if the legislation cannot be applied. This could create frustrations as well as compromise the credibility of the reform and the state legitimacy.

Some interviewees expressed their opinion that given the needs of the country and of the populations, conducting elections at every local level could be considered as a waste of money, which could be allocated to other development projects.

The programme does not clearly define conflict mitigation objectives in the sense that priorities areas of interventions have not been selected based on their political, social, economic fragilities. The evaluation notes that overall a level of security risk nationally is still very low.

No risk analysis, conflict sensitivity or Do No Harm analysis was conducted to measure the different effects of the LDSP approaches and implementation details, as well as those subsequent structural reforms. To date there has been no issue of note in this regard, but there is a risk that the County Service center could become a focus for grievances at the local level, given their visibility as a fulcrum of government service delivery at the local level. Recently the County Service Center in Margibi was damaged during a student’s demonstration. Additionally, the different forms of accountability and political economy around the reforms are not clearly spelled out. The Local Government Act (LGA) in its current form, as highly anticipated will indeed reshuffle the political balance and the consequences of those changes.

The dominant rationale is that the elections of superintendents, commissioners and local chiefs instead of their actual nomination by the presidency will change the accountability system from being accountable to the central power to being accountable to the population instead, an application of a bottom up approach. The inherent risks of ethnic based politics are high. Dominant ethnic group could capture most if not all available county positions to the detriment of smaller ethnic groups and other minorities. Inequality in the resource endowment between counties could also have detrimental consequences at the national level and further exacerbate social tension and cleavages. Accordingly, No analytical assessment of the potential risks and their impact has been done to focus on the consequences of changing from utmost highly centralized system to a decentralized system thus resulting to changes in its dynamics, accountability, legitimacy and national identity in a fragile country.

The NPDLG requires an incremental approach over a period of ten years, and it is particularly relevant in the Liberian context but there are some discrepancies on the timeframe and sequencing of different reference documents on decentralization.

The programme was designed for a five years period (2013-2017) and the Liberia Decentralization Implementation Plan, (LDIP) for the same period. The LDIP has not been revised to align to the evolution context. Deconcentration originally planned for a period of three years 2012-2015 commenced recently in 2015. During the first year 2013-2014, LDSP focused on civic education, sensitization and finalization of the LGA and the previous programme LDLD concentrated on drafting the National Policy on decentralization as well as awareness raising and consultations.

The NPDLG indicates as follows:-local capacity development, institutional restructuring for economic governance, and empowerment of existing local structures, among others, shall be established within the first three years of the ten-year period of incremental implementation. In that respect, the relevance of the approach is certain, using existing structures to build on the system, although the questions of local accountability and transparency over all organizational procedures are not clearly defined. The programme is significantly behind due in large part to EVD related disruption; but also due to slow pace of progress as relates to political decentralization. It was anticipated at this point in the programmme that the LGA would have been passed and the programme would be focusing on supporting the implementation of key provisions of the LGA. The proramme document was revised in 2015 in response to the slow pace of political decentralization and constitutional review to focus more explicitly on service delivery as a tangible outcome.[[7]](#footnote-7)

The LDIP strategy involves several approaches which have inadequately implemented. (Eg:- (a) Uniform implementation of decentralization across the counties. As to date, planned but not implemented; (b) capacity building approach based on an assessment of the degree to which the designated capacity to perform the functions devolved to the local institution should be attained. In this regard, no capacity assessment is visible but a general capacity assessment was conducted only for the MIA in 2016).8

The sequencing of the LDIP is a key component for the overall approach, but the legal steps involving the constitutional review which could widen the scope of local elections, inhibits the overall approach to some extent. Although existing provisions may not have been fully utilized to move the decentralization agenda forward, the scope of the current constitution allows for the implementation of a number of actions to empower local structures including elections of the officials.9

Though the overall theory of Change of the programme is clearly articulated and relevant it is not visible at this mid-term point. There has been good progress but the required momentum to facilitate the process speedily is still lacking. The initial Programme Document indicated that decentralization of power, decision-making and government authority with corresponding resources will improve governance over time, increase transparency of government processes, enhance accountability and ultimately result to better delivery of services in fulfillment of the GoL’s responsibilities to serve the Liberian people, promote democracy and reduce poverty. In this regard, delivery of services appear as key achievement of note to date in line with the strategy to sequence implementation. The overall objective remains the unchanged

The five years LDIP Strategy adequately highlights the importance of coordination of the decentralization reforms for the following reasons:-

* Serves as a mechanism for donor coordination and harmonization in support of decentralization reforms;
* Supports GoL leadership of the reform process but at the same time seek to involve a broad range of stakeholders including civil society;
* Ensures a broad based nation perspective to ensure integration of possible differing approaches within counties due to varied context and capability;
* Ensures a flexible and responsive approach to the reform process; and
* Ensures responsive approach to inclusive gender and conflict sensitivity.

The LDSP which involves all the MACs, has been positioned largely under the responsibility of the MIA, a Ministry in charge of local governance, where the secretariat for the programme implementation is based. This is relevant for the local government reform as this Ministry has over-sight responsibility for all the local governance chain. The role of the Governance Commission, a highly recognized structure in the country for leading all governance reforms, confers legitimacy to the LGA and the overall decentralization process. This approach faces some limitations triggered by political dynamics of the involvement of all the relevant MACs, most of whom are peers to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Considering LDIP implementation strategy to gradually increase the national ownership, the approach has been less integrated into programming as reflected in restructuring of the project organogram, embedded within the ministry’s core structure. It is important to highlight that UNDP support still plays a major role in the programme implementation daily.

### Integration of decentralization in national policies and discourses

1. **National Level**

Since Liberia’s return to democracy in 2003, decentralization has been part of a broad agenda for the recovery and development of the country. Efforts have been made in that direction from the first transitional Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) which commenced in 2003. In 2006, the government created the Governance Commission whose mandate is to finalize and implement a blue print providing options for political, social and economic decentralization. The main achievements as of 2011 included the implementations of the County development fund (CDF) and County development agenda (CDA). The CDA was overseen by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (now defunct) in consultation with the legislators including joint implementation carried-out by MIA and GC. The CDF is operated by a County project Committee and the Superintendent with oversight responsibility of legislators. Although some progress in deconcentration have been made with the second PRS “Lift Liberia” which lasted from 2008 to 2011, a lack of political will and financial mismanagement led to poor implementation of the governance pillar.

In 2013, a nation-wide consultation was held to design the eighteen year-long development programme, Vision 2030-Liberia Rising, a platform that provided the pathway to Liberia becoming a middle income economy within the specified time frame. In this program, decentralization is a top priority as specified in the good governance section of the agenda.

According to the NPDLG, the two main objectives of decentralization are to enhance democracy and improve access to public services. This requires the establishment of a constitutional support for local governance which was absent from the 1986 Constitution. Also, the first five years objectives of this roadmap are described in the strategy Agenda for transformation whose fourth pillar is dedicated to governance and public institutions. This document further enumerates the goals of decentralization to include:- popular participation, local initiative, transparency, accountability, provision of public services and provides a list of priority interventions such as deconcentration of Ministries, Agencies and Commissions, development of infrastructures and human capacities and encourages citizen participation to the constitutional reform process.

Within that framework, several documents have been published detailing the agenda on decentralization raised by politicians during the previous elections.

Political involvement is also playing a key role demonstrated by a strong interest of the President to promote deconcentration efforts through the launching of the Deconcentration platform in 2015 and by her presence during the official opening of the County Service Centers.

The LDSP is aligned to the objectives of decentralization as expresses in the AFT and the NPDLG and is relevant in providing support to the Government of Liberia pursuit of its stated priority within these policy framework documents.

1. **Sectorial Level**

Despite the recommendations from the Agenda for Transformation, (AFT) mandating all ministries to publish their strategy and organizational charts by 2017, decentralizations remains absent from many sectorial strategies (Eg. Public Works, Transport, Commerce, Labor, etc.). The ***Land Right Policy (2013)*** did not make clear reference to decentralization reforms, but the LDSP have registered serious concerns about revising the administrative boundaries and defining criteria for each territorial level.

The MTE established that prior to the promotion of the decentralization agenda, very few sectorial documents had already expressed some opinions regarding lack of emphasis made on similar issues. Accordingly, there are some MACs that have integrated decentralization into their policies including:- The Ministry of Health and Social welfare and the Ministry of Education, among others as such, they are advanced as compared to others because their deconcentration processes started many years ago.

In the E***ducational sector plan (2010-2020)***, the strengthening of the decentralized education system is a specific policy objective. The strategies adopted are the development of a decentralization policy and strategy ensuring empowerment of local education authorities, the improvement of monitoring and supervision of schools and type of teaching materials provided by County Education Officers, (CEOs) and District Education Officers, (DEOs), the allowance of the necessary financial resources and finally, the strengthening of coordination with the other government bodies responsible for decentralized governance and local capacity building.

Also, decentralization is well integrated into Liberia's ***2011-21 National Health and Social Welfare Policy***. This document defines the role of the county administration with responsibility for service delivery and partner oversight, while the central administration focuses on establishing policies, standards, resource allocation, planning, monitoring and evaluation. Responsibilities for direct social welfare service delivery will be transferred progressively to local authorities as their capacities improve. In order to adapt to decentralization, several strategies have been established to include:-The development and implantation of a coherent de-concentration that transfers functions, authority and resources to the local level and the restructuration of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in order to strengthen local government structures.

The ***National Gender Policy of 2009*** identifies the low presence of women in decision making at the national and local levels as the main challenge regarding governance. The main actions required to address this issue establish the need to implement a gender capacity building plan and provide technical support to counties for gender mainstreaming thus ensuring that County development plans, programs, budgets and services benefit women.

The ***2002 National Environmental Policy*** mentioned the need to decentralize decision-making to the appropriate level of government and civil society, but so far, it seems that little has been done in that area.

In addition, the ***Liberia National Capacity Development Strategy (2011)*** includes the decentralization perspective in planning for future human resources needs at the local level, and a two years capacity building strategy developed by the MIA.

Decentralization has a potential to become the vehicle for coordination of and harmonization of sectorial decentralization strategies and sequencing. Many of the MACs participate in the Technical working Group and the Board. Progress has been made in deconcentrating of documentation services. However the LDSP has as yet been unable to transform itself into a vehicle to drive and define sectorial decentralization efforts, bringing together the county authorities and key sector ministries to define strategy, objectives and key competencies and resources required.

1. **Civil society**

Liberia has a promising civil society and governance is one of the top issues addressed by Civil Society Organizations (CSO), along with youth and women empowerment. Among the main CSOs defending decentralization and local governance is Partners for Democratic Development “**Naymote”, a** key actor promoting citizens’ understanding of democratic processes and the long-term benefits of their participation in these processes. They also provide guidance such as the **Youth and local government toolkit**. Other structures include:- Youth Partnership for Peace and Development (YPPD), Youth Participation in Democracy (YPD), Liberia Democracy Watch, (LDW), Promotion of Public Participation and Respect for the Rule of Law), (PPRROL) and Rural Integrated Center for Community Empowerment (RICCE) who are engaged in empowering rural communities to participate in decision making, advancing actions on genuine democratic alternatives thus Promoting transparency and accountability. Civil society has been widely consulted to design the Vision 2030 program. Furthermore, Civil Society Organizations Platform on Decentralization and Governance in Liberia was set up in 2013 in order to participate in the dialogue on the Local Government Act and get involved in some of the project activities. Civil society has also been part of the national consultative process for the national land reform and is represented at the Constitution Review Committee. Nevertheless, civil society is excluded from the County Council which allocates money from the County Development Fund and Social Development Fund to development projects.

Though CSOs are critical advocates for decentralization their engagement has been minimal. However, achievement of decentralization should provide expanded space for civil society engagement at the local level, through the mandating of consultative mechanism and the expanded opportunities to play a role in service delivery and ensure robust watch dog function. Decentralization is a relevant approach for civil society.

1. **Politics**

LDSP supported the inclusion of decentralization in the political discourse when 21 of the 22 national political parties signed a Joint Resolution on Decentralization and Local Governance Reforms, calling for enactment of the local government act (2015) into a law in June 2016. Political parties pressurized the government to achieve the constitutional amendment needed in order to set up a legal framework for the implementation of decentralization and to conduct local elections. In July, 2016, this act was approved by the legislature pending approval by the Liberian Senate. These activities prove that LDSP has integrated decentralization into national policies discourses.

### Relevance to marginalized groups

Inclusivity is at the core of the programme theory of change for the stabilization and development of the country. Decentralization aims to ensure a fairer access to administrative services, political decision making, and mainstream funding at the local level, thus bringing government to the population. As a result, several CSC are operating and implementing deconcentration activities in the following counties:- (Margibi, Grand Bassa, Bong, Niimba), and the process is being replicated in other areas. The delay in finalizing the work plan led to delayed for commencement of the programme implementation thereby constraining the implementation window which was further limited by the rainy season.

The County Services are however located in the main cities of the counties, which is logical and relevant for practical reasons but mainly benefits rural elites. They will have easier access to the provisions of services and local government structures while the most vulnerable groups consisting of the population in the most remote communities may find the CSCs inaccessible. Presently, community awareness through community radios have been put in place to increase the outreach of information on decentralization.

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To date, LDSP has extended the provision of services to rural populations. Women have been a key category that have benefited from this expanded service delivery. The Ministry of Gender is one of the MACs represented at the CSC in addition to the presence of its offices in all the county capitals.

Specific attention to marginalized groups such as disabled, ethnic minorities, or youths does not appear in components of the LDSP Programme document, even though youths and women groups have been consulted generally on the provisions of the LGA and their perspective on decentralized governance. The question of youths, students’ participation and/or inclusion into the process to endorse LGs legitimacy and accountability still remains a key factor, as well as the integration of rural women, who are the population’s least educated. Regarding the provision of increase administrative and legal recognition to rural populations, the LDSP has made strides that have impacted some groups and have reduced their vulnerabilities. The LDSP is relevant to marginal groups **(see more below on cross-cutting issues).**

### Relevance of the LDSP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework relevant to achieve the planned outcome and sensitivity to the constraints of the country.

The MTE team addressed questions in the ToR to ascertain whether the resources allocated for planned activities were utilized for the intended activities. An assessment was conducted for verification by concentrating and placing emphasis on the achievements reflected in the programme performance result matrix. The team reviewed the project work plans and various reports and discovered that resources allotted for planned activities were utilized efficiently. The LDSP has produced significant results reflecting relevance of the LDSP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework and their sensitivity to the political and development constraints of the country.

The implicit intervention logic of the project intended to support deconcentration in order to provide access to services for the population, creates the demand for decentralization by showing added value of the results while strengthening an increased demand for state services and accountability. This logic derived from the loopholes on **Constitutional Review and legislation**. There are however, several different levels of effects at this stage and the validity of the overall approach depends on a number of conditions including:-The overall coherence of the different decentralization efforts, and the delays in implementation of fiscal decentralization, and political decentralization that could undermine future results of deconcentration. Also, the institutional set up which has positioned the programme at the MIA level with the role to ensure the coordination for implementing decentralization in the agenda of the different ministries, raises serious concerns by some interviewees who indicated that this could be difficult for the MIA to have a strong influence in mobilizing other Ministries, some of which are much bigger.

The role of the President was also key in launching the deconcentration platform. In the meantime, the President has obviously more leverage on the executive bodies, including the MFDP. The lack of implementation of the Inter-ministerial committee, progress in term of political decentralization via passing the LGA at the Senate, reflect dynamics positively at the institutional level. This also depends on the ability of the citizens directly or through civil society organizations to hold politicians accountable for their commitment to the reform and the progress on revenues sharing and decentralization, which needs to happen at the local level.

The secretariat is positioned under MIA hierarchical chain but involves other institutions such as, the Governance Commission. This is based on institutional mandate and lead for associated activities. However coordination has been poorly undertaken and has led to a number of inefficiencies in project implementation with competing activities targeting the same stakeholders

## EFFECTIVENESS

MTE Team conducted detailed assessment of effectiveness of LDSP interventions and reports that effectiveness in achieving expected outputs is maintained at a satisfactory level. Also key stakeholders’ perceptions on the level of effectiveness of the five strategic outputs as well as the level of efficiency and effectiveness of funding modalities, M & E system, and addressing cross cutting themes were rated satisfactorily

### Contribution of LDSP to the objectives of decentralization

According to the LDSP programme structure, objectives are defined as the transfer of authority and responsibilities from national to local governments in Liberia. Overall, LDSP has contributed and committed immensely to moving the decentralization agenda ahead by supporting the drafting of national policy and legal frameworks, increasing awareness on decentralization amongst various groups of the population, political and administrative stakeholders, and providing new services to the population.

Progress related to the objectives of decentralization are less visible at this mid-point even though dynamics have been put into proper perspective and launched as evidenced by various project activities. There is a general expectation that momentum within the programme will increase once the LGA is passed. The programme has made some progress as per the intermediary steps taken leading to the fulfillment of the objectives reflected in the legal framework. In the case of peace building, few progress have been reported including:-Easy access to land deeds, being allowed to clarify property of land, establish legitimacy and also avoid potential conflicts and disputes over land access. Despite the fragility nature of the nation, limited insecurity problems exist since the signing of the peace agreement with the exception of some conflicts that emerged in Sinoe County. The programme is likely to experience less effects on peace building by strengthening administrative issues, State legitimacy, good governance and social issues. Hence, LDSP has contributed to the objectives of decentralization.

### Effectiveness in moving governance at the local level in Liberia and results at national level.

Some progress in moving local governance at local levels have been made in terms of the decision making process, increased accountability and autonomy. Reference to financial capacities, MTE team discovered that the only funding allocated to the counties are the County Development Fund (CDF) and the Social Development fund (SDF

Substantial achievements on deconcentration have been made resulting to large number of services delivered with 22,000 customers. The MACs have provided 24 services including:-ECOWAS biometric/identification cards, adjudication of labor cases, labor Inspection, collection & analysis, labor statistics, contractor’s License permits for zoning & Land use, legal psychosocial & medical services, business registration, marriage certificates (traditional & western),organization of children representative forum, registration of birth certificates, Registration of New educational facilities, education data collection & processing,import & export declaration, data collection, dissemination, monitoring, deed registration, lease agreement, bachelor & spinster certificate, issuance of divorce letter, flag receipts, Development planning & monitoring services.

Majority of the services are new while few existed prior to opening the CSC but they delivered differently. Example:-Land deeds were provided at the county level, but people had to pay extra fees to facilitate travel to Monrovia. Also, Western marriage certificates were delivered in the counties and birth registrations were available at the hospitals. Although no assessment reflecting statistical data are available for old services and to what extent those old services benefitted the population, it is worth nothing that all these services are now effectively delivered.

During the MTE team visits to Grand Bassa and Margibi, beneficiariesat the CSCs informed the team that the presence of services at the county level has meant they no longer have to pay high transportation and accommodation expenses in Monrovia, and also benefits they enjoyed from fast delivery of services as compared to Monrovia. They explained that not all of them have relatives in Monrovia, and the process to obtain important documents sometimes took several weeks. They shared their painful experiences of having huge crowds of people waiting on line or sleeping in front of various ministries in Monrovia but overall, the experience and benefit to the population has been positive. Some inhabitants of Monrovia commute between various CSCs in counties to obtain documentations because the process for services delivery are more efficient.

Some minor challenges still exist regarding the processing of documents at the central level whereby an appointed staff was responsible to bring them to Monrovia due to large demand for services and the lack of adequate daily power supply or stationary. However, proper planning will mitigate associated risk of losing documents, etc. Notwithstanding, reluctance to fully address such issues relating to deconcentrated services raises concerns that once CSCs are opened in the southeastern counties, considering the bad road conditions poses serious challenge.

Administrative services provided at the local level also allowed for revenues generation at the various CSCs. In the absence of cost sharing, no funds are available in the national budget to facilitate operational expenses at the CSCs, although revenue generated are paid to the central government through LRA offices in the counties. CSC largely depend on donor funds to operate. As to date, revenues collected from Grand Bassa CSC alone amounted to US$ 52,683 or L$4,794,240 equivalent.

Beneficiaries interviewed perceived the deconcentration as a way for the State to obtain more revenues from the population as additional revenues generated by the CSC are sent to central government with none remaining at local level due to the Current legal framework (PFM). In the long run, if this situation persists, this could create reverse effects and strengthen the central power in terms of finance and legitimacy, instead of promoting local governance. Hence, it is crucial that financial decentralization progresses rapidly along with the fiscal and other reforms of the local government. It is worth noting that at the national level, key administrative and political stakeholders in Monrovia and in some counties have been provided full awareness and sensitization about the process which is more integrated into the government planning. The House of Representatives recently passed the LGA Bill pending the Senate’s approval which is also a very positive sign.

### Innovative techniques and best practices

CSCs represent an innovation in the long historical Liberian context and have proven to be an innovative product as this type of structure was never implemented in the past nor potential innovations in the overall decentralization practices previously identified. Some best practices identified in this are summarized below:

* CSCs one stop shop (OSS) concept played a vital role in the success of the LDSP so far. It is considered to be highly beneficial by LGs as they have delivered 24 services to 22,000 beneficiaries which has resulted to savings on time, money and have also provided security protection. This concept was considered to be one of the most tangible outcomes of the LDSP with a high level of effectiveness since its implementation.
* Capacity Building Training provided for local authorities that is designed and delivered jointly with national institutions.
* Training of LDSP Staff in procurement and positioning that staff member in UNDP exclusively to speed up procurement process for programme implementation.

Additional Best practices from the previous LDLD programme which has provided additional support to the **LDSP** were as follows:-

* Setting up of an M & E Unit within the MIA to support monitoring and evaluation activities
* Preparation of training manuals on local governance ensuring availability of requisite information, processes and procedures to support local governance activities and promote the overall decentralization agenda.
* Establishment of database on local level projects for smooth implementation.

### Incorporation of anti-corruption and integrity institutions

Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) have drafted some anti-corruption guidelines to be used at the county level. Generally, the financial procedures for the use of the LDSP funds are intended to avoid corruption risks which also creates a very bureaucratic system. However, at the CSCs, the LRA is in charge of all the payments, but this does not prevent risks associated with civil servants asking for additional money even though, no case was identified during the evaluation. Hence, it is worth noting the LDSP has been effective in controlling corruption by being supportive in implementing those various control mechanisms put into place by LRA to prevent corruption.

Adequacy of LDSP strategy to ensure that MIA and GC can lead the decentralization agenda

Various efforts have been made to support ownership by the two institutions but capacities remain very limited as they play their political roles. A training department is being set up but there is lack of a clear analysis and plan for capacity building, although some work have been done in that respect. Capacity assessments were conducted in 2015 and 2016 (Rapid Assessment and Micro Assessment) but it did not measure progress showing clear indicators.

The LGA reform will also restructure the MIA into a Ministry of Local Government to enhance its capability and competencies to coordinate and oversee local authorities. This self-reform process also faces some limitations in the form of conflict of interest with potential internal resistances. This is particularly significant and must be given immediate attention, considering the facts that the impact of programme effectiveness is tied to the restructuring of the MIA in order to coordinate the decentralization reform agenda.

The lack of clear planning to facilitate the reform of local governance illustrates some capacity limitations, as well as less progress or results in several components of the reform including:- the ability of the staff and various departments involved at central level to perform their duties and be accountable to the various stakeholders in their performance toward advancing the reform.

The role of the Governance Commission is less direct in the programme execution, and some key macro studies have not been conducted on the effects and impacts of the various components of the reform, their applicability options for generating revenues and arbitration on key sensitive issues. The Commission’s role in revising the LDSP and ensuring its adequacy to the context was also limited. As indicated earlier, these two institutions which must be increased their capacities to leverage the political dynamics involved in the process at governmental and inter-ministerial levels.

The project included trainings on organizational aspects including:-Monitoring & evaluation, communication, planning, human resources and procurement without clear measures of the effects of those trainings such as, pre and post-test, or analysis of the changes of processes and practices. However, the question of technical skills in local governance, in terms of management and local administration for example, must be tackled. The forthcoming role of local governance agents will however be key during implementation of the LGA.

## EFFICIENCY

MTE established that LDSP efficiency in achieving expected outputs was maintained at a satisfactory level and considered its various interventions efficient during programme implementation, especially those in the capacity development sector. Independent planning and implementation of development activities by LGs and communities were made possible by the programmes capacity building interventions at all levels. However, there is still need to provide additional on-going trainings as need arises for smooth implementation of the decentralization agenda.

Additionally, the MTE noted that although UNDP has delivered goods and services in line with administrative procedures, its efficiency in supporting local governance initiatives such as the LDSP has been adversely affected by cumbersome procurement processes, a weak field presence and rigid project management. There were frequent complaints by stakeholders/partners that UNDP procedures have been very cumbersome especially those linked to procurement, causing delays that affected the ability of LDSP to deliver timely against results. Recently, LDSP has recruited and positioned a staff at UNDP to exclusively expedite procurement matters and hopefully, reduce problems for smooth programme implementation.

Increasing ownership of the State institutions of the programme is also relevant to efficiency but should be conditioned by increased transparency and public accountability. Planning of human resources should be strengthened, as well and form part of a general revision of the human resources processes. Monitoring should be more efficient, participatory and better coordinated in order to encompass outcomes, risks and possible impacts.

### Efficiency and cost effectiveness of LDSP’s strategy and execution

The previous evaluation of LDLD and CST identified the need to merge efforts into one single approach at both national and local levels as such, similar approach was applied to the LDSP. This was relevant because those interventions were positioned at the ministerial level to ensure that a ministry could not oversee the actions of sectors in another ministry. Coordination is happening strategically at local levels, but not enough expected engagement of visible synergies at national level and in the implementation of the various project components.

The NDIS played a key role in programme execution hence, Job security becomes crucial considering the role of non-civil servants which is key for the LDSP as their contracts timeframe do not depend necessarily on the political agenda. Continuity for the implementation of the programme cannot be over-emphasized especially, in a context where political leadership heading the MIA changed several times.[[8]](#footnote-8) Now, in the wake of political uncertainty and change of government after the next presidential elections, proper planning to ensure the retention of LDSP staff by contract is crucial.

The issue of human resources management and fast staff turn-over should be considered seriously. Lack of “Champion” and/or “Institutional memory” to drive the decentralization agenda weakens the project implementation. Requisite systems should include institutionalization of the knowledge based trainings integrated into capacity building plans of the institutions and possibly setting up standards, capitalization and replication.

Recently, a new organogram has been designed and implemented with the objective to strengthen the integration of NDIS into the MIA hierarchy. It aims at having a separate and distinct structure for the project implementation. This is essential in order to strengthen ownership and avoid duplication or substitution of functions between NDIS and MIA. The effects of this new organogram cannot be readily assessed because these positions were not occupied at the time of the evaluation. The actual linkages and knowledge transfer between NDIS and MIA should be monitored. The programme was originally planned for the maximization of resources between the MACs at the CSC. (Example sharing of vehicles to visit districts, etc according to target 1.2 in 2015). This did not happen, instead vehicles given by the programme were actually not used by the CSCs but given to the superintendents.

### Economical use of financial and human resources

MTE reviewed quarterly and annual progress reports that were transparent and accountable for the utilization of resources as per activities planned and the outputs achieved.The use of financial resources is controlled by strict procedures of the UNDP, while human resources are managed by the MIA except for the CTA position and financial management of the programme.

Human resources allocation were done on ad hoc basis with limited early or long term planning. Example:-The contracts of the staff of the secretariat ended in June, 2016 without proper planning for the recruitment of the new staff in advance as such, for several months there was no official staff in the secretariat which functioned at minimum level. Accordingly, the staff members were asked to work as volunteers during that period for the benefit of the programme and as a contribution to the development of their country, which obviously pose an issue in terms of employment ethics. As to date, the contracts of the staff members who had to work voluntarily have been renewed.

At the local level, this volunteer approach to work was applicable to only one staff deployed by MACS at the County Service Center, a Coordinator who was not a MAC staff. All staff are duly employed at the county level and re-deployed at the CSC but some were not paid for several months by their ministries (Example, MOE in Grand Bassa).

At UNDP, an issue of limited planning of staffing occurred as well. The Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) who played a central role in the programme execution, was offered a job opportunity by USAID in another country and e resigned from the position before the end of the contract simply because the project recruitment for a CTA covers only one (1) year contractual period in alignment with the programme framework.

In terms of cost efficiency, the ROM reports of 2015 pointed out the significant share of the CTA in cost structure, corresponding to a position at P5 level according to UNDP salary grid, which is equivalent to US$26,333 USD/month as Liberia is still considered as an unstable and fragile country though the country has been peaceful for more than ten years now. (Note:-cost in Liberia are reflective of the country post adjustment which differs from one field office to the next and UN security rating of the country). Currently, ToR is being drafted for the recruitment of a new CTA, with a slightly different profile, as MIA and GC have expressed the need to get further external technical support for the implementation of this process which is new to the Government of Liberia. Priorities of the programme will be the restructuring of local governance system, fiscal decentralization, accountability and transparency over the resources redistribution, as well as integration of decentralization in the different policies and operations of the MACs, including Ministry of Lands Mines & Energy, etc.

UNVs assigned to LDSP are funded by USAID to support the functioning of the CSC, with the objective to provide ad hoc technical assistance and mentorship. Significant delays occurred in their deployment in the country and at the field level. They were not all hired at the same time, in some cases with several months of delay, and some spent several months in Monrovia before deployment in the counties. They are assigned to train mentees and ensure knowledge replication in the counties by constituting a pool of trainers, which turn out to be more difficult than anticipated because of the limited level of competences at the local level, and the fact that MIA staff usually comprise of older people. In this regard, future intervention needs to be properly coordinated with objectives specified for maximum output.

Finances are managed by UNDP based on a specific NIM agreement. Administrative processes are widely described as uncertain, long and cumbersome by the various interviewees. Limited human resources for the management of the finances at UNDP level partly explain this factor. UNDP took a corrective measure by recruiting a project administration assistant a month before this evaluation to expedite the work flow in a timely manner. In the past, the project had an administrative assistant with a MIA contract, who was inefficient to ensure payment process were undertaken expeditiously. This issue is already corrected within the revised staffing structure.

In some cases, administrative delays prevented the implementation of some activities such as;- a symposium for law makers, public hearing at legislature by GC, dates delay for workshops involving people from all over the country. Also, research on revenue potential was postponed from November 2015 to April 2016, and furniture requested in May were delivered in September. This justifies the need for long term planning of the activities for minimum two or three weeks according to UNDP financial procedures.

Under such circumstances and given the existing political process, some vital opportunities can be missed such as, an advocacy that require ad hoc meetings or workshops, depending on the political agenda and dynamics of the different institutions, MACs, House of Representatives and Senate.

Application of a hybrid model for the management of financial resources could be considered, during the usage of small grants to off-set running costs of the programme, preferably basic supplies. This will require clear efforts on the part of the MIA relative to transparency of the utilization of funds at the local level and equipment provided.

Table 3: Project Expenditure Delivery Summary

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Pillar & Component** | **Approved Budget** | **Total** Utilized | **Unspent Balance** | **% Utilization** |
| **GOVERNANCE & PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS (GPI)** | | | | | |
| **2013** | **LDSP** | **429,928** | **385,642** | **44,286** | **89.70** |
| **2014** | **LDSP** | **1,355,011** | **823,276** | **531,735** | **60.76** |
| **2015** | **LDSP** | **1,959,689** | **1,808,143** | **151,546** | **92.27** |
| **2016** | **LDSP** | **2,841,296** | **1,752,428** | **1,088,868** | **61.68** |
| **TOTAL** |  | **6,585,924** | **4,769,489** | **1,816,435** | **72.42** |

According to LDSP expenditure delivery summary for the period ranging from 2013-2016[[9]](#footnote-9). Out of a total approved budget of $6,585,924, total amount utilized was $4,769,489 and the un-spent balance reflects US$ 1,816,435 averaging 72% for the entire 4 years period. Project delivery rate for 2013 and 2015 was 90%. In 2014 there was a decline of 62% due to the Ebola epidemic. As to date, with remaining 3 months to end of year, 2016 rate stands at 62%. If all activities totalling US$ 681, 270.00 in the third and fourth quarter work plan are achieved, the trend will have a positive result. Originally, funds allocated to the programme was US$10,476,406 based on the revised programme document.

### Adequacy of the monitoring and evaluation systems

In order to effectively produce maximum efficiency, LDSP Monitoring & Evaluation system needs to be strengthened considering the scope of coverage of the Country. There are a multiplicity of tools and approaches applicable for M&E depending on the different organizations involved in the process, clear overview of the various level of results monitored at the outcome levels, as well as a clear ownership and accountability structure. Recently, an M&E officer was hired in the NDIS but lacked previous M&E experience as such, the position has been vacant for several months.

M&E role currently assumed by GC is not expedient, as the focus of the GC is to monitor outcome level. The project should recruit its own M&E personnel to handle the functions effectively and efficiently to monitor output and activity progress liaising with the GC on outcome monitoring. The project M&E will support the articulation of more robust result based reporting away from activity and output based reporting currently.

The programme document provides the following M&E tools:-

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| An ***Issue Log*** will be updated by the secretariat to facilitate tracking and resolution of potential problems or requests for change. |
| A ***Risk Log*** will be regularly as the focus of the GC is to monitor outcome level progress. The Project should recruit its own M&E personnel to handle the functions effectively and efficiently of monitoring output and activity progress and liaising with the Gc on outcome monitoring. The Project M&E will support the articulation of more robust result based reporting away from activity and output based reportage currently.updated by the secretariat by reviewing the external environment that may affect the programme implementation. |
| A ***Programme Lessons Learned Log*** will be activated and regularly updated by the secretariat to ensure on-going learning and adoption within the organization, and to facilitate the preparation of the Lessons Learned Report at the end of the Program. |
| A ***Quality Log*** will be developed by the secretariat to record progress towards the completion of activities. |
| ***An annual programme review*** will be conducted by the Programme Board during the fourth quarter of each year to assess the performance of the program. The review will involve key programme stakeholders (i.e. national partners, donours, UN agencies, specialized organizations) and will focus on achievements, challenges and validation of annual work plans. |
| ***Updates and briefings*** will be provided by the secretariat on a rolling and regular basis to donor partners throughout the programme life-cycle, including **half-year strategic review** and progress evaluation sessions. |

These tools although available were inadequately used. They belong to UNDP internal M&E system but were not part of the daily monitoring of the programme by the NDIS.

The annual work plan also includes indicators which were hardly followed. Those indicators also vary from year to year. In 2016, a consultant was hired to support the revision of the work plan but only resulted to refining the indicators that were difficult to follow. Example:-MIA staff were not involved in the formulation of the M&E tools and indicators and some deputy minister are not aware of them. However, plan to conduct assessments of the CSCs also constitute and/or requires some forms of M&E.

Requisite trainings workshops have been done on M&E for CSC and county staff, while the main form of M&E are the weekly reports sent on the delivery of services without other details such as qualitative appreciations. At the county level, a multitude of stakeholders are in charge of M&E for the implementation of development projects funded by the County Development Fund or Social Development Funds. This include:-The Project Management Commission, County Planning officer, County Development officer, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, Civil Society. MTE discovered some potential duplications of functions for each category of stakeholders including:-local State and Civil Society, especially as the number and size of the projects remain reduced. Indicators at outcome level in those various documents are noticeable.

In addition, some monitoring of the outcomes is taking place at UNDP level in the ROAR. Those data could not be obtained. The Governance Commission is in charge of M&E at the outcome and impact level. An M&E staff is also positioned there. No assessment was produced on LDSP so far. Decentralization will be the subject of the next general governance assessment in 2016, while the 2015 one focused on elections only. In LDSP continuous efforts to ensure M&E systems are adequately put in place, it is worth noting that this evaluation also forms part of its monitoring and evaluation.

### Potential alternative approaches to achieve better results

LDSP overall approach in this regard has been driven by a top down approach. Stakeholder engagement takes place at the national level, and the processes started from the Governance Commission, MIA and relevant MACS. Considering this issue, he need for more capacity building cannot be over emphasized. it is logical to ensure that training and capacity building programmes are established within the MIA and integrated into the planning & human resources unit. This should be associated with a clear analysis of the gaps and follow-up of the progress in light of the ensuing reform. Once the needs at the MIA and at the county levels are clearly identified, the decision regarding resource mobilization to facilitate the process would be easily made to produce the relevant results. Eventually, this will help to adequately and clearly define the role and action plan of potential UNVs and LDSP may link this or use short term consultants instead for support on some specific issues. Also, the mentoring approach of the UNV is relevant in order to create a pool of trainers but it is very essential that the replication mechanisms be put in place to ensure the actual effectiveness of this approach. In addition to the above, LDSP establishment of M&E linkages at local, programme and national levels serves as potential alternative approaches to achieve better results that leads to efficiency.

## SUSTAINABILITY

In many cases of Local Government programmes like the LDSP, concerns of sustainability have not been adequately factored into the project at the design stage. The LDSP lacks a clear sustainability plan that is yet to be articulated and implemented as such, there is possibility that the programme could phase out due to donors fatigue. The programme has conducted some awareness and sensitization activities on decentralization and local government reforms but the lack of funding in addition to abrupt and constant changes of political leadership and some challenges that exists especially, as it relates to the revision of the local government structures on which the success of the programme depends, may hamper the continuity of the process. Presently, there is still an over-reliance on donors funding for programme implementation and the lack of an exit strategy. LDSP has no exit strategy embedded in its Prodoc with relevant information on how the state will take over the program, or which mechanism would be put in place to sustain the activities without UNDP or other donors’ intervention. Sustainability of the CSCs operations due to lack of adequate funding poses serious risk to the existing and opening of new centers. However, it is worth nothing that sustainability is better ensured through continued investments in capacity building of different stakeholders and not just Governments at the local level over a long period of time.

### Likelihood that governance interventions are sustainable

The dynamics triggered by the project are progressively integrated into the Liberian society, including institutions in Monrovia hence, the sensitization and information provided on decentralization is likely to remain. The overall adaptation of the Liberian society to the theory of change that decentralization is a major issue for peace building is a gradual process. This is a new phenomenon involving a dynamic interplay between top down vis-a-vis bottom up approach especially, when “centralization” has marked Liberian society for decades. To date, the accountability mechanisms only exist from the counties to the central level and there is little reciprocity in that regard. Currently, counties report to the central level, but there is limited feedback or engagement on the local level as it relates to the central decision making process. Also, financial dependency of the counties, and uncertainty over their funding, remain the main challenge, and raises questions on the State capacity to implement the other steps of the reform. However, progress should not be underestimated given the complexity of the process and the multiple layers of interests at stake.

### Mechanisms put in place by UNDP to sustain improvements

Overall, UNDP have achieved mixed results of local governance support with respect to sustainability but still experiencing on-going need for improvement. An assessment reveals that insufficient attention to important design, advocacy and implementation elements have contributed to a weak record of sustainability. UNDP initiatives in local governance have been more sustainable when working simultaneously on legislative frameworks for decentralization, nurturing effective partnerships with Government, CBOs and communities, and developing appropriate methodologies and approaches that could be replicated. At the same time, several factors have adversely affected sustainability including:-. Weak risk analysis (political, administrative, social, corruption, and so on), poor advocacy to promote broad based ownership, insufficient micro-macro linkages and unrealistic timelines have prevented adoption of projects for scaling up nationwide. Sustainability has been adversely affected when resource implications have not been fully factored in and this has resulted in insufficient capacity building efforts within Government and among non-state actors.

In many cases, concerns of sustainability have not been adequately factored into the project at the design stage. Contributing to this has been the limited transfer of in-house knowledge on local governance to other units within UNDP and to development partners[[10]](#footnote-10)

In the case of LDSP, no exit strategy is indicated in LDSP Prodoc detailing for example, how the state will take over the program, or which mechanism would be put in place to sustain the activities without UNDP intervention. UNDP has several distinct projects that could contribute to sustaining improvements such as, support to civil society organizations, which remain key stakeholders that support the decentralization process by triggering demand from the politicians and others. Given the lack of financial commitment and capacities of the Liberian State, and despite some efforts to integrate it further into the MIA structure, the process still remains a project based approach.

It is not so much about the funding pattern, but the commitment and predictability of donors funding which poses financial challenge as compared to ensuring that the project integration into longer term strategic planning could involve its engagement with clear political support and ownership.

The revision of the “organogram” is also aimed at strengthening ownership of the programme by the State. Example:-the Deputy Minister for Administration is now acting as the programme director and the various members of the Secretariat report to him according to MIA hierarchy. In light of the challenges related to the reform, it seems key that the secretariat supports the MIA in strategic planning for the progressive restructuring of local governance, even before the passage of the Local Government Act. However, sustainability is better ensured through continuous investments in capacity building of different stakeholders and not just Governments at the local level over a long period of time. Efforts at building capacity of CSOs as a critical partner in decentralized governance is important to sustain gains. However, UNDP mechanism to sustain LDSP is still a working process.

### Required enhancement to the governance portfolio to support service delivery over the long term

At a general level, some major components related to the local governance have yet to be designed and/or implemented such as, the revision of the local governance structure in terms of coverage of the various administrations, and allocations of human resources. All of these are indirectly related to service delivery. Other main reforms at the government level are being implemented progressively. Significant challenges remain for the future implementation of the local governance reforms as such, planned interventions in the governance portfolio could not be put in place at this stage.

The timeframe for the passing of the LGA by the Senate remains uncertain, although recent progress relative to the passing of the Act at the House of Representatives is promising. Another issue involves the progressive retirement of the local civil servants in light of the forthcoming reform of the local government. This issue is not really tied up to the Act and the downsizing of the local government or restructuring of the staff composition, human resources and capacity building processes that could start without interruption and/or delay.

UNDP’s governance portfolio comprises of Justice and Security, Support to Elections, Support to Constitutional Reform and Support to Transparency, Accountability, Oversight and Participation projects. The evaluation recognizes that a significant number of UNDP Liberia projects are implemented at the local level and governance related interventions often support at the national level. The current decentralization process provides the opportunity to start considering decentralization as a cross-cutting issue, from the national level to the decentralized entities and vice-versa. Such an approach would also contribute to leveraging results from the various MACs and institutions. Further pooling of resources also at the local level could also maximize synergies and local dynamics. There could be opportunities to promote the decentralization agenda, by funding projects at the local level, through the County Council or County Treasury for example, as pilots for the functioning of those entities. The ability to implement such projects would also be an interesting sign validating the government’s priorities on the matter.

To date, LDSP is the main intervention supporting deconcentration and service delivery at local level. The Rule of Law and Access to Justice Programme supports expansion of justice and security access at local levels as well. This approach largely focuses on documentation services as a direct and visible output for the population.

It is anticipated that non-documentation services would be partially implemented along-side documentation services with the inclusion of inspection services, etc., but it is not certain as to what extent the population will welcome and appreciate these services. Other services which should be offered have not been assessed comprehensively during this evaluation. People interviewed indicated the need to have birth certificates without the 12 years limitation, and would also support issuance of passports at the local level.The governance portfolio has the capacity required to support service delivery over a long term and these capacities should be further enhanced.

### Actions of the GoL to ensure long-term sustainability of the LDSP relative to the long-term objectives of decentralization

Capacity for service delivery is strongly connected to the ability to cover the operational costs for the maintenance of the CSCs. The funding of CSCs operational costs remains a major issue which MIA have estimated at 60,000US per year maximum for each CSC. Recently during the last Board meeting donors were requested to keep on contributing to the financing, until GOL can assume responsibility and show more commitment to finance of the CSC through budgetary allotment. The lack of funding for the CSC prevents the sustainability of the operations, and could be interpreted as a sign that decentralization is not a major priority for the government. Budgetary allocation, through the MIA, could be a solution as such, 500,000 USD was requested by the MIA for the next budgetary period but this was not approved. Note that previous allocation of fund to the tone of 500,000 USD was provided by GoL with limited transparency over the use of the amount which still remained at the central level. As to date, actions by Gol for LDSP sustainability relative to long term objectives are still pending.

# CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

## Partnership Strategy

Multiple partners and necessary stakeholder engagement is significant for a successful decentralization process. This remains essential to trigger changes, and further coordination, synergies and complementarities that are essentially put into place at operational level for sustainable programme implementation.

### Inclusivity, appropriateness and effectiveness of the partnership strategy

The LDSP deliberately targets decentralization of administrative and political governance in Liberia and as such, support for its successful implementation of the 2013-2017 programme has taken on a unified program-based approach, drawing on the technical expertise, activities and experience of the GoL, UN, and other development partners including the EU, USAID, Sweden and other actors in Liberia to deliver an effective decentralization program. MTE discovered that the partnership strategy has been rather inclusive with board meetings involving a number of stakeholders. Partnership is indeed the key for the performance of the LDSP programme, in terms of the following:-

* Ability to engage the different MACs in the reform
* Leverage support and political influence
* Support accountability through external oversight, by the civil society.
* Ensure that the voice of the vulnerable groups is taken into consideration.

During the past few years, MIA, GC, and UNDP have successfully collaborated to support policy framework and overall capacity development of national and sub-national administration. The MTE interacted with and held several discussions with all partners in order to access their perception and articulate their views. This was necessary to ensure that adequate redress to relevant issues of concerns are considered to facilitate future smooth programme implementation.

Decentralization is a transversal reform and has created potential synergies with all the national and sectorial reforms and programmes implemented in Liberia. There is a level of coordination with the fiscal decentralization which mostly happen in terms of joint meeting and involvement of the MFDP in the Board Meetings and Technical Working Committee but it does not translate in actual joint activities or implementation modalities.

In order to achieve decentralization outcomes at the national and local levels, the LDSP works with partners as follows:

* The CSA and GC supported by the World Bank, Sweden and USAID, in the area of the Public Sector Modernization Programme to ensure that the public sector reforms support and are aligned with the decentralization programme and to provide the capacity it needs.[[11]](#footnote-11)
* The MFDP, supported by the EU, USAID and Sweden to facilitates fiscal decentralization through the IPFRMP to decentralize Treasury functions by creating County Treasuries in all the 15 counties in support of Fiscal Decentralization. Plan is already in progress in few of the CSC with gradual extension to others.
* The MoGDCSP and UN Women, to ensure that decentralization supports the mainstreaming of gender equality into governance, in policy and its implementation, and to ensure that decentralization delivers equitable and inclusive local service provision in relation to the Government of Liberia’s National Gender Policy, and implementation of Security Council 1325.
* In the past, county level collaboration existed between the Government of Liberia and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Presently, partnership at the county level with UNMIL and other partners, has minimized due to UNMIL’s transition. However, UNDP continues to work closely with all partners to assist in the transfer of security and other responsibilities.
* Additionally, LDSP progressively forges strong partnership via collaboration, coordination and synergy building among all MAC’s involved in the deconcentration process. Partners at the governance sectors include but not limited to 12 Macs participating in the deconcentartion process namely:-(Ministry of Labor, Transport, Internal Affairs, Gender, Public Works, Health, Commerce, Education, Finance and Development Planning, Liberia Revenue Authority, Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) and Center for National Documents and Records/Archive (CNDRA).

Evaluation discovered some level of collaboration, coordination and synergy building among MAC’s involved in deconcentration process which is a positive sign for decentralization.[[12]](#footnote-12) However, this could be strengthened further through a more practical and operational planning, ensuring that key node for changes are targeted jointly to move forward the reform agenda, and promote accountability and transparency which decentralization can also influence, starting at the local level.

### Current or potential complementarities or overlaps with existing national partners’ programmes

Most national partners complement each other programmes in order to drive the decentralization agenda, MTE discovered no overlaps. There have been some collaboration between national partners and coordinated efforts to achieve decentralization. National partnerships have not affected the progress towards achieving the outputs but rather boosted progress so far. In the future, complementarities and potential overlaps may be numerous, in relations to the various components of the LDSP and the cross-cutting nature of decentralization. This covers Land Reform, Public Sector Modernization, Gender, Youth and Economic Development. Also, some stakeholders are less involved, when they should be concerned about driving the decentralization agenda. Example:-The Ministry of Land, Mines and Energy, etc. Revenues generated from natural resource could play a major role in the funding of local governance. The MLM&E could also partake in discussions on revenue sharing and equitable access to resources, as well as assume some funding responsibilities and engage local authorities in the sector. MTE also discovered that traditional authorities, particularly, the Traditional National Council, do not collaborate with others when they could leverage some influence at the grassroots level.

### Collaboration with other international development partners

UNDP has collaborated, coordinated, and build synergies with other partners for implementation of the LDSP program. Namely, the European Union, Government of Sweden and USAID as key contributers to the programme, but also given their parallel support to Public Sector Refrom and IPFRMP which impinge on the project delivery. USAID funded the UNV in the LDSP and is currently putting in place a programme of 10 million USD in three other counties. The objectives are rather similar to those of LDSP. In parallel, USAID also has a programme, GEMS, to support the public reform and some coordination is ensured with the participation of USAID attendance and participation in the LDSP Board Meeting.

MTE discovered that inclusivity of the process contributed to longer gestation period for programme implementation planning. The involvement of the donors was quite noticeable, specifically, matters concerning human resources, recruitment and retention. of the secretariat staff. It justifies the occurrence of issues in the past with the qualifications of the staff, which hampered the performance of the programme implementation immensely.

### Partnership with civil society and private sector

CSOs are present in the counties, but at a minimum level. CSO acknowledged partnership but requested for more collaboration. Civil society was involved in some training workshops and the review of the Local Government Act conducted by the Governance Commission. At the local level, there are examples where they play an oversight role at the CSC, or were involved in the monitoring of the local projects. Capacity building of the civil society at the local level, and engagement of the citizens is strongly needed. Generally, civil society participates in county meetings for the management of County Development or Social Development Funds. Their role in the process is also limited as they do not have decision making power. LDSP worked with civil society mostly at the national level.

## Gender Equality

### Gender addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the program

The Government of Liberia is committed to ensuring that effective representation and participation of women in decision and political structures is reflected in its laws, policies, international and regional treaties including the National Gender Policy of Liberia, the Liberia’s Action plan for implementation on UNSCR, 1325, the AFT, etc. The Decentralization policy also has strong focus on social inclusion, including women in the political process. The policy seeks to ensure that a gender[[13]](#footnote-13) perspective informs all aspects of the decentralization process. Also, emphasis on equal participation in public decision making was further developed in the Local Governance Act (LGA) (which reserves two seats for women in each County Council).

The decentralization programme seeks to empower women at all levels of governance. The Liberia’s national policy on decentralization & local governance, NPDLG and its legal & regulatory framework provides enabling environment for participation of women, people with disabilities and other marginalized group where socio-economic development really matters.

Liberia’s Traditional authorities and patriarchal values and norms is a significant barrier to women’s inclusion and participation in decision-making processes and structures (Men marginalize women). This issue is so prevalent in the Liberian society where men serve as the traditional and cultural heads of homes as such, men’s influence in the home extends into the public sphere where they constitute the majority of decision makers at a national, county and local levels. This socially constructed role given to men has reinforced a social norm that often excludes women from exercising influence and fails to recognize the value of their knowledge and participation in politics and governance. Women who are able to participate in politics and public life at local level often face ridicule and harassment for transcending conventional gender role.

Because traditions and gender stereotypes are so deeply engrained and entrenched in attitudes, institutions and social relations and structures in Liberia, challenging them is a long term process and special measures are needed to overcome them.

### Support promoted positive changes in gender equality any unintended effects

In this regard, the LDSP programme have partially addressed some of these issues considering the recruitment of a gender advisor positioned in the Secretariat was a strong step forward to help disaggregate the data by gender, and support the MIA in applying gender mainstreaming. The deconcentration of services specifically included support to women through the services provided by the Ministry of Gender and Social Affairs, in terms of psychosocial counselling, and support to victims of SGBV and domestic violence. Those services existed before the implementation of the CSCs. Data to measure the evolution of the number of cases addressed at the county level in the different counties have not been obtained.

Overall, by providing an easier access to all services, the CSCs also benefit the vulnerable groups, notably women and women head of households and children who could not afford or take the risks to go to Monrovia. The majority of birth registration are undertaken by women[[14]](#footnote-14).

Women in informal business sector are now moving into the formal sector due to access to business registration services at the county service center example:- local catering and restaurant businesses. As a result of the registration of traditional marriages at the county level, women can now have rights in their marriages, similar to those of women in civil marriages.

Interviewees indicated that the fact that women victims had to go to the CSCs would not pose an issue for them, even if they were likely to meet other people there but women target beneficiaries were not available for consultation and/or verification on this during the study.

The Ministry of Gender operated and sustained decentralized offices in the various counties, offering an alternative to going at the CSCs. UN Women have conducted a specific study on women and decentralization in Liberia[[15]](#footnote-15)

Additionally, it is worth noting, that the MTE according to UNDP assessment on Local Governance discovered that overall, a strategic and systematic effort at mainstreaming gender concerns into local governance has been missing. A systematic gender analysis of local governance interventions has not been regularly conducted. Though there is recognition that women’s empowerment has amounted to more than their participation in electoral politics, appropriate indicators for assessing improvements in gender relations and greater equality in the benefits flowing to women and men have not been formulated for most local governance initiatives. Similarly, capacity building initiatives have targeted women but adequate data have not been gathered to assess whether or not women have benefited from a higher awareness and training.[[16]](#footnote-16)

## Human rights

### Extent to which the programme has actively promoted the fulfilment of human rights

Liberia has ratified many important international and regional human rights treaties, including the core UN international human rights treaties, important humanitarian law instruments, the Geneva Conventions and Protocols and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. A 2013-2018 - National Human rights action plans (NHRAP), a policy document created to help articulate the advancement of human rights in Liberia. It guaranteed the overall development of all persons and populations by respecting, defending and promoting their human rights, ensuring the full exercise of civil, political, social, economic, cultural, and environmental rights deemed inseparable, interdependent, and equally essential; while recognizing all human rights contained in international declarations and treaties, in the Constitution and in domestic legislation.

The LDSP in supporting decentralization reform aims to support right holders and duty bearers in supporting equity towards State services in the country, and supports the voices of the citizenry in the governance system. Hence, engagement with both types of stakeholders contributes to promoting the fulfillment of human rights.

### Integration of human rights in each outcome of the programme and prioritization of the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination

The Mid-term Evaluation noticed that the Liberia’s decentralization agenda which the LDSP supports does not have a human right component embedded into it, neither did the designing of LDSP Program document incorporate human rights explicitly as a cross-cutting issue.

The MTE also discovered that the Liberia Independent Human Rights Commission (INHRC) has prepared a ‘Blue Print’ that factors Human Rights into decentralization. Currently, the INHRC has 23 Human Rights Regional Officers and Monitors already assigned in the 15 counties and has already established several regional offices, though they are not based at county level. [[17]](#footnote-17)

### Potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights and mitigation and management measures incorporated into programme rationale, strategy, and results and resource framework

The LDSP Programme document did not address these issues, however, considering the question relative to what ways does devolution of power influence respect for human rights or What opportunities arise for human rights advocacy in relation to local government? The impacts may be positive, negative or both, and to date, there are limited elements to draw firm conclusions on the potential trends in that respect.

The rationale of decentralization is related to having a more equitable sharing of resources amongst the population, and deconcentration services have also a human right aspect in which people are provided with the necessary HR recognition such as This document provided to donors for funding was not given to the team the birth certificates.

Decentralization in Liberia ought to improve governance and administration where power is devolved and exercised by providing services closer to the population. All these services may be managed more accountably and efficiently at local level and where this is achieved, devolution of responsibility should lead to improved respect for human rights. Decentralization may however not necessarily improves respect for human rights, if accountability and transparency mechanisms are not put in place at the local level, this could lead to some level of impunity, based on dominant networks in the various counties, especially if this comes with significant benefits from the natural resources exploitation. In that respect, the corporate social responsibility practices and existence of whistle blowing mechanisms and effectiveness of oversight bodies, at national level, will be key. In many situations, the effect may be negative, and an inherent risk will no doubt be greater where decentralization is designed and implemented without taking into account ‘human rights’.

The MTE is of the opinion that the importance for the application and adaptation of a Human Rights Based Approach to Development (HRBAD) for decentralized governance is critical for this programme because, it requires a development programming approach to local problems in favor of an inclusive consultative process in which local communities’ voices are predominant. Hence, LDSP’s could be more explicit in terms of the inclusion of HRBA, because decentralization is critical to the establishment of a long-lasting form of participative democracy that respects the dignity of the person by providing direct opportunities to engage directly in public decision and to voice concerns.

# Assessment of Programme performance

## Governance & Public Institution Pillar

The GPI Pillar of the UNDP is responsible for promoting Liberia’s Agenda for Transformation pillar 4 on governance with objective to support the National vision through its efforts to build and operate efficient and effective institutions and systems, in partnership with the citizens that will promote and uphold democratic governance, accountability, justice for all and strengthen peace.

In doing so, GPI through the implementation of various projects, hopes to align with the national agenda for transformation to achieve the followings four (4) UNDAF outcomes:-Outcome 4.1: Strengthening Key Governance Institutions: By 2017 Liberia has governance institutions that are equipped with inclusive systems to perform effectively; Outcome 4.2 Ensures that constitutional reforms are in place. Outcome 4.3: Provides resource management framework enabling transparent, accountable and equitable distribution of economic benefits and protection of rights of all; Outcome 4.4: Public Sector Institutions and Civil Service Reform in place:

**5.2 Key Achievements**

The actual outcomes and impact against the LDSP five (5) Strategic Outputs are presented in Tables 5 to below. **(See annex 5)** reflecting performance matrix for details of LDSP achievements by output. MTE9 has highlighted target outputs that are met and/or accomplished and others that are partly met or unaccomplished and has assessed whether these could still be completed before end-of-project and recommended measures to address them

**Table 5**

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| **ACTUAL OUTCOMES & ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER STRATEGIC OUTPUT 1** |
| * Presidential Directives – that created the political space and stated the unwavering commitment of the government to move services to the people put into place. * The establishment of county service center(s) which provides opportunity for MACs and county administration to pool resources in a shared governance format; Eg. Bassa , Margibi, Service centers with MOL, MIA, MoC, MoGCSP, MoH, MoPW, MOT, MOE, CNDR and LISGIS providing services from the Center. * Citizens now have access to services at the county level (i.e. permits, birth certificate, marriage certificates, business registration, driver’s license, Ecowas bio-metric Permit etc. * Non documentation services in progress. Procurement of furniture and specialized equipment and stationery. * County service center training for MACs of Nimba, Lofa, Bong,Margib, Gbarpolu, Rivercess, Cape Mount and Bomi) * Recruitment of UNVs all in place and supporting coordination in and around the CSCs. * Disaggregation of the budgets – MOH underway. MIA and MOE not yet disaggregated * Procurement training discussion concerning additional resources for establishing presence in counties hosting CSCs especially. * Improved infrastructure–construction works underway in Grand Kru, Bomi, Gbarpolu and River Cess. * Town hall meetings conducted in Bassa in Buchanan and District 1 (137 / 44 women. * Conducted radio talk shows nationwide – community radio stations selected in Bassa, Kakata,Margibi, Bong, Nimba and Grand Gedeh. * MIA press conference held in Bassa on 28th June |
| COMMENTS: Outputs Significantly accomplished at satisfactory level even though few achievements were far behind schedule for example:-the unmet target to have 15 CSCs by December 2016. GOL is highly committed to complete before commencement of the LDSP next phase. LDSP & MIA must buttress efforts to ensure positive implementation of GOL political will in this regard. Enhance outcome achievements with additional services including Adult Birth Certificates,Import & Export Declaration, etc. in order to improve image of CSC and increase service delivery. LDSP should Create more awareness of the decentralization process. |

**Table 6**

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| **ACTUAL OUTCOMES & ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER STRATEGIC OUTPUT 2** |
| * Establishment of county treasuries-treasury officers deployed to Bassa, Bong, Nimba and Margibi * Synergies in service delivery under the Supt. (cost effective and coordinated). * Forty-five (45) persons from across the deconcentrating MACs have been trained and effectively delivering services at the County Services Center * Developing 3 year County Development Agendas-dialogues conducted in Bassa, Bong, Nimba and Grand Gedeh * County participatory planning manual–updated by LIPA and department for research and planning. * Anti-corruption measures–LACC and other integrity institutions on board (Notice board, watch dog manual, Code of conduct in process). * Women are the greatest beneficiaries of services currently at the county service centers, for example, about 70% of those receiving birth certificates are women. |
| COMMENTS: Output fully satisfactory with targets met. LDSP has made significant investment for this purpose and has also developed a very good coordination with and among the CSCs. LDSP should enhance progress via increased publicity through community radios, posters, fliers, bill boards in strategic places like parking stations, market centers, etc |

**Table 7**

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| --- |
| **ACTUAL OUTCOMES & ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER STRATEGIC OUTPUT 3** |
| * Engaged political parties to make Decentralization a key principle in their party platform-conference of political partners held in June in Buchanan. * LGA Bill passed by the House pending approval by the Senate. * Women in informal business sector are now moving into the formal sector due to access to business registration services at the county service center; local catering and restaurant businesses. * As a result of the registration of traditional marriages at the county, women can now have rights in their marriages, similar to those of women in civil marriages. * Engaged legislators for support and approval of LGA-lunch meeting with the Senate and House of representative. Concerns documented and follow up conference held. |
| COMMENTS-Output at satisfactory level with limited target unmet and are still a working progress. Example:-LGA has passed but provision on elections of local authorities removed pending constitutional amendments. Impose necessary actions on political leaders and hold them accountable for commitment to the reform. Continuous pressure should originate from population including CSO, etc., to drive this political agenda. Anticipate completion before project next phase. |

**Table 8**

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| **ACTUAL OUTCOMES & ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER STRATEGIC OUTPUT 4** |
| * Key provisions in the local government bill on elections of local officials were successfully considered by delegates during the constitutional reform conference. * Developed an MIA capacity development and training strategy-LIPA is taking the lead and will be supported by an international consultant. * Selected 15 local government mentees and pair them up with the UNVs possible mentees now identified in the majority of counties. * Conducted 4 round table policy dialogues-first dialogue conducted in Buchanan regarding lessons learnt from Grand Bassa County Service Center. * Conducted 4 round table policy dialogues-first dialogue conducted in Buchanan regarding lessons learnt from Grand Bassa County Service Center. |
| COMMENTS- Output partially accomplished with exception of 4.2 & 4.3 whereby M&E and ICT are still considered working progress. M&E Plan should be revisited to allow progress monitoring from Year 1 to end-of-project. Outcome is further strengthened by a modernize CSCs with automated services with CSC IT training engagement which requires installation of internet connectivity to ease communication, sharing of reports and also place documentation on-line for easy access to services provided. |

**Table 9**

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| **ACTUAL OUTCOMES & ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER STRATEGIC OUTPUT 5** |
| * Streamlining of NDIS and alignment to MIA departments * DMA designated as the focal person for the programme in the Ministry, reporting to the Minister who then reports to the IMCD * Support staff and drivers under the programme have been moved to the government structures. * The Senior Analyst at the GC will lead the M&E mechanism of the programme and support the M&E specialist recruited into the NDIS. * Chairing of High Level Round Table on Deconcentration by the President of Liberia, Mrs., Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. included the Vice President of Liberia, H.E. Joseph N. Boakai, heads of Service Delivery MACs, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, the Donour Community and other interested parties; meeting served as the catalyst to speedily implement deconcentration with all MACs on board. |
| COMMENTS- Output rated satisfactory. Targets are met. |

The MTE have also categorized the programme achievements into 5 areas considering the LDSP logical framework structure reflecting LDSP outcomes and outputs below:-

**LDSP-Logical framework structure**

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|  | **Outcomes** | **Outputs** |
| 1 | De-concentrated services and corresponding resources managed at the assigned level of government. | **Output 1.1:** The MACs of the government of Liberia tangibly and visibly transfer functions, decision making and corresponding resources to the counties according to the de-concentration strategy.  **Output 1.2:** Enhanced coordination, sharing and pooling of resources across units of macs at the county level achieved.  **Output 1.3:** Improved infrastructure to support the de-concentration process.  **Output 1.4:** Citizens are organized and informed to participate in the de-concentration process. |
| 2 | Service delivery and accountability of local government improved. | **Output 2.1:** Capacity for participatory planning, budgeting and managing of development funds as well as revenue collection strengthened with focus on marginalized groups.  **Output 2.2:** Anti-corruption measures (systems and enforcement mechanisms) established and functional at county, city, district and community levels.  **Output 2.3:** Capacity of women and girls to participate in local government as leaders enhanced. |
| 3 | Legal and regulatory framework for decentralization is in place. | **Outcome 3.1:** Efforts to finalize local government act and other requisite legislation sustained.  **Output 3.2:** Civil service reforms aligned with decentralization policy and all signed international conventions that ensure equal access to civil service.  **Output 3.3:** Criteria established for districts, municipalities, chiefdoms and clans to rationalize and restructure them to ensure economic viability and sustainability. |
| 4 | MIA is capacitated to lead and implement decentralization reforms. | **Output 4.1:** Institutional and human capacity of MIA built to coordinate and lead the implementation of decentralization nationally.  **Output 4.2:** GC Capacitated to undertake governance assessment and monitoring strengthen.  **Output 4.3:** ICT and working environment of county administrations improved.  **Output 4.4:** Capacity for concurrent monitoring and evaluation of decentralization implementation established at MIA and the county government level |
| 5 | Programme Management | **Output 5.1:**  Efficient and effective support and coordination of the implementation of the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Government. |

1. **Deconcentration**

* The establishment of county service center(s) which provides opportunity for MACs and county administration to pool resources in a shared governance format; with MOL, MIA, MoC, MoGCSP, MoH, MoPW, MOT, MOE, CNDR and LISGIS.
* CSCs established in 2015
* Citizens now have access to services at the county level up to 24 services (i.e. permits, birth certificate, marriage certificates, business registration, driver’s license, Ecowas bio-metric Permit etc. Disaggregation of the budgets – MOH underway. MIA and MOE, amongst all the others, not yet disaggregated.
* Establishment of county treasuries-treasury officers deployed at Bassa, Bong, Nimba and Margibi.
* Chairing of High Level Round Table on Deconcentration by the President of Liberia, Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. included the Vice President of Liberia, H.E. Joseph N. Boakai, heads of Service Delivery MACs, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, the Donour Community and other interested parties; meeting served as the catalyst to speedily implement deconcentration with all MACs on board.

1. **Decentralization**

* LGA Bill passed by the House of Representatives pending approval by the Senate with provision on elections of local authorities removed pending constitutional amendments.
* Engaged legislators for support and approval of LGA-lunch meeting with the Senate and House of representative. Concerns documented and follow up conference held.
* Conducted 4 round table policy dialogues-first dialogue conducted in Buchanan regarding lessons learnt from Grand Bassa County Service Center;
* 18 Political parties signed a resolution to incorporate decentralization into their campaign manifestos.

1. **Capacity building**

* County Service Centers training conducted for various MACs in Nimba, Lofa, Bong,Margib, Gbarpolu, Rivercess, Cape Mount and Bomi).
* Recruitment of UNVs to be assigned at CSCs supporting coordination in and around the CSCs.
* Developed an MIA capacity development and training strategy-LIPA is taking the lead and will be supported by an international consultant.
* Selected 15 local government mentees and pair them up with the UNVs possible mentees now identified in majority of the counties.
* Streamlining of NDIS and alignment to MIA departments.

1. **Sensitization and awareness**

* Town hall meetings conducted in Bassa in Buchanan and District #1 (137 / 44 women).
* Radio talk shows nationwide – community radio stations selected in Bassa, Kakata,Margibi, Bong, Nimba and Grand Gedeh.
* Forty-five (45) persons from across the deconcentrating MACs have been trained and effectively delivering services at the County Services Center
* Engagement of political parties to make Decentralization a key principle in their party platform-conference of political partners held in June in Buchanan.

1. **Accountability and transparency**

* Developed 3 year County Development Agendas-dialogues conducted in Bassa, Bong, Nimba and Grand Gedeh
* County participatory planning manual updated by LIPA and department for research and planning.
* Anti-corruption measures, with LACC and other integrity institutions on board like the Ministry of Justice, Court systems, etc (Notice board, watch dog manual, Code of conduct in process).[[18]](#footnote-18)

## General challenges

The project had a slow start because the first significant resource inflows occurred eight months into project implementation. The recruitment process for the NDIS, especially, the CTA.

Took more time than anticipated. In addition, the 2014 Ebola outbreak considerably slowed down the project implementation and only very limited interventions could be implemented in 2014. Furthermore, the effects of logistical constraints are to be considered. The bad road conditions prevented access to the most remote areas, especially during the rainy season which extends from April-October. This hampers the implementation of activities in the areas where needs are the highest especially south eastern Liberia. Also, inadequate funding to off-set daily operational expenses at CSCs despite huge revenue generation, poses serious problems for continuous service delivery at the local level and could impede future deconcentration process.

# Lessons Learned and Best Practices

LDSP is a complex programme involving and impacting a broad variety of stakeholders, while reshuffling governance balance. Although several best practices have emerged, lessons learned are as follows:-

* Political leadership is Key to decentralization and hence, it remains key for the adequate engagement of the different levels of political stakeholders, using the various political dynamics put in place in selecting and retaining leadership. Leadership consistency is vital to maintaining “Champions” or “institutional memory” to drive the continuous process.
* High turnover of staff, political leadership in government at all levels, within partners, NGO especially the MIA (six ministers since inception of the program) have adversely affected programme implementation and subsequently sustainability.
* Synergy building by LDSP among various MAC operating at the CSCs have produced positive results and has contributed to the significant success in the deconcentration process.
* The delay of MAC’s in establishing systems to support CSCs. Examples:-CSC could not issue work permits to aliens for a few months because payments for the permits could not be received by LRA pending the opening of a bank account by MOL for deposit of revenues.
* Documentation of services by MICAT in the Grand Bassa CSC is more efficient as compared to those of other MACs.
* Exit strategies are vital to increase ownership and avoid situation that the programme remains an end in itself. There is no exit strategy indicated in the programme document, detailing for example, how the state will take over the program, or which mechanism would be put in place to sustain the activities without UNDP or other donors’ intervention. There should be an exit strategy regarding sustainability of all programs including the LDSP. An exit strategy included into the LDSP Programme Document implies that the created structures are financially sustainable and capable of producing resources for programme implementation.
* Decentralization is an incremental process and needs to be based on existing structures (such as counties in this case). In this regard, it remains key to ensure that the planned reforms are realistic and can be implemented or the process will lose its legitimacy, create unmet expectations, frustrations and mistrust.
* Transparency and accountability over the public funding mechanisms and decision making processes remain central to ensure that decentralization supports good governance. This covers internal accountability from the local governance structures to the central level, and from the central level to the local government institutions, as well as external accountability of the State institutions to the population, which will guarantee State legitimacy.
* Decentralization is a multiple layer process requiring complex stakeholders’ engagement, with specific interests. As such, it must play with the political dynamics, and ensure some reactivity as well as broad but specific approach to the different types of stakeholders.
* Political leadership is central to decentralization and hence, it remains key to be able to engage adequately the different levels of political stakeholders, using the various political dynamics in place.
* A joint evolution of the different components of deconcentration of services, fiscal decentralization, and devolution is central to ensure the effectiveness of the reform and avoid possible reverse effects.
* Harmonization of programmes and projects to mainstream decentralization into both government and partners’ interventions is required in order to have a multiplier effects and impact when done through collaboration, coordination and synergy building.
* Monitoring & Evaluation systems needs to be strong while coordination and clear definition of tasks is required between the various stakeholders focusing around the same performance indicators and systems, and taken into account the outcomes and impacts of the programme.
* Decentralization needs to be linked with overall State reforms and capacity building to advance the competence of local administrations to effectively manage local affairs, ensure the effective delivery of basic social services and improve the lives of Liberians.

# Conclusions

Considering this Mid-Term programme implementation phase of the LDSP and the National Development goals and objectives envisaged in Vision 2030, as well as the Government of Liberia Ten (10) Years Plan, the LDSP was both a timely and highly relevant initiative that addressed an important sector in Liberia’s development. The overall implementation strategy is relevant, commencing with deconcentration and support for the integration of the programme into the MIA structure, etc. However, decentralization reform will only meet its objectives of equity and stabilization by ensuring rapid progresses are made towards fiscal decentralization and passage of enabling legislation, with some level of devolution as well as increased transparency and accountability in the management of State institutions at the MIA and local government levels. The LDSP has increased awareness on decentralization among various groups of the population including political and administrative stakeholders.

The MTE concluded that significant progress has been made in terms of having the LGA, a vital tool for decentralization in place along with the existing partial deconcentration of services which constitutes record achievement in administrative outreach to the citizens and overall governance of the country even though, the implementation strategy and potential delays did not allow outreach to the most remote counties. However, more work need to be done in order to ensure that LGs have full autonomy to effectively achieve optimum outcomes for local communities. Hopefully, the political leadership will address this aspect of the overall reform in a context where forthcoming elections will reshuffle the government dynamics and interests.

Although the objectives and some of the expected outcomes were ambitious and challenging in view of the short time span provided for implementation with limited resources, and also considering the longer gestation period required for transformative results, it may be concluded that the time frame to entirely achieve the expected outcomes of the Programme maybe inadequate which establishes the need to revisit the project targets and review subsequent work plans to render them more realistic in the next phase. Therefore, given LDSP own capacity and strong foundations that have paved the way to fully achieve the expected outcomes envisaged, added to the crucial role of strong local governance in Liberia’s democratization process, the extension of this programme is highly recommended. The key challenges and issues faced during the implementation of LDSP are elaborated in the main report with specific recommendations to adequately address them

Currently, the implementation of political decentralization is still moving at a very slow pace, notwithstanding, administrative deconcentration provides political advantages in terms of visibility of the process and financial gains. The citizen’s demands will be essential to ensure that further progress is made towards the achievement of the National Decentralization Agenda. As such, awareness raising, outreach to the communities, and capacity building of local CSOs, including women and youth groups, will be essential.

The deconcentration process, if not accompanied by fiscal decentralization and some devolution may create serious risks. There is also an inherent risk associated with the LDSP focusing primarily on CSC implementation thus losing the overall rationale that decentralization supports stabilization. Moreover, further work must be done to validate the financial sustainability of the reform, commencing with the funding of CSCs, transparent and equitable retrocessions of revenues to the counties through GOL budgetary allocation and assuring funding mechanisms of the county treasuries.

Moving decentralization forward and addressing the financial challenges will constitute the main challenges of the next phase of the project in addition to the high turn-over rate of MIA leadership resulting to loss of institutional memory and champion, as well as a strategic vision of the reform and capacity building of local government that could hamper continuous effort to drive the decentralization agenda.

# Recommendations

The evaluation reveals that while LDSP main objectives and expected outcomes continue to be valid, strengthening the approach and methodology in programme design and implementation will provide the necessary impetus for enhancing the impact of the next phase of the Programme implementation. Hence, the following priorities should be taken into consideration, both in terms of content and practices:-

**Government of Liberia**

* Allocate adequate funding to off-set operational costs of the CSC through direct line budgetary allocation to illustrate the GoL commitment to the overall process.
* Ensure political leadership are put in place at the various components of the reform, especially those that could be implemented based on the current regulatory and legal framework.
* Engage in early planning process for elections at local level as per the constitution.
* Establish and ensure effective and efficient functioning of the County Treasuries.
* Ensure integration of decentralization perspective in all the MACs policies, strategies and programmes, and reinforce coordination between the MACs.

**UNDP and Donors:**

* Support civil society at the local level to build their capacity, possibly via local CSOs networks. This should include understanding, analysis and reporting on local governance, accountability, transparency and anti-corruption.
* Mainstream local governance into all its programmatic areas effectively by including decentralization and other cross-cutting issues such as, gender, human rights, etc, in the different programmes.
* Ensure that the INHRC “Blue Print” a document that factors HR into decentralization is embedded or injected into decentralization agenda for Liberia.
* Consider an exit strategy in any future programme design and implementation, otherwise projects risk will become an end in themselves; An exit strategy should be embedded into the LDSP Prodoc implying that the created structures are financially sustainable and capable of producing resources for programme implementation.
* Improve planning capacity at MIA to reduce delays in procurement process experienced at UNDP during programme implementation.
* Establish proper M&E follow-up mechanism at LG level in the LDSP next phase to ensure sharing and application of knowledge gained through training and study tours.

**LDSP/ MIA:**

* Ensure that deconcentration process is accompanied by fiscal decentralization and some level of devolution to reduce inherent risk associated with the LDSP focusing primarily on CSC implementation thus losing the overall rationale that decentralization supports stabilization.
* Revise the envisaged reforms to ensure that they can be progressively implemented based on estimated costs and financial commitment of the GoL taking into account the Liberian context while ensuring that the most remote and conflict prone areas get specific attention.
* Ensure that services are deconcentrated in the most remote counties of Liberia.
* Strengthen the outreach on CSC services and decentralization in the various communities, paying specific attention to vulnerable groups, to increase sensitization and awareness on the services provided and encourage people to take ownership.
* Support a participatory planning process for the development and implementation of CDA, Country Treasury and Local Government Reform.
* Strengthen accountability mechanisms at the local level, via transparency over the revenues, expenses, and budgetary allocations. In that respect, the role of the legislative bodies in the funding allocation should be revised to ensure separation of power.
* Ensure capacity development at all levels and conduct a comprehensive series of capacity assessment exercises to determine the overall capacity shortfalls nationwide.
* Design and implement a plan for the reform of local government, including human resources reform and retirement plans that will develop synergy with the Public Sector Modernization and possibly USAID GEMS programme.
* Develop a Risk Management Plan considering the risks associated with LDSP implementation, and the need to mitigate them in order to improve programme performance.
* Ensure the design and implementation of an action plan for the Local Government Act including analysis of the related risks.
* Ensure the inclusion of other Ministries, which will have to play vital roles at the local level, such as the Ministry of Land, Mines & Energy, etc concerning the transfer of competences from the central to the county level.
* Ensure synergies are developed with the Land Reform Commission.
* At the local level, strengthen the integration of youth and women, including those of rural areas, in awareness raising, consultation, and workshops.

**NDIS/MIA/ UNDP:**

* Ensure a participatory approach to M&E by establishing linkages between the levels of monitoring in order to strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation systems so that the different stakeholders are familiar with the performance indicators and adequately report on them.
* Ensure monitoring at the outcome level, including assessments of CSC on the added value and effects of new services and the evolution of statistics for services that already existed prior to implementation of deconcentration.

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| **ANNEX 1: EVALUATION MATRIX**  **Evaluations Questions (from the ToRs)** | **Sub-questions** | **Indicators** | **Data source / Means for verification** |
| **Relevance**   * To what extent is LDSP relevant to the strategic considerations of the GoL, in the political, economic and social context of Liberia? * To what extent is the LDSP implementation strategy appropriate to achieve the objectives? * Has decentralization penetrated the national discourse governance issues and has it influenced national policies? * Is the LDSP relevant to the most marginalized people of Liberia, including women? | * How were the strategies and programme elaborated? To what extent was the process participatory? * To what extent is the programme and subsequent revisions consistent with national reference strategies and policies with UNDP strategies and policies? Are there gaps? To what extent do interventions need specific approaches, even possibly including discrepancies with international standards, to be relevant and efficient in the context? * How and to what extent have possible loopholes been filled and was the support to national capacities appropriate and relevant? * Have some loopholes not been identified by UNDP and not addressed? To what extent are there synergies and complementarity between the different international organizations and NGOs in supporting State and non-State partners? * To what extent were the means and methods of the interventions adequate with the expected results? Was the results framework coherent with the strategies? * How was the context taken into account and followed up in elaborating and implementing the strategies? * Are there cases where the strategies / programme design limited the potential results? Are there cases highlighting potential contradictions between the strategies implemented? * Which needs assessment and baselines were used to define the strategy? To what extent do the strategies meet the needs of the beneficiaries?   To what extent is decentralization visible and included in the national governance policies, strategies, projects, as well as in the legal framework?  Which other national policies or projects are influenced by decentralization, if any? Which one are not, why?   * To what extent is there a balance between response to the needs of the different types of partners and communities? * How representative and inclusive is the decentralization process? * Are there groups excluded from the benefits of the decentralization? Which ones and to what extent? * To what extent can the most vulnerable and marginalized groups be reached? Which consequences can it have? | * Inclusion of the government in the formulation process * Differences between UNDP strategy and national priorities / similarities, including different revisions. * Level of integration of lessons learned on UNDP strengths and weaknesses in the programming (mention of lessons learned in programme documents, repetition of possible issues). * Linkage of other stakeholder intervention with government priorities * Consistency between the different levels of expected results. * Context analysis and inclusion of the context in risk monitoring. * Project revision because of context evolution. * Existence of needs assessment * Adequacy of the strategy with needs indicators available * Extent of the gaps in needs analysis (coverage of the assessments, methodological limitations) * Existence and revision of IMEP, level of implementation * Risk monitoring documents * Existence of follow up of partners implementation compare to strategies * Possible / necessary gaps with the strategy depending on partners / areas / sectors * Existence of capacity assessment / capacity development plans * Existence of training programme, ad hoc workshop, on the job training (joint work and level exchanges) * Existence of minutes of coordination meetings / emails / sharing of project related documents between organization working on partner’s capacity building (EU, USAID, UNDP, NGOs) * Decentralization is included in the national governance agenda, and clear efforts / progresses are made by the government to move it forwards. * Existence of other national policies and projects referring to decentralization. * Amendment to the Constitution of Liberia to provide for the election of county superintendents and administrative district commissioners   Ethnics not represented in the decentralized governance system  Geographical areas not reached by the increase service delivery  Geographical areas for which decentralization does not change anything  Ability for women, IDPs, orphans, elders and other vulnerable to access State services at decentralized level | Desk review (project documents, evaluation reports, government strategies and policies, external organizations working on governance and vulnerable groups)  KII with government partners, organizations working on the subject (including CSOs) |
| **Effectiveness:**   * What evidence is there that LDSP has contributed towards an achieving the objectives of decentralization? * Has LDSP been effective in moving governance at the local level in Liberia? Do these local results aggregate into nationally significant results? * Has LDSP worked effectively with other national and international delivery partners to deliver governance services? * How effective has LDSP been in partnering with civil society and the private sector to effect decentralization?   `   * Has LDSP utilized innovative techniques and best practices in its programming? * Has LDSP incorporated anti-corruption and integrity institutions in the implementation of decentralization, particularly in the deconcentration phase? * Taking into account the technical capacity and institutional arrangements of the MIA and GC, is the LDSP strategy suited to ensuring that the 2 institutions can lead the decentralization agenda? * What contributing factors and impediments enhance or impede LDSP’s performance in this area? | * To what extent could the various levels of activities / outputs / outcomes be implemented? * To what extent do actual interventions meet the results framework’s targets at this stage? What are the different levels of results of UNDP interventions visible at this stage? * To what extent do they contribute to Liberia’s development agenda? Are there results, which are not related to national development agenda? * Are there potentially negative effects of the interventions? * To what extent do results differ between men and women? How are cultural limitations overcome? * What are the other key stakeholders involved in the development agenda and how did their role evolve? * Are there other stakeholders contributing to capacity building of UNDP State and non-State partners? What is the extent of their contribution to capacity building? * What are the differences in the approaches and strategies between the development partners and what are the effects of those differences at the local level? Which practices should be harmonized and replicated? On which aspects /areas should coherence be strengthened? * In which aspects was civil society and private sector involved? Are there missed opportunities? How effective was it and how should this evolve? * To what extent have lessons learned and best practices from other programmes been integrated? * To what extent has the integration of anti-corruption and integrity be effective? How does it translate into financial and human resources practices? * How did the bribery / corruption indicators evolve? * To what extent was capacity built at an institutional / organizational level? * To what extent is the structure of the partnership network appropriate for the strategy? How was partners’ selection undertaken? * If planned action could not be implemented, is this documented and have results framework / AWP integrated those issues? * Why could some interventions not be implemented? To what extent could this be anticipated? * How could those difficulties be overcome? * To what extent have all possible leverages be used to overcome difficulties? | * Differences planned results & interventions / actual implementation and achievements * Level of coverage by UNDP and partners / gaps * Money allocation to each of the 4 counties from MH, MOE and MIA * local capacity development, institutional restructuring for economic governance, and empowerment of existing local structures, among others, shall be established within the first three years of the ten-year period of incremental implementation. * PPCC provide training to procurement officers in all Countiestosupport the deconcentration of procurement functions of MIA * Existence of partners / projects with similar or related interventions, with which no coordination / communication took place * Level of inputs and results by other partners * Frequency and coverage of the contacts / involvement of civil society and private sector   Recommendations of previous studies and assessments not integrated, or of similar programmes  Existence of pilot practices  Level of corruption at the different Stat services (testimonies/ studies)  Existence of nepotism practices  Human resources practices ensuring absence of conflict of interest  Equity and transparency of the selection / prioritization system for inputs management  Increased technical capacity of the organizations covering the different aspects of the LDSP  Evolution of the staffing and financial resources  Problems in implementation and reporting for some type of partners  Level of recurrence of the difficulties in programming in Liberia  Level of integration of the difficulties in the programming | Desk review (AWP, results framework, technical and financial reports, MoU, minutes of meetings, performance and capacity assessments, partnership and communication strategies, reports on other decentralization programmes)  KII  Focus group |
| **Efficiency**   * Are LDSP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework relevant to achieve the planned outcome? Are they sufficiently sensitive to the political and development constraints of the country (political stability, post crisis situations, etc)? * Has LDSP’s strategy and execution been efficient and cost effective? * Has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? * Are the monitoring and evaluation systems that LDSP has in place helping to ensure that programmes are managed efficiently and effectively? * Are there alternative approaches that could achieve better results that the current design of the programme? | * How is conflict sensitivity integrated into programming? * To what extent has cost-effectiveness been integrated in the programme? * To what extent have local resources been used? * Which were the delays? Why? * To what extent is monitoring and evaluation effective? Which were its effects on the programme? * Which alternatives approaches could be used? How sound were the rationales for the selection of a specific approach? | * Evolution of cost effectiveness ratio (if calculable, staff / partners / interventions costs) * Gaps between planned timeframe and actual implementation * Average cost by beneficiary * Delays in the implementation of activities * Human resources required for implementation of the different activities * M&E indicators used and shared with partners * Consistency of the M&E implementation & reporting * Existence of areas of the programme with no M&E * Existence of an analysis of various options | Desk review (technical report, partners reports, capacity asessments)  KII  Focus group |
| **Sustainability:**   * What is the likelihood that UNDP governance interventions are sustainable? * What mechanisms have been set in place by UNDP to support the government of Liberia to sustain improvements made through these governance interventions? * How should the governance portfolio be enhanced to support central authorities, local communities and civil society in improving service delivery over the long term? * What changes should be made in the current set of governance partnerships in order to promote long term sustainability? * What is the government of Liberia doing to ensure the long-term sustainability of the LDSP, and are these interventions likely to ensure the long term objectives of decentralization as outlined in the Agenda for Transformation? | * To what extent has the activities and knowledge be institutionalized? * Has a replication mechanism been put in place? * To what extent is there evidence that the programme strategies, lead to better sustainability of the interventions? What are the bottlenecks to sustainability? How could they be mitigated? Why weren’t they mitigated? * Which other relays could be * Could some exit strategies be implemented without losing the benefits of the programme? * Are there other organizations or State institutions able to take over the support for the sector results? * To what extent can the various Stat institutions be funded through GoL resources? | * Ability to replicated the practices gained during the interventions * Existence of mechanisms to ensure institutionalization, capitalization and replication of the interventions & results of the programme. * Leverage effects on donours and other stakeholders * Main gaps in terms of community coverage * Level of means and commitment of community, local, national authorities for the interventions * Existence of other stakeholders likely to invest in the programme results | Desk review (project reports, reports of the partners, prospective reports on security, donours strategy in the country)  KII  Focus Group |
| **Partnership strategy**   * + Has the partnership strategy in the governance sector been inclusive, appropriate and effective?   + Are there current or potential complementarities or overlaps with existing national partners’ programmes?   + How have partnerships affected the progress towards achieving the outputs   + Has UNDP worked effectively with other international delivery partners to deliver on good governance initiatives?   + How effective has UNDP been in partnering with civil society (where applicable) and the private sector to promote good governance in the region? | * Which stakeholders are not included in the governance reform processes? * To what extent can the current partnership structure ensure accountability to the final beneficiaries, and to donours? * To what extent is there coordination, exploitation of the synergies between the different programmes? * Which are the effects of the partnership structure on the performance of the programme? | * Frequency of the coordination meetings * Level of integration of the different claims related to the programme * Reaction of the government following discussions / comments by donours / civil society / UNDP * Existence of duplication across the programmes, or joint programming of some activities * Workplans of the other programmes are available to the LSDP project staff and a State structure ensure coherence of the various initiatives | Desk review (minutes of coordination meetings, project documents, reports by partners, civil society reports)  KII  Focus Group |
| **Gender Equality**   * To what extent has gender been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the program? * To what extent has LDSP support promoted positive changes in gender equality? Were there any unintended effects? | * To what extent specific needs of male and women are taken into account at the various stages of the process? * Which are the potential obstacles for women to participate in the programme or have access to the benefits of the programme? * How is gender sensitivity included in the activities / training? Did it change some perceptions and practices of the participants? * To what extent can gender promotion affect the social fabric? | * Data dissagregated by gender * Number of women participating at the various stages of the program * Ability of women to raise their voice during the project activities and to access the programme outputs and basic services. | Desk review (minutes of meetings, content of the trainings project documents, reports by partners, civil society reports)  KII  Focus Group |
| **Human Rights**   * To what extent has the programme actively promoted the fulfilment of human rights? * In its design and implementation, does it include opportunities to integrate human rights in each outcome of the programme and prioritize the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination? * In its design and implementation, does it take into account any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights and were these rigorously assessed and identified with appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into programme rational, strategy, and results and resource framework? | * To what extent does the programme take into consideration the various needs of the different groups of population? * To what extent is equity included in the programme? * Which groups are potentially excluded? * To what extent does the current governance system affect human rights and equity? | * Mention of human rights in the activities * Existence of ethnical / demographic / cultural bias in the programme * Geographical and sectoral coverage of the programme * Level of freedom of speech on the governance issues * Specificities of the human resources allocated to the programme and supported at local level | Desk review (minutes of meetings, content of the trainings project documents, reports by partners, civil society reports)  KII  Focus Group |

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| **Annex 2. Interview Guide** | Project Staff | Partners | External Stakeholders |
| 1. How was the project formulated? To what extent was it participatory and inclusive? | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent have social, economic and political dynamics been taken into consideration? Which groups or territories have not been included? What will be the changes between current / past forms of governance and the decentralized ones? | X | X | X |
| 1. Are there gaps between the LDSP and national policies and strategies? And with international standards? | X | X | X |
| 1. Are there current or potential complementarities or overlaps with existing national partners’ programmes? | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent is decentralization included in the various government policies, strategies and programmes? | X | X | X |
| 1. How was the prioritization undertaken, including for the selection of counties? To what extent have the most relevant activities and outputs selected to achieve the objectives? | X | X | X |
| 1. What needs could not be covered? Have some activities ben rejected at the inception stage? | X | X | X |
| 1. How / to what extent was the project revised periodically, given the evolution of the results and of the context? | X | X | X |
| 1. How and to what extent was the gender dimension included in the project? Ethnic minorities? | X | X | X |
| 1. How is conflict sensitivity included in the programme? | X | X | X |
| 1. How was gender factored in the programme and in the results? How have cultural constraints related to gender been addressed? To what extent do the results differ between male and women? | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent did the M&E process allow to jointly identify results and limitations to the process across the various implementing partners and participants? How would you suggest improvements to the M&E to enable documenting results at outcome and impact level in the future? | X | X | X |
| 1. How have lessons learned been identified and included in the project? | X | X | X |
| 1. How was cost efficiency included in the project? Were some of the costs paid by the beneficiary organizations, and why? To what extent have local resources been maximized? | X | X | X |
| 1. Which activities could not be implemented as planned and why? Which were the difficulties? To what extent can they be anticipated and planned? | X | X | X |
| 1. How were beneficiaries, trainers and trainees selected? Did these change through the years? | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent are the recruitment, human resources processes, financial management at the decentralized levels formalized and consistent? How is performance of the civil servants assessed? | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent is anti-corruption and bribery factored into the programme and related interventions? | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent were coordination and the partnership strategy relevant and effective? How have partnerships affected the progress towards achieving the outputs | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent were civil society and private sector involved? Are there further opportunities in that respect? | X | X | X |
| 1. How did the capacities of the partner institutions evolve over the course of the programme? Are there components of the programme that they would have difficulties to manage, for which reasons? | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent were the trainees / beneficiaries able to use the knowledge/practices taught during the trainings in their different organizations? How has this been documented? | X | X | X |
| 1. What were the potential limitations to put into practice the learnings of the activities | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent did you try to overcome potential limitations and difficulties during the project implementation ? | X | X | X |
| 1. Which changes can be identified in the beneficiary organizations and to what extent can they be attributed to the programme? | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent did those changes lead to potential impacts? | X | X | X |
| 1. Can any unexpected positive or negative effects be identified? | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent are the most vulnerable included in the benefits of the decentralization? | X | X | X |
| 1. To what extent are there replication / institutionalization mechanisms in each organization to ensure knowledge capitalization and dissemination? | X | X | X |
| 1. Are there examples of such replication? To what extent would a training of trainer approach be relevant? | X | X | X |
| 1. What would be your recommendations for the potential future of this project, governance in Liberia, in particular at the local level? | X | X | X |

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| --- | --- |
| ANNEX 3. Key Evaluation Questions Considering the implementation status of the programme and the resource disbursements made to date, the evaluations will explore the following questions: | |
| **CRITERIA** | **QUESTIONS** |
| ***1. RELEVANCE*** | * *To what extent is LDSP relevant to the strategic considerations of the GoL, in the political, economic and social context of Liberia?* * *To what extent is the LDSP implementation strategy appropriate to achieve the objectives?* * *Has decentralization penetrated the national discourse governance issues and has it influenced national policies?* * *Is the LDSP relevant to the most marginalized people of Liberia, including women?* |
| ***2. EFFECTIVENESS*** | * *What evidence is there that LDSP has contributed towards an achieving the objectives of decentralization?* * *Has LDSP been effective in moving governance at the local level in Liberia? Do these local results aggregate into nationally significant results?* * *Has LDSP worked effectively with other national and international delivery partners to deliver governance services?* * *How effective has LDSP been in partnering with civil society and the private sector to effect decentralization?* * *Has LDSP utilized innovative techniques and best practices in its programming?* * *Has LDSP incorporated anti-corruption and integrity institutions in the implementation of decentralization, particularly in the deconcentration phase?* * *Taking into account the technical capacity and institutional arrangements of the MIA and GC, is the LDSP strategy suited to ensuring that the 2 institutions can lead the decentralization agenda?* * *What contributing factors and impediments enhance or impede LDSP’s performance in this area?* |
| ***3. EFFICIENCY*** | * *Are LDSP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework relevant to achieve the planned outcome? Are they sufficiently sensitive to the political and development constraints of the country (political stability, post crisis situations, etc)?* * *Has LDSP’s strategy and execution been efficient and cost effective?* * *Has there been an economical use of financial and human resources?* * *Are the monitoring and evaluation systems that LDSP has in place helping to ensure that programmes are managed efficiently and effectively?* * *Are there alternative approaches that could achieve better results that the current design of the programme?* |
| ***4.SUSTAINABILITY*** | * *Has the partnership strategy in the governance sector been inclusive, appropriate and effective?* * *Are there current or potential complementarities or overlaps with existing national partners’ programmes?* * *How have partnerships affected the progress towards achieving the outputs* * *Has UNDP worked effectively with other international delivery partners to deliver on good governance initiatives?* * *How effective has UNDP been in partnering with civil society (where applicable) and the private sector to promote good governance in the region?* |
| ***5. PARNERSHIP*** | * *Has the partnership strategy in the governance sector been inclusive, appropriate and effective?* * *Are there current or potential complementarities or overlaps with existing national partners’ programmes?* * *How have partnerships affected the progress towards achieving the outputs* * *Has UNDP worked effectively with other international delivery partners to deliver on good governance initiatives?* * *How effective has UNDP been in partnering with civil society (where applicable) and the private sector to promote good governance in the region?* |
| ***6.GENDER EQUALITY*** | * *To what extent has gender been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the program?* * *To what extent has LDSP support promoted positive changes in gender equality? Were there any unintended effects?* |
| ***7. HUMAN RIGHTS*** | * *To what extent has the programme actively promoted the fulfilment of human rights?* * *In its design and implementation, does it include opportunities to integrate human rights in each outcome of the programme and prioritize the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination?* * *In its design and implementation, does it take into account any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights and were these rigorously assessed and identified with appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into programme rational, strategy, and results and resource framework?* |
|  |  |

**Annex 3. Focus Group Protocol**

This protocol is a general and draft list of questions which will be further tailored based on initial interviews and depending on the different categories of participants to the focus groups.

1. Why did you take part to the activity?
2. What did you get from this activity?
3. Did it change something in your way of working? If so, what?
4. Were there components of this activity useless to your job? Which ones?
5. Were there specific difficulties in the implementation of this activity? What could be improved?
6. Do you face also difficulties in the implementation of what you learnt / discussed during this activity? Why? How could this be overcome?
7. Do you see other effects of this activity, on your organizations and its performance / results?
8. What would be the priorities in terms of governance in the country to date? And for local governance?
9. How is the performance of civil servants assessed and to what extent is this effective?
10. How could transparency and equity increase?
11. How potential informal rewards practices such as corruption be mitigated?
12. Do you see categories of populations excluded from the potential benefits of decentralization? Which ones and why?
13. To what extent have peace building efforts been successful in the country?
14. Would you have other recommendations to strengthen the work at the county level?

# ANNEX 5. PERFORMANCE MATRIX

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **LIBERIA DECENTRALIZATION SUPPORT PROGRAMME(LDSP)** | |
| **OUTCOME(S) OUTPUT(S)** | |
| 1. De-concentrated services and corresponding resources managed at the assigned level of government. | 1.1 The MACs of the government of Liberia tangibly and visibly transfer services, decision making and corresponding resources to the counties according to the deconcentration strategy;  1.2 Enhanced coordination, sharing and pooling of resources across units of MACs at the county level achieved;  1.3 Improved infrastructure of county service centers to support the deconcentration process;  1.4 Citizens are organized and informed to participate in the deconcentration process; |
| 2. Service delivery and accountability of local government improved. | 2.1a Capacity for participatory planning, budgeting and managing of development funds as well as revenue collection strengthened with focus on marginalized groups.  2.1b Capacity of the public, citizens’ groups and civil society organizations strengthened to undertake participatory and performance monitoring, and to carry out watch-dog functions;  2.2 Anti-corruption measures (systems and enforcement mechanisms) established and functional at county, city, district and community levels;  2.3 Capacity of women and girls to participate in local government as leaders enhanced; |
| 3. Legal and Regulatory framework for decentralization is in place. | 3.1 Ensure coordinated formulation of legal framework for decentralization;  3.2 Public sector and civil service reforms aligned with decentralization policy;  3.3 Criteria established and implemented for districts, municipalities, chiefdoms and clans to rationalize and subsequently to restructure them to ensure economic viability and sustainability; |
| 4. MIA is capacitated to lead and implement decentralization reforms. | 4.1 Institutional and human capacity of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Monrovia and Counties) built to co-ordinate and lead the implementation of the Decentralization process;  4.2 GC capacitated to undertake governance assessment and monitoring strengthened;  4.3 County administration with necessary ICT facilities (software, services) in place; |
| 5. Programme management support, coordination, and monitoring strengthened | 5.1 Efficient and effective support and coordination of the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Government;  5.2 Capacity for concurrent monitoring and evaluation of decentralization implementation established at MIA and the county government level. |

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| **LDSP PERFORMANCE MATRIX** | |
| **The following Tables depict the Project’s Progress** | |
| **GOVERNANCE & PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PILLAR (GPI**) **GOVERNANCE & PUBLIC INSTITUTION PILLAR (GPI)** | |
| OUTCOMES | 1. Deconcentrated functions and corresponding resources managed at the assigned level of government. 2. Service delivery and accountability of local governments is improved. 3. Legal and regulatory framework for decentralization. 4. Ministry of Internal Affairs is capacitated to lead and implement decentralization reforms. 5. Programme management support, coordination, and monitoring strengthened |
| Planned Results (outputs) | Actual Achievements to date |
| **Output 1.1** The MACs of the government of Liberia tangibly and visibly transfer services, decision making and corresponding resources to the counties according to the deconcentration strategy; | * Presidential Directives – that created the political space and stated the unwavering commitment of the government to move services to the people put into place. * The establishment of county service center(s) which provides opportunity for MACs and county administration to pool resources in a shared governance format; Eg. Bassa , Margibi,Service centers with MOL, MIA, MoC, MoGCSP, MoH, MoPW, MOT, MOE, CNDR and LISGIS providing services from the Center * Citizens now have access to services at the county level (i.e. permits, birth certificate, marriage certificates, business registration, driver’s license, Ecowas bio-metric Permit etc. * Non documentation services in progress |
| **Output 1.2** Enhanced coordination, sharing and pooling of resources across units of MACs at the county level achieved; | * Procurement of furniture and specialized equipment and stationery. * County service center training for MACs of Nimba, Lofa, Bong,Margib, Gbarpolu, Rivercess, Cape Mount and Bomi) * Recruitment of UNVs all in place and supporting coordination in and around the CSCs * Disaggregation of the budgets – MOH underway. MIA and MOE not yet disaggregated * Procurement training discussion concerning additional resources for establishing presence in counties hosting CSCs especially. |
| **Output 1.3** Improved infrastructure of county service centers to support the deconcentration process; | * Improved infrastructure–construction works underway in Grand Kru, Bomi, Gbarpolu and River Cess. |

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| --- | --- |
| Planned Results | Actual Achievements to Date |
| **Output 1.4** Citizens are organized and informed to participate in the deconcentration process | * Town hall meetings conducted in Bassa in Buchanan and District 1 (137 / 44 women. * Conducted radio talk shows nationwide – community radio stations selected in Bassa, Kakata,Margibi, Bong, Nimba and Grand Gedeh. * MIA press conference held in Bassa on 28th June. |
| **Output 2.1a** Capacity for participatory planning, budgeting and managing of development funds as well as revenue collection strengthened with focus on marginalized groups | * Establishment of county treasuries-treasury officers deployed to Bassa, Bong, Nimba and Margibi * Synergies in service delivery under the Supt. (cost effective and coordinated). |
| **Output 2.1b** Capacity of the public, citizens’ groups and civil society organizations strengthened to undertake participatory and performance monitoring, and to carry out watch-dog functions. | * Forty-five (45) persons from across the deconcentrating MACs have been trained and effectively delivering services at the County Services Center * Developing 3 year County Development Agendas-dialogues conducted in Bassa, Bong, Nimba and Grand Gedeh * County participatory planning manual–updated by LIPA and department for research and planning. |
| **Output 2.2** Anti-corruption measures (systems and enforcement mechanisms) established and functional at county, city, district and community levels | * Anti-corruption measures–LACC and other integrity institutions on board   (Notice board, watch dog manual, Code of conduct in process). |
| **OUTPUT 2.3** Capacity of women and girls to participate in local government as leaders enhanced. | * Women are the greatest beneficiaries of services currently at the county service centers, for example, about 70% of those receiving birth certificates are women. |
| **Output 3.1** Ensure coordinated formulation of legal framework for decentralization. | * Engaged political parties to make Decentralization a key principle in their party platform-conference of political partners held in June in Buchanan. * LGA Bill passed by the House pending approval by the Senate. |
| **Output 3.2** Public sector and civil service reforms aligned with decentralization policy | * Women in informal business sector are now moving into the formal sector due to access to business registration services at the county service center; local catering and restaurant businesses. * As a result of the registration of traditional marriages at the county, women can now have rights in their marriages, similar to those of women in civil marriages. |
| Planned Results | Actual Achievements to Date |
| **Output 3.3** Criteria established and implemented for districts, municipalities, chiefdoms and clans to rationalize and subsequently to restructure them to ensure economic viability and sustainability. | * Engaged legislators for support and approval of LGA-lunch meeting with the Senate and House of representative. Concerns documented and follow up conference held. |
| **Output 4.1** Institutional and human capacity of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Monrovia and Counties) built to co-ordinate and lead the implementation of the Decentralization process | * Key provisions in the local government bill on elections of local officials were successfully considered by delegates during the constitutional reform conference. * Developed an MIA capacity development and training strategy-LIPA is taking the lead and will be supported by an international consultant. * Selected 15 local government mentees and pair them up with the UNVs possible mentees now identified in the majority of counties. |
| **Output 4.2** GC capacitated to undertake governance assessment and monitoring strengthened | * Conducted 4 round table policy dialogues-first dialogue conducted in Buchanan regarding lessons learnt from Grand Bassa County Service Center |
| **Output 4.3** County administration with necessary ICT facilities (software, services) in place | * Conducted 4 round table policy dialogues-first dialogue conducted in Buchanan regarding lessons learnt from Grand Bassa County Service Center |
| **Output 5.1** Efficient and effective support and coordination of the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Government. | * Streamlining of NDIS and alignment to MIA departments * DMA designated as the focal person for the programmein the Ministry, reporting to the Minister who then reports to the IMCD * Support staff and drivers under the programmehave been moved to the government structures. * The Senior Analyst at the GC will lead the M and E mechanism of the programmeand support the M and E specialist recruited into the NDIS. |
| **Output 5.2** Capacity for concurrent monitoring and evaluation of decentralization implementation established at MIA and the county government level | * Chairing of High Level Round Table on Deconcentration by the President of Liberia, Mrs., Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. included the Vice President of Liberia, H.E. Joseph N. Boakai, heads of Service Delivery MACs, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, the Donour Community and other interested parties; meeting served as the catalyst to speedily implement deconcentration with all MACs on board |
|  |  |

AGENDA 6: LDSP Organogram



# Annex 7. Terms of Reference

**INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT PROCUREMENT NOTICE**

***MID TERM EVALUATION CONSULTANT***

**PROCUREMENT NOTICE No. UNDP/IC/LDSP/017/2016** **Date: 22 August 2016**

**Country:** Liberia

**Duty Station:** Monrovia, Liberia

**Description of the assignment: International Midterm Evaluation Consultant**

**Project name:** LDSP

**Duration:** 22 days over a period of 6 weeks

Proposals should be submitted at the following address: by email to [**bids.lr@undp.org**](mailto:bids.lr@undp.org) (Please include procurement notice number in the subject area) no later than 5:00 PM (GMT), Wednesday, 24 August 2016. Any request for clarification must be sent by standard electronic communication to the address or e-mail indicated above. The LDSP Project will respond by standard electronic mail and will send written copies of the response, including an explanation of the query without identifying the source of inquiry,

1. **Background**

The Liberia Decentralization Support Program (LDSP) is a five year (2013 – 2017) Government of Liberia program designed to facilitate the implementation of the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Government. The program supports the decentralization of administrative, political and fiscal governance in Liberia. The program is aligned with Pillar IV of the **Agenda for Transformation (AfT)** namely, **Government and Public Sector Modernization,** which states: “In partnership with citizens, create transparent, accountable and responsible public institutions that contribute to economic and social development as well as inclusive and participatory governance systems”.

The LDSP commenced in June 2013 and is funded by a consortium of donour partners. The total project cost is estimated at US$ 18 million over the five (5) - year period. In line with UNDP’s programming approach, its implementation represents a policy shift from direct implementation (DIM) by donour agencies to a national implementation modality (NIM) under which major implementation responsibilities as well as the attendant authorities and accountabilities have been transferred to government institutions led by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and the Governance Commission (GC). Its work plan, developed year to year defines major program activities for the period of its implementation and presents the outputs and outcomes the LDSP seeks to achieve under each of its five (5) main established outcomes and the core actions that will be implemented towards achieving those outputs.

The Matrix below presents the Outcomes and Outputs of the Program.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Outcomes | Outputs |
| 1 | De-concentrated services and corresponding resources managed at the assigned level of government. | **Output 1.1:** The MACs of the government of Liberia tangibly and visibly transfer functions, decision making and corresponding resources to the counties according to the de-concentration strategy.  **Output 1.2:** Enhanced coordination, sharing and pooling of resources across units of macs at the county level achieved.  **Output 1.3:** Improved infrastructure to support the de-concentration process.  **Output 1.4:** Citizens are organized and informed to participate in the de-concentration process. |
| 2 | Service delivery and accountability of local government improved. | **Output 2.1:** Output 2.1: Capacity for participatory planning, budgeting and managing of development funds as well as revenue collection strengthened with focus on marginalized groups.  **Output 2.2:** Anti-corruption measures (systems and enforcement mechanisms) established and functional at county, city, district and community levels.  **Output 2.3:** Capacity of women and girls to participate in local government as leaders enhanced. |
| 3 | Legal and regulatory framework for decentralization is in place. | **Outcome 3.1:** Efforts to finalize local government act and other requisite legislation sustained.  **Output 3.2:** Civil service reforms aligned with decentralization policy and all signed international conventions that ensure equal access to civil service.  **Output 3.3:** Criteria established for districts, municipalities, chiefdoms and clans to rationalize and restructure them to ensure economic viability and sustainability. |
|  | MIA is capacitated to lead and implement decentralization reforms. | **Output 4.1:** Institutional and human capacity of MIA built to coordinate and lead the implementation of decentralization nationally.  **Output 4.2:** GC Capacitated to undertake governance assessment and monitoring strengthen.  **Output 4.3: ICT and working environment of county administrations improved.**  **Output 4.4:** Capacity for concurrent monitoring and evaluation of decentralization implementation established at MIA and the county government level |
| 5 | Program Management | **Output 5.1:**  Efficient and effective support and coordination of the implementation of the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Government. |

# Program Strategy

As the Government has noted, Liberia is still a fragile, post-conflict nation, which is making a determined effort to transition from recovery and reconstruction to inclusive growth and sustainable human development. The extended conflict in Liberia, which led to the economic and social destruction of the country over a 14-year period up till the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2003, is recognized as having two root causes. The first was the systematic marginalization and exclusion of significant proportions of the population from the political process. The second, and related was an economic crisis that emerged through the 1970s and 1980s leading to increasing impoverishment.

Preventing re-occurrence of the conditions that led to conflict consequently requires action at both the political and economic levels. Both require to be inclusive in terms of geographical and social scope, enabling greater “voice” and space for participation by the citizens of Liberia. Decentralization of power, decision-making and government authority and corresponding resources will improve governance over time, increase transparency of government processes, enhance accountability and ultimately result in better delivery of services and the fulfilment of the Government’s responsibilities “to serve the Liberian people, promote democracy and reduce poverty.”

Based upon consultation at the national, county, district and chiefdom levels, there is a consensus that decentralization will contribute first and foremost to a “country led and country-owned transition out of fragility.” As a means to accomplish this, the GoL and its development partners have agreed that a coordinated programmatic framework will facilitate a more flexible and government-led implementation process, including efficient and effective management of financial resources, The Liberia Decentralization Support Program:

* Serves as a mechanism for donour coordination and harmonization in support of decentralization reforms;
* Supports GoL leadership of the reform process but at the same time seek to involve a broad range of stakeholders including civil society;
* Works nationwide, while being sensitive to the possible different approaches needed in the different Counties;
* Aims for a flexible and responsive approach to the reform process; and
* Works in an inclusive gender and conflict sensitive manner.

This program views decentralization as an all-inclusive process that imposes itself as the principal focus of governance reform and the designated vehicle for implementing this all government reform. The strategy for implementation of decentralization in Liberia has been guided by the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Government (NPDLG). Section 6.0 of the NPDLG reads:

*“the implementation of the NPDLG shall be incremental over a period of ten years. This incremental approach shall include amendment to the Constitution of Liberia to provide for the election of county superintendents and administrative district commissioners. The strategy is to pursue the process of constitutional amendment while simultaneously establishing conditions for successful deconcentration as the first stage of the process of decentralization. Such conditions which include local capacity development, institutional restructuring for economic governance, and empowerment of existing local structures, among others, shall be established within the first three years of the ten-year period of incremental implementation.”*

The NPDLG goes on to assign the responsibility of developing a comprehensive strategy for the implementation of the policy to Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Governance Commission, the Ministry of Finance, Planning an Economic Affairs and other MACs.

In the review of the program in the last half of 2014, the need to align the program more directly with the NPDLG has been highlighted, resulting in a 2-track approach.

Track 1 is pragmatic - responding to the “immediate needs for citizens to tangibly receive some peace dividends” by prioritizing the implementation of deconcentration, focusing on service delivery to the counties. The emphasis on deconcentrating services deliberately mean that a menu of services[[19]](#footnote-19) have been identified by MACs for moving to the from the central government to the counties, taking into consideration efficiency (cost and time), collaboration and ownership and leadership by the county administration;

Track two continues to make preparations for the more devolved local governance anticipated in the 10-year timeline, when local leaders will be elected and able to assume the functions envisaged in the draft LGA.

Alongside these two tracks is a strong focus on capacity building, considered a crosscutting issue targeting the professionalization of identified personnel to become the career civil service who will manage the local government structures and systems. Coming out of conflict Liberia has seen a proliferation of units of local government like towns, cities and townships.

# Purpose of the Evaluation

UNDP is commissioning this evaluation of the LDSP to capture evaluative evidence of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of current programming under the LDSP, taking into account the objectives of the decentralization policy, and which can be used to strengthen existing strategies and/or to set the stage for strategic realignment. The evaluation will serve an important accountability function, providing national stakeholders and partners in Liberia with an impartial assessment of the results of the investment into the decentralization reform.

# Evaluation Scope

The evaluation will be conducted during the months of August to September 2016, with a view to enhancing programmes while providing strategic direction and inputs to the preparation of the AWP 2017 and the next phase of decentralization in Liberia. Specifically, the evaluation will assess progress of programming toward the set objectives, namely:

* transfer of authority and responsibilities from national to local governments in Liberia include the following:
* Enhance sensitivity, responsiveness and capabilities of local governments and make them accountable to local people;
* Accelerate effective and efficient service delivery and poverty alleviation by developing and strengthening local level planning, monitoring and management capacity and providing access to national and local resources through fiscal decentralization;
* Increase equitable distribution of the nation’s resources so as to ensure a more wholesome process of development and democratic governance; and
* Enhance participatory decision-making to engender peace-building and reconciliation.

The evaluation will take into consideration the synergies between the decentralization reform and other major GoL reforms, particularly the constitutional review processes, electoral reform and the public sector reform.

# Evaluation Questions

The evaluation will seek to provide answers to the following questions:

*Relevance:*

* To what extent is LDSP relevant to the strategic considerations of the GoL, in the political, economic and social context of Liberia?
* To what extent is the LDSP implementation strategy appropriate to achieve the objectives?
* Has decentralization penetrated the national discourse governance issues and has it influenced national policies?
* Is the LDSP relevant to the most marginalized people of Liberia, including women?

*Effectiveness*

* What evidence is there that LDSP has contributed towards an achieving the objectives of decentralization?
* Has LDSP been effective in moving governance at the local level in Liberia? Do these local results aggregate into nationally significant results?
* Has LDSP worked effectively with other national and international delivery partners to deliver governance services?
* How effective has LDSP been in partnering with civil society and the private sector to effect decentralization?
* Has LDSP utilised innovative techniques and best practices in its programming?
* Has LDSP incorporated anti-corruption and integrity institutions in the implementation of decentralization, particularly in the deconcentration phase?
* Taking into account the technical capacity and institutional arrangements of the MIA and GC, is the LDSP strategy suited to ensuring that the 2 institutions can lead the decentralization agenda?
* What contributing factors and impediments enhance or impede LDSP’s performance in this area?

*Efficiency*

* Are LDSP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework relevant to achieve the planned outcome? Are they sufficiently sensitive to the political and development constraints of the country (political stability, post crisis situations, etc)?
* Has LDSP’s strategy and execution been efficient and cost effective?
* Has there been an economical use of financial and human resources?
* Are the monitoring and evaluation systems that LDSP has in place helping to ensure that programmes are managed efficiently and effectively?
* Are there alternative approaches that could achieve better results that the current design of the programme?

*Sustainability*

* What is the likelihood that UNDP governance interventions are sustainable?
* What mechanisms have been set in place by UNDP to support the government of Liberia to sustain improvements made through these governance interventions?
* How should the governance portfolio be enhanced to support central authorities, local communities and civil society in improving service delivery over the long term?
* What changes should be made in the current set of governance partnerships in order to promote long term sustainability?
* What is the government of Liberia doing to ensure the long-term sustainability of the LDSP, and are these interventions likely to ensure the long term objectives of decentralization as outlined in the Agenda for Transformation?

*Partnership strategy*

* + Has the partnership strategy in the governance sector been inclusive, appropriate and effective?
  + Are there current or potential complementarities or overlaps with existing national partners’ programmes?
  + How have partnerships affected the progress towards achieving the outputs
  + Has UNDP worked effectively with other international delivery partners to deliver on good governance initiatives?
  + How effective has UNDP been in partnering with civil society (where applicable) and the private sector to promote good governance in the region?

The evaluation should also include an assessment of the extent to which programme design, implementation and monitoring have taken the following cross cutting issues into consideration:

*Gender Equality*

* To what extent has gender been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the program?
* To what extent has LDSP support promoted positive changes in gender equality? Were there any unintended effects?

Human rights

* To what extent has the programme actively promoted the fulfilment of human rights?
* In its design and implementation, does it include opportunities to integrate human rights in each outcome of the programme and prioritize the principles of accountability, meaningful participation, and non-discrimination?
* In its design and implementation, does it take into account any potential adverse impacts on enjoyment of human rights and were these rigorously assessed and identified with appropriate mitigation and management measures incorporated into programme rational, strategy, and results and resource framework?

Based on the above analysis, the evaluators are expected to provide overarching conclusions on LDSP results, as well as recommendations on how the LDSP can be adjusted in programming, partnership arrangements, resource mobilization strategies, and capacities to ensure that the full achievement of current planned outcomes. The evaluation is additionally expected to offer wider lessons for the program in Liberia, based on this analysis.

1. **Methodology**

The evaluation of the LDSP will be carried out by a team of external evaluators, and will engage a wide array of stakeholders and beneficiaries, including national and local government officials, donors, civil society organizations, academics and subject experts, private sector representatives and community members. The evaluation is expected to take a **“theory of change’’ (TOC) approach** that examines the root-cause analysis and backed by rigorous and credible evidence justifying why the programme priorities are the most appropriate and most likely to contribute to higher level development change. It will seek to determine causal links between the interventions of the program, and progress towards achieving the set objectives of the program at national and local levels in Liberia. Evidence obtained and used to assess the results of LDSP support should be triangulated from a variety of sources, including verifiable data on indicator achievement, existing reports, evaluations and technical papers, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, surveys and site visits.

The following steps in data collection are anticipated:

1. **6.1 Desk Review**

A desk review should be carried out of the key strategies and documents underpinning the implementation of the program. This includes reviewing the Agenda for Transformation (AfT), Vision 2030, National Policy on Decentralization and Local Government (2012), Deconcentration Implementation Strategy (DIS) (2014), Deconcentration Platform (2015), the Liberia Decentralization Support Program PRODOC as amended in 2015, The Draft Local Government Act, program quarterly, annual reports, the EU Results Oriented Monitoring Report; TORs, evaluations, technical assessment reports and all products of the program, as well as any other document produced outside the scope of the program that may be considered relevant. The evaluators are expected to review other pertinent strategies and reports developed by the Government of Liberia that are relevant to the decentralization agenda.

1. **6.2 Field Data Collection**

Following the desk review, the evaluators will build on the documented evidence through an agreed set of field and interview methodologies, including:

* Interviews with key partners and stakeholders, including government and civil society
* Field visits to project sites and partner institutions
* Survey questionnaires where appropriate
* Participatory observation, focus groups, and rapid appraisal techniques

1. **Deliverables**

The following reports and deliverables are required for the evaluation:

* Inception report
* Draft LDSP Evaluation Report
* Presentation at the validation workshop with key stakeholders, (partners and beneficiaries)
* Final LDSP Evaluation report

Seven (7) days after contract signing, the evaluation manager will produce an **inception report,** including an evaluation matrix presenting the evaluation questions, data sources, data collection, analysis tools and methods to be used. The inception report should detail the specific timing for evaluation activities and deliverables, and propose specific site visits and stakeholders to be interviewed. Protocols for different stakeholders should be developed. The inception report will be discussed and agreed with the MIA, GC and the implementing MACs, and the donor partners before the evaluators proceed with site visits.

The **draft evaluation report** will be shared with stakeholders, and presented in a validation workshop, that the MIA and GC will organise. Feedback received from these sessions should be taken into account when preparing the final report. The evaluators will produce an ‘audit trail’ indicating whether and how each comment received was addressed in revisions to the **final report**. The suggested table of contents of the evaluation report is as follows:

* Title
* Table of contents
* Acronyms and abbreviations
* Executive Summary
* Introduction
* Background and context
* Evaluation scope and objectives
* Evaluation approach and methods
* Data analysis
* Findings and conclusions
* Lessons learned
* Recommendations

Annexes

1. **Evaluation Team Composition and Required Competencies**

The LDSP evaluation will be undertaken by 2 external evaluators, hired as consultants, comprised of an Evaluation Manager and an Evaluation Associate. Both international and national consultants can be considered for both positions.

1. **Required Qualifications of the Evaluation Manager**

* Minimum Master’s degree in law, economics, political science, public administration, regional development/planning, or other social science;
* Minimum 10-15 years of professional experience in public sector development, including in the areas of democratic governance, regional development, gender equality and social services.
* At least 5 years of experience in conducting evaluations of government and international aid organisations, preferably with direct experience with civil service reform and capacity building;
* Sound knowledge of results-based management systems, and monitoring and evaluation methodologies; including experience in applying SMART (S Specific; M Measurable; A Achievable; R Relevant; T Time-bound) indicators;
* Excellent reporting and communication skills

The **Evaluation Manager** will have overall responsibility for the quality and timely submission of the draft and final evaluation report. Specifically, the Evaluation Manager will perform the following tasks:

* Lead and manage the evaluation mission;
* Develop the inception report, detailing the evaluation scope, methodology and approach;
* Conduct the project evaluation in accordance with the proposed objective and scope of the evaluation and UNDP evaluation guidelines;
* Manage the team during the evaluation mission, and liaise with UNDP on travel and interview schedules’
* Draft and present the draft and final evaluation reports;
* Lead the presentation of draft findings in the stakeholder workshop;
* Finalize the evaluation report and submit it to UNDP.

1. **Required qualification of the Evaluation Associate**

* Liberian citizen or persons with extensive experience working in Liberia during the last 5 years;
* Minimum master’s degree in the social sciences or similar area;
* Minimum 5 years’ experience carrying out development evaluations for government and civil society;
* Experience working in or closely with UN agencies, especially UNDP, is preferred;
* A deep understanding of the development context in Liberia and preferably an understanding of governance issues within the Liberia context;
* Strong communication skills;
* Excellent reading and writing skills in English.

The Evaluation Associate will, *inter alia*, perform the following tasks:

* Review documents;
* Participate in the design of the evaluation methodology;
* Assist in carrying out the evaluation in accordance with the proposed objectives and scope of the evaluation;
* Draft related parts of the evaluation report as agreed with the Evaluation Manager;
* Assist the Evaluation Manager to finalize the draft and final evaluation report.

1. **Evaluation Ethics**

The evaluation must be carried out in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’ and sign the Ethical Code of Conduct for UNDP Evaluations. In particular, evaluators must be free and clear of perceived conflicts of interest. To this end, interested consultants will not be considered if they were directly and substantively involved, as an employee or consultant, in the formulation of UNDP strategies and programming relating to the outcomes and programmes under review. The code of conduct and an agreement form to be signed by each consultant are included in Annex 4.

1. **Implementation Arrangements**

The UNDP CO in collaboration with MIA and GC will select the evaluation team through an open process, and will be responsible for the management of the evaluators. The Head of Unit/DCDP will designate a focal point for the evaluation that will work with the M&E Specialist and Programme Manager to assist in facilitating the process (e.g., providing relevant documentation, arranging visits/interviews with key informants, etc.). The CO Management will take responsibility for the approval of the final evaluation report. The M&E Specialist or designate will arrange introductory meetings within the CO and the DCDP or her designate will establish initial contacts with partners and project staff. The consultants will take responsibility for setting up meetings and conducting the evaluation, subject to advanced approval of the methodology submitted in the inception report. The CO management will develop a management response to the evaluation within two weeks of report finalization.

The Task Manager of the Project will convene an Advisory Panel comprising of technical experts to enhance the quality of the evaluation. This Panel will review the inception report and the draft evaluation report to provide detail comments related to the quality of methodology, evidence collected, analysis and reporting. The Panel will also advise on the conformity of evaluation processes to the UNEG standards. The evaluation team is required to address all comments of the Panel completely and comprehensively. The Evaluation Team Leader will provide a detail rationale to the advisory panel for any comment that remain unaddressed.

The evaluation will use a system of ratings standardising assessments proposed by the evaluators in the inception report. The evaluation acknowledges that rating cannot be a standalone assessment, and it will not be feasible to entirely quantify judgements. Performance rating will be carried out for the four evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

While the Country Office will provide some logistical support during the evaluation, for instance assisting in setting interviews with senior government officials, it will be the responsibility of the evaluators to logistically and financially arrange their travel to and from relevant project sites and to arrange most interviews. Planned travels and associated costs will be included in the Inception Report, and agreed with the Country Office.

1. **Time-Frame for the Evaluation Process**

The evaluation is expected to take 22 working days for each of the two consultants, over a period of six weeks starting September 2016. A tentative date for the stakeholder workshop is October 6, 2016 , and the final draft evaluation report is due the October 20, 2016. The following table provides an indicative breakout for activities and delivery:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Deliverable** | **Work day allocation** | | **Time period (days) for task completion** |
|  |  | **Evaluation Manager** | **Evaluation**  **Associate** |
| Review materials and develop work plan | Inception report and evaluation matrix | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| Participate in an Inception Meeting with MIA, GC, MACS and partners |
| Draft inception report |
| Review Documents and stakeholder consultations | Draft evaluation report  Stakeholder workshop presentation | 13 | 16 | 30 |
| Interview stakeholders |
| Conduct field visits |
| Analyse data |
| Develop draft evaluation and lessons report to Country Office |
| Present draft Evaluation Report and lessons at Validation Workshop | Final evaluation report | 5 | 3 | 7 |
| Finalize and submit evaluation and lessons learned report incorporating additions and comments provided by stakeholders |
|  | totals | 22 | 22 | 6 weeks |

1. **Fees and payments**

Interested consultants should provide their requested fee rates when they submit their expressions of interest, in USD. UNDP will then negotiate and finalise contracts. Travel costs and daily allowances will be paid against invoice, and subject to the UN payment schedules for Liberia. Fee payments will be made upon acceptance and approval by the UNDP Country Office of planned deliverables, based on the following payment schedule:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Inception report | 10% |
| Draft Evaluation Report | 70% |
| Final Evaluation Report | 20% |

1. **DOCUMENTS TO BE INCLUDED WHEN SUBMITTING THE PROPOSALS.**

Interested individual consultants must submit the following documents/information to demonstrate their qualifications:

1. Proposal:

Explaining why they are the most suitable for the work (1 page)

2. Financial proposal

3. Personal CV (P11) including past experience in similar projects and at least 3 references

**14. FINANCIAL PROPOSAL**

The financial proposal shall specify a daily fee. Payments will be made to the Individual Consultant based on specific and measurable deliverables as specified in the TOR upon completion of all deliverables.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Unit** | **Quantity** | **Unit Price** | **Total price** |
| **Consultancy/professional fee:**  **all- inclusive lump sum rate** | **Lump sum for total contract days** | **1** |  |  |
| **Others (please specify)** | **Each** | **1** |  |  |

Proposals should be submitted at the following address: by email to [**bids.lr@undp.org**](mailto:bids.lr@undp.org) (Please include procurement notice number in the subject area) no later than 12:00 Noon (GMT)**, Monday, 29 August 2016.**

1. **EVALUATION**

Individual consultants will be evaluated based on the following methodologies:

*Cumulative analysis*

*Award of the contract will be made to the individual consultant whose offer has been evaluated and determined as:*

*a) responsive/compliant/acceptable, and*

*b) Having received the highest score out of a pre-determined set of weighted technical and financial*

*\* Technical Criteria; [70 points]*

*\* Financial Criteria; [30 points]*

*Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 70% of the maximum points would be considered for the financial evaluation*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Criteria*** | ***Weight*** | ***Max. Point*** |
| *Technical* |  |  |
| *Criteria A:*  Proposed methodology; | *14* | *20* |
| *Criteria B:*  Overall experience in the provision with the services given above; | *24.5* | *35* |
| *Criteria C:*  Adequacy of competencies & skills responding to the Terms of Reference , (TOR) ; | *10.5* | *15* |
| *Financial* | *30 points x price of the lowest price proposed / price of proposal* | *30 points* |

**ANNEXES**

ANNEX 1- INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

ANNEX 2 – P11 FORM

# ANNEX 8. LIST OF KEY INFORMANTS

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| NAMES | ORGANIZATIONS | TELEPHONE NUMBER (S) |
| CLEOPHAS TROARE | UNDP |  |
| BOYD JOHNSON | UNDP | 0770003801 |
| VIRGINIA CHITANDA | LDSP-CTA | N/A |
| NESSIE G. GOULD | UNDP | 0777440315 |
| ROBERT DORLIAE | UNDP | 0770003792 |
| SAMUEL NAH | UNDP | 0770003797 |
| J. LEVI DEMMAH | MIA-BUCHANAN | N/A |
| SAGACIOUS GARDOE | MIA-CSC BUCHANAN | 0776070605 |
| VARNEY A. SIRLEAF | MIA-DMA | 0777513621 |
| AUGUSTUS M. ZAYZAY, Jr. | MIA-DMRP&D | 0775560733 |
| ALLEN KROMAH | MIA-AMRD&P | 077058757 |
| KOU BELLEH | MIA-CDA | 0775226190 |
| JOHN Z. BUWAY | MIA-CSC MARGIBI | 0886523180 |
| TARR SACKIE | MIA-MARGIBI | 0886521902 |
| AMINATA GAYFOLO | MIA-MARGIBI | 0886998547 |
| FAHN LEPOLU | MIA-MARGIBI | 0886494437 |
| SAM T. ARTIS | MIA-MARGIBI CSC | 0886054155 |
| JOSHUA ROBERTSON | MIA-MARGIBI CSC | 0777612096 |
| JUSTIN BARMEN | MOL-MARGIBI CSC | 0886581380 |
| DANILETT D. ASHTON | MOH-MARGIBI CSC | N/A |
| SAMUEL MORLU | MOE-MARGIBI CSC | 0886534836 |
| GABRIEL B. MILLER | CNADR-MARGI | 0886290016 |
| MARGA RUOHOMAKI | SWEDEN EMBASSY | 0770173801 |
| LENA NORDSTORM | SWEDEN EMBASSY | 0770173801 |
| ABA HAMILTON DOLO | LACC | 0770179009 |
| ZOBON A. KOLENKY | LACC | 0886523961 |
| JAMES KINGSLEY | LACC | 0886523326 |
| ERIK KRISTENSEN | EU | 0777731777 |
| DANIEL K. BOAKE | WORLD BANK | 0886606967 |
| JAMES D. TORH | INHRC | 0880532014 |
| HAROLD M. AIDOO | IREDO | 0886523021 |
| SIDIKI A. QUISIA | MFDP-DRSP | 0777756671 |
| THEO ADDY | MFDP-AMDP | 0886439758 |
| EMMANUEL WILLIAMS | MFDP-D | 0886513670 |
| WEADE S.W. SHERIFF | MFDP-PS | 0886680174 |
| MOHAMMED ALI | MFDP-WASH | 0777542845 |
| NIMENE B. REEVES | MFDP-SE | 0886716660 |
| SALIHO DONZO | MFDP-ADSP | 0886653704 |
| ROOSEVELT CAMPBELL | MOL-ADRLA | 0886521871 |
| GRACIA BUENCAMINO | USAID |  |
| APRIL O’NEIL | USAID |  |
| KOLANAH SANDO | USAID |  |
| MAHMOUD KOROMA | UN-WOMEN | 0777330330 |
| YARSUO WEH DORLIAE | GC | 0886951263 |

# ANNEX 9. WORKPLAN

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Time/Date** | **Activity/Objective** | **Participants** | **Co Focal Point** | **Confirm** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| INCEPTION REPORT  **Monday 09/12, 2016** | *Review Documents-Programme and other documentation of the GPI Pillar*  *Preparation of the Inception report*  *Finalization and submission of Inception Report* | *PSU Team, Consultant Team* | |  | *Confirmed* |
| **Tuesday Sept. 13, 2016** | *GC-Commissioner Policy & Legal Reform* | *Consultant Team* | | PSU | *Confirmed* |
| **Wednesday Sept. 14, 2016** | **Meeting with UNDP, GoL/Partners, Technical Team to discuss the proposed programme components, identify focal points for detailed consultations** | | | | |
| 10:00 am -11:00 am | *MIA-Deputy Minister, Research Planning & Development* | | *Consultants Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *11:00 am -12:30 pm* | *MIA/NDIS-Capacity Building Advisor* | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *12:30 pm - 1:30 pm* | MIA-Asst. Minister Research Planning & Dev. | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *1:30 pm - 2:30 pm* | *MIA-Deputy Minister, Administration* | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *2:30 pm - 3:30 pm* | *UNDP-Deputy Country Director/Programme* | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *3:30 pm - 5:30 pm* | *Meeting with Programme Team* | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| **Thursday Sept. 15, 2016** | **UNDP-Senior Team** | | | | |
| *9:00 am - 10:00 am* | *UNDP-Programme Associate-Governance* | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *10:00 am - 11:00 am* | *UNDP-Finance Associate-Operations* | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *11:00 am – 5:30 pm* | *Planning meeting, documents review, confirmation of agenda/housekeeping* | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| **Friday Sept. 16, 2016** | ***DEPARTURE-FIELD VISIT-MARGIBI COUNTY*** | | | | |
| *7:30 am – 6:00 pm* | *Meeting with County Superintendents, Chiefs, district commissioners, CSC Coordinator, MACs, Discussion with training participants, target beneficiaries and customary authorities* | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| **Saturday, Sept. 17, 2016** | **Meeting with LDSP Leadership** | | | | |
| *9:00 am -12:00 pm* | *UNDP-CTA,LDSP* | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *1:00 pm -2:00 pm* | *CSO-Meeting with civil Society Org.-IREDO* | | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Monday Sept. 19, 2016 MEETINGS** | | | | |
| *9:00 am -12:00 pm* | *UNDP-Meeting with Programme staff* | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *12:30 pm - 1:30 pm* | *EU-Meeting Programme Manager Governance* | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *2:00PM - 3:30 PM* | *INCHR-Meeting with Commissioner* | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *3:30 pm - 5:00 pm* | *World Bank-Meeting with Sr. Public Sector Specialist, & Economist* | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| **Tuesday Sept. 20,2016** | ***LDSP BOARD MEETING, Etc.*** | | | |
| *9:00 am-10:30 am* | *UNDP-Meeting Programme Staff* | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *1:00 am - 1:00 pm* | *MIA-LDSP Board Meeting* | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *1:00 pm - 2:30pm* | *MFDP-Meeting with Asst. Minister Dev. Planning, Director, Regional & Sectorial Planning, Asst. Director Research, Asst. Director M & E, Asst. Director regional Planning, Senior Economist, Asst. Pillar Specialist Human Dev. Pillar, Director WASH.* | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *3:00 pm – 4:30 pm* | *Swedish Embassy–Meeting with Swedish Ambassador & Counsellor, Democratic Governance.* | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *4:30 pm – 5:30 pm* | *UNDP-Meeting GPI Pillar Team Leader* | *Consultant Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| **Wednesday Sept.. 21, 2016** | **FIELD VISIT BUCHANAN GRAND BASSA COUNTY** | | | |
| *8:00 am – 6:00 pm* | *Meeting with County Superintendents, County Communication Officer, CSC Coordinator, Discussion with MACs at CSC, training participants, target beneficiaries and other customary authorities* | *Consulting Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| **Thursday Sept 22, 2016** | **FIELD VISIT BOMI COUNTY** | | | |
| *9:00 am – 2:30 pm* | *Meeting with County Superintendents, County officials, UNV assigned at BOMI and CSC Coordinator.* | *Consulting Team* | *PSU* | Confirmed |
| 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm | USAID | *Consulting Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm | *UNDP-Consultative Meeting* | *Consulting Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| **Friday Sept. 23, 2016** | **MEETINGS & DEBRIEFING-UNDP** | | | |
| *9:00 am – 10:30 am* | MOGDCSP-Meeting with Director for Policy | Consulting Team | PSU | Confirmed |
| *11:00 am – 12:00 pm* | UN Women | Consulting Team | PSU | Confirmed |
| *1:00 pm - 3:30 pm* | *UNDP-Consultative Meeting* | *Consulting Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *4:00 pm – 6:00 pm* | *MIA-Debriefing-UNDP, DCD/P, MIA, GC* | *Consulting Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| **Saturday Sept. 24, 2016** | **MEETINGS** | | | |
| *10:00 am - 12:30 pm* | *Consultative Meeting-Draft Preparation* | *Consulting Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *1:00 pm - 3:00 pm* | *Meeting with political parties* | *Consulting Team* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *11:00 pm -12:00 pm* | *Airport Departure/Consultant* | *Consultant* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| **Monday Sept. 26, 2016** | **MEETINGS** | | |  |
| *9:00 am -11:00 am* | *MOH-Meeting with Dir. Justin Kovayan, Focal Person Governance & Decentralization* | *Consultant* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *12:00 am – 1:00 pm* | *UNDP-Meeting Programme Analyst, LDSP* | *Consultant* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| **2:00 pm 5:30 pm** | **Documentary review & compilation of data** | *Consultant* | *PSU* |  |
| **Tuesday Sept. 27 2016** | **MEETING** | | | |
| *10:00 am – 11:30 am* | *MOL - Meeting with Asst. Director Regional Labor Affairs* | *Consultant* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *12:00 pm – 5:00 pm* | *Documentary review & compilation of data* | *Consultant* |  |  |
| **Wednesday Sept. 28, 2016** | **MEETING** | | | |
| *10:00 am – 11:30 am* | *LACC-Meeting with Director, Education & Programme, Asst. Director, Protection* | *Consultant* | *PSU* | *Confirmed* |
| *1:00 pm – 5:30* | *Documentary review & compilation of data* | *Consultant* |  |  |
| **Thursday** | **MEETING** | | | |
| *10:00 am -12:00 am* | *MIA-Meeting LDSP Staff* | *Consultant* |  |  |
| *1:00 pm – 5:30 pm* | *Documentary review & compilation of data* | *Consultant* |  |  |
| **Friday, September** | **MEETING** |  |  |  |
| *10:00 am -12:30 am* | *UNDP- Meeting Operations Compilation of data-Resource mobilization* | *Consultant* |  |  |
| ***MONDAY- SATURDAY***  ***October 1-8, 2016*** | PREPARATION OF DRAFT-SUBMISSION TO CONSULTANT PENDING CONSOLIDATION AND ONWARD SUBMISSION TO UNDP FOR REVIEW AND FEEDBACK | *Consulting Team* |  |  |

# ANNEX 10. REFERENCES

**Government of Liberia:**

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May 2016. LDSP Organogram after meeting with senior staff of MIA.

September 20, 2016. LDSP 1st and 2nd Quarter Board Meeting. (powerpoint)

LDSP QA

2016. LDSP Final first quarter report

2016. Second quarter report sent out for comment

2016. Third and Fourth Quarter Work Plan.

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2016. Annual Workplan with gender comments

December 2014. Consolidated Annual Report of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Governance Commission (GC).

2015. Annual report

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Nov. 2015. Program document final.

2014. Consolidated Annual Report.

2013. Consolidated Annual Report.

April 2013. Program document final draft 2013-2017.

     

1. LDSP Prodoc, April 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. LDIP (2013-2017): Establishing Effective and Accountable Decentralized Governance in Liberia [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Note: 2016 Expenditure @ September 23, 2016.

   Note: Low delivery in 2014 due to Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For detail, see Liberia’s Demographic Health Survey, 2008 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. 5Aganda for Transformation, P.4 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Briefs-Impact Evaluation No. 2, by Patricia Rogers, 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid. AFT p.5

   8 2014, Civil Society Rapid Assessment, Search for Common Ground.

   9 LDSP, Prodoc, revised, 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Since 2013, six (6) Ministers have headed the MIA. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Note: 2016 Expenditure @ September 23, 2016.

   Note: Low delivery in 2014 due to Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Evaluation: UNDP Contribution to strengthening LG, 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. LDSP Prodoc: 2013-2017 (revised, 2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. BOSS Presentation, CSC Bassa County, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Ensuring a Gender-Responsive Foundation for Liberia’s

    Decentralization Process: A Review & Analysis of Barriers Opportunities & Entry Point [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. BOSS Presentation, CSC Grand Bassa County, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Ensuring a Gender-Responsive Foundation for Liberia’s National Decentralization Process, 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Strengthening LG Participation, December, 2010 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. INHRC-Presentation-Meeting Sept, 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. LDSP Progress Report, 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)