



THE GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

~ COMBINED EVALUATION REPORT ~
OF THE INDEPENDENT CONSULTANTS
(Michael Dalton and Mark Marvey)

Monrovia

18 March, 2012

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Michael Dalton

Mark Marvey

Monrovia - 18 March, 2012

The Evaluation Team has made every effort to address comments received from stakeholders. In doing so, the Evaluation Team has responded at the most appropriate locations in the Report, which may not necessarily coincide with where the original stakeholder comments were made.

The inputs from stakeholders considered in this report are those received by

17 March 2012.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
AMC	Aid Management Committee
AMP	Aid Management Platform (software)
AMU	Aid Management Unit (at Ministry of Finance)
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BCPR	UN Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
CAF	Country Assistance Framework
CBO	Community Based Organization
CBRD	Community Based Recovery and Development Programme
CCA	UN Common country Assessment
CDA	County Development Agenda
CDC	Clan/Community Development Committee
CDF	County Development Fund
CDG	County Development Grant
CDO	County Development Officer
CDP	County Development Programme (EC)
CDSC	County Development Steering Committee
CEB	County Education Board
CEP	Community Empowerment Project
CHT	County Health Team
CIMM	County Information Management and Monitoring
CIP	County Information Packs
CLCC	County Level Coordinating Committee(s)
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement (signed in Accra in August 2003)
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CS	County Superintendent
CSIO	County Statistics and Information Office (or Officer)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation(s)
CSR	Civil Service Reforms
CST	County Support Team
CTA	Chief Technical Advisor
CWIQ	Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire Survey
DAD	Development Assistance Database
DC	District Commissioner
DDC	District Development Committee
DDP	District Development Plan
DEO	District Education Officer
DEX	Direct Execution (UN)
DGF	Development Gateway Foundation
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DIM	Direct Implementation
DLCC	District Level Coordination Committees
DP	Development Partners
DPKO	UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations
DS	Development Superintendent
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General
EBR	Expenditure to Budget ratio
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union

EUR	Euro
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organisation
Gb	Gigabyte
GC	Governance Commission
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEMAP	Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme
GEWEE	Gender Equality and Women's Economic Empowerment (programme)
GIS	Geographical Information System
GOL	Government of Liberia
GPS	Global Positioning System
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting
HIC	Humanitarian Information Centre
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDP	Internally Displaced Person(s)
IMSC/IAC	Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee/Inter-Agency Committee
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMIS	Integrated Management Information System
IMO	Information Management Office(s)
IMWG	Inter-Ministerial Working Group (on decentralisation)
IP	Implementing Partner(s)
iPRS	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy
JP	Joint Programme
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
JSP	Justice and Security Programme
LAN	Local Area Network
LECBS	Liberia Emergency Capacity Building Support (project)
LED	Local Economic Development
LEITI	Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
LDLD	Liberian Decentralization and Local Development Programme
LIBTELCO	Liberia Telecoms Corporation
LISGIS	Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services
LNP	Liberia National Police
LOA	Letter of Agreement
LRDC	Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCC	Ministerial Coordinating Committee(s)
MCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MGD	Ministry of Gender and Development
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MIS	Management Information System
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOHSW	Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPEA	Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
MPW	Ministry of Public Works

NCC	National Coordination Committee
NEX	National Execution
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIM	National Implementation
NPHS	National Population and Housing Survey
NSA	National Security Agency
NSO	National Statistics Office
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PBSO	UN Peace-Building Support Office
PEM	Public Expenditure Management
PFM	Public Financial Management
PMT	Project Management Team (on LDF-supported farm projects)
PMU	Programme Management Unit
PPCC	Public Procurement and Concessions Commission
ProDoc	Programme Document or Project Document
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSC	Programme or Project Steering Committee
PSR	Public Sector Reform
PTSA	Parent Teacher Student Association
RBM	Results-based Management
SCC	Sector Coordinating Committee
SDF	Social Development Fund
SEK	Swedish Kroner
SES	Senior Executive Service
Tb	Terabyte
TNA	Training Needs Analysis
TOKTEN	Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals
TOT	Training of Trainers
TRAC	UNDP Target Resources Allocated from Core (funding)
UL	University of Liberia
UN	United Nations
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN – HABITAT	United Nations Organisation for Human Settlements
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UPS	Un-interrupted Power Supply
US\$	United States Dollar
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal

Executive Summary

Brief Description:

The County Support Team (CST) approach was first formulated in 2006. The CST concept was an innovative response from the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the UN Country Team (UNCT) to the need to re-establish the State's authority in rural areas across the country. As opportunities emerged the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, UNMIL and Government decided to formulate a joint programme which would support county and district level capacity building, data and information management, and the building of county and district administration buildings. Complementing the CST, the Liberia Decentralisation and Local Development (LDLD) programme aim was to develop a framework for decentralizing political and administrative responsibilities to facilitate the proper functioning of local government and to further spur service delivery to local communities facing critical humanitarian conditions typified by appalling social and economic uncertainties. The National Information Management Centre (NIMAC) was a joint UNDP and Government project designed as a response to data and information needs, as well as the building of information management capacities at the centre and at sub-national level, for recovery and development.

Purpose of the Evaluation:

The overall purpose of this combined evaluation of the CST and LDLD programmes and the NIMAC project is to inform and guide decision-making and programming processes such as the Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy II (PRS II) and the formulation of the new UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The expected outcome of the evaluation is to:

- Determine the extent to which the programmes and project are achieving the desired objectives;
- Provide stakeholders with an external, objective view on the programme and project status and factors of success or otherwise, their relevance, how efficiently and effectively they are being managed and implemented, and whether the programmes or project are likely to achieve their respective objectives;
- Assess whether programme partners and donors are effectively positioned to support the programmes under the current or an amended partnership strategy, and whether their respective contributions can be credibly linked to the achievement, in part or in whole, of the overall outcome to date; and
- Help programme/project management and stakeholders to draw lessons and best practices from project design and implementation so as to guide and inform further programming process and decision-making.

Key Findings and Conclusions:

The key findings and conclusions of the evaluation team regarding relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and potential sustainability are presented in the Table on the next page. In addition to numerous findings of a programme- or project-specific nature, key findings of a general nature are:

- No clear link between decentralisation and the CSR and PSR. There are gaps and ambiguities in these policies;
- The CST and LDLD programmes seem to be parallel programmes with no obvious synergy in implementation as currently designed. This should not be allowed to continue;
- While the formulation of the NIMAC project and the linkages to both CST and LDLD are clear, it is quite likely that (i) there will be unfinished elements currently under NIMAC that programmatically could and should be considered part of the CST/LDLD AWP (2012);
- Logically and programmatically other current NIMAC elements such as support at the national level to LISGIS and to the AMU at the Ministry of Finance should remain outside, possibly to be captured under the UNDP's current ECOMAN programme;
- The vagueness of the objectives (not having been articulated through an RBM lens) has inadvertently led to only the reporting of what should be considered as partial responses regarding results;

- Key Findings -

Key Area	CST	LDLD	NIMAC
1. Relevance	The CST as designed and implemented continues to show that it is one of the most relevant UN initiatives in support of restoring the State's authority at the sub-national level and in promoting peace and stability.	The LDLD Programme design represents a novelty that responds to Liberia's historic challenge of exclusion of the majority of the citizenry from decision making and governance. The programme is extremely relevant to addressing the needs of the Liberian people following years of civil and political decadence	The NIMAC has offered focused and demand-driven support to the strengthening of the designated national agency (i.e. LISGIS), as well to the county-level function (i.e. CSIOs) and to the establishing of an aid management platform and office, critical to informing national development planning, resource allocation and monitoring.
2. Efficiency	Through the UNMIL Field Office mechanism and the choice of implementing partners, the CST has delivered on its aims and objectives more efficiently than any other modality possibly could.	The LDLD is been implemented efficiently through partnership with the GC, MIA CSA and an array of UN agencies (UNMIL, UN-HABITAT, CST etc.), which places at its disposal a range of resources for undertaking its interventions.	By complementing other D/P contributions, LISGIS and MOF-AMU have been supported efficiently By linking with CST and LDLD, the project has been able to deliver its outputs and results in a timely and efficient manner at the county level.
3. Effectiveness	The CST has been visibly effective in that the county administrations are applying the skills training they received, are working in dedicated buildings, and critical PRS- and CDA-related planning, data and information systems are operational.	The evidence of the effectiveness of the LDLD abounds. The programme has not only lent considerable support to the drafting and dissemination of the National Decentralization Policy, it supported the forging of consensus and has been at the heart of strengthening local administration capacities on PFM and local economic development and others.	LISGIS and the CSIOs are operating effectively as a result of NIMAC support but not exclusively so, although both have room for improvement. The effectiveness of the support to the MOF AMU is more difficult to ascertain as other factors are involved, and should be considered a work-in-progress for now.
4. Impact	As a result of the CST support, visibility of the State functioning at the county and district levels is promoting community and citizen engagement in planning and is fostering a tangible sense of civic normality, engagement and expectations.	LDLD support to MIA/GC has indisputably culminated into the formulation of essential legal frameworks (draft Local Government Act) and trigger deliberate effort on the part of Ministries and agencies to start deconcentrating key aspects of their functions to the counties - MOHSW and MOE	LISGIS and the CSIOs operating effectively and efficiently, albeit within their constraints, are having a visible impact on planning and monitoring. It may be too early to assess what impact the supported AMU is having on national budgeting and resource allocation
5. Potential Sustainability	The software and hardware for county administration have been supported, with visible national ownership of the processes and systems. Sustainability will depend on leadership, continuous training and reinforcement, centre-to-county feedback, transparent prioritisation and resource allocation, and receiving timely and appropriate operations budget and cash-flow.	As Liberians embrace and develop a participation culture and the MIA gathers the capacity to effectively lead and provide oversight of local administration, the country will require unremitting efforts to consolidate governance reforms and sustainable and equitable growth and development	Technically, in terms of competencies, LISGIS and the CSIOs are well positioned regarding potential sustainability. As with the MOF AMU, there is an issue of insufficient national resources being allocated to sustain and strengthen the functions.

- Resource mobilisation has become critical for all three programmes and project;
- A lot of improvements have been made in central ministries, agencies and in local administrations. However, sustainability, in terms of the Government's recurrent budget, is a serious cause for concern;
- There no discussion of exit strategy in the CST and LDLD documents, not even component by component;
- There are many interdependent issues regarding a potential transition from UNMIL to UNDP or the UNCT, and the formulation of any new programme where a UN field presence is critical, will require a lot of careful analysis and negotiation at the macro and meso levels.

Key Recommendations:

As with the findings and conclusions, there are recommendations set out for each of the three programmes and project. The key recommendations are as follows (maintaining their reference number in the main report):

Recommendation G.1: Government to host and UNDP to facilitate the holding of a workshop on Issues, Constraints and Challenges to harmonising and aligning the Decentralisation Policy and implementation strategy, with the Civil Service Reform and the Public Service Reform – refer to 7.1.1 (a);

Recommendation G.3: UNDP to ensure that there is a proper understanding of programming and RBM terminology by those formulating programmes or projects and also AWP and progress reports – refer to 7.1.1 (b);

Recommendation G.5: UNDP to ensure that there should be no further separation of CST and LDLD programmes beyond the end of this year, that sub-national activities supported by NIMAC are included in a new unified programme with CST and LDLD, and that more attention is given to establishing baselines – refer to 7.1.1 (c);

Recommendation G.6: Government, in consultation with UNDP and development partners, to ascertain how to support incomplete national level activities to strengthen national statistics and aid tracking - refer to 7.1.1 (c);

Recommendation G.14: Government and development partners to take a detailed look at the challenges to sustaining the outputs and results of capacity building programmes, particularly in this area, and to formulate a multi-year comprehensive approach – refer to 7.1.1 (f);

Recommendation G.15: The Government and UNDP to examine the two programmes (CST and LDLD) to assess what an exit strategy, component by component, might be or indeed should have been originally; this exercise will be needed as part of any formulation of a follow-on initiative – refer to 7.1.1 (g);

Recommendation G.16: Given the complexity and the risks involved, UNMIL and UNDP to commence more detailed joint examination of all aspects of what an effective transition would involve – personnel, infrastructure, security, logistics, accommodation, giving due attention to how the handover would be sequenced within each county – refer to 7.1.1 (h);

Looking Forward and Next Steps:

With a theme of ***“Liberia Rising: Looking Beyond Local Administration to Equitable Growth and Local Governance”***, there is now a real opportunity to build on what has been achieved. By adopting a programme approach the best initiatives of the three can be brought into one coherent whole. In light of the priorities and unmet needs regarding decentralisation, local service delivery and equitable growth, a proposal is made covering seven key areas: (i) decentralisation policy implementation, (ii) implementation of Civil Service reforms and Public Sector reforms for decentralisation; (iii) capacity building for local administration; (iv) capacity building for local statistics, data and information management; (v) efficient and transparent allocation and utilisation of funds for local development; (vi) provision of mission-critical infrastructure and resources; and (vii) strengthening civil society locally so as to enhance governance of the local development and accountability processes.

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THE REPORT

1.0. Background and Context

1.1. Background

The County Support Team (CST) approach was a key response to the Government's recovery and decentralisation efforts. It was both an innovative and integrating mechanism at the time, to enhance capacity building of local administration at the county level. To assist in this process, a two-year UN project: *Strengthening Capacity of Local Administration* began in 2006, focussing on building up local capacity to assess, plan, coordinate, mobilise resources and deliver basic services. This support was provided under "hard and soft" components.

Devised to lend support to the Government of Liberia, in developing and executing a decentralisation legal framework and policy and also administrative, planning and resource allocation systems at the sub-national level throughout Liberia, the Liberia Decentralisation and Local Development (LDLD) initiative was also designed with the aim of empowering counties, districts and communities to access development funds from various sources (national and external) using international best practices. It was launched in June 2007 and has since been funded by the European Commission and the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF).

It has also entailed the setting up of a capital investment and local development fund, to support Liberia's efforts in reversing historic tendencies within its centralized system of administration. Decentralising political authority, fiscal administration and formulating procedures, processes and systems for effective public expenditure management at the County, District and Sub-district levels have required national consensus building that has culminated in the development, endorsement and launch of the Decentralisation policy. Much remains to be done before the requisite legal and regulatory framework to enhance the functioning of sub-national governments can be attained. LDLD as a response to Liberia's quest and rising demand for quality public service delivery and improvements in management, has supported the building of capacities for the reinvigoration Liberia's local government management and system of administration..

At the core of anticipated results are (i) the full adoption of policies to strengthen fiscal decentralisation, (ii) effective and efficient administrative and governance systems in Liberia, (iii) the putting into place of adequate organizational capacities and systems to promote pro-poor infrastructure and service delivery, and (iv) local economic development and sustainable resources' management through governing arrangements that are closer and responsive to the people of Liberia.

The foundation for building effective policies and targeted development assistance is reliable qualitative and quantitative information and statistics. Accurate and up-to-date relevant data on the entire plethora of socio-economic and demographic indicators is critical to planning and monitoring of national, sectoral and local development strategies. For official purposes, such information products are preferably generated and/or disseminated by a mandated national institution/agency. Before July 2006 in Liberia, most development policy and sectoral initiatives were developed in a data vacuum, with largely outdated and incoherent data sets available to users. The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) was created by a Legislative Act in July 2004 as the National Statistics Office (NSO) with mandate to coordinate and carry out the collation/compilation as well as dissemination of most official statistics on Liberia. This was done with the express intent of expanding and redirecting the remit of what had formally been the Bureau of Statistics at the MPEA. LISGIS was created as a semi-autonomous agency that could have the potential to be self-sustaining if only ministries and other entities channelled information management services particularly dissemination of all official statistics through it. In essence, the capacitated LISGIS would ensure the coordinated compilation of accurate, relevant statistics on key economic, administrative, geographical and social aspects of Liberia whilst managing it in such a way as to render it meaningful

and accessible for the formulation of national, sectoral and local development policies and strategies. However, before July 2006, it was still too young and lacked the requisite capacities (technically, administratively and logistically) to fulfil this mandate. The situation in the Liberia statistical system had been one challenged by not only the absence of data but also the lack of reliable access mechanisms to get to data and information that do exist. Clearly there was an urgent need for capacity building support to be fulfilled by partners to ensure availability of relevant data to support effective planning for recovery and development.

1.2. Context

Liberia had just transitioned from years of conflicts to constitutional governance through the 2005, elections that ushered in Africa and Liberia's first democratically elected female president (Ellen Johnson Sirleaf). Civil authority was still fragile, essentially in the counties and communities lacked basic social services. To make ends meet through informal means, tens of thousands more survived on handouts or humanitarian assistance. Internal displacement was widespread and poverty evident .and the rule of law weak and unenforceable because of the collapse of government status, individual protection, was uncertain.

The earliest intervention was the CST, which supported the restoration of civil authorities throughout the country by the construction, refurbishing of infrastructures and capacity development of national and sub-national administration for service delivery. At that time the critical linkage and interdependence between decentralisation and reconciliation were recognised. Following that and conceived in 2007, the LDLD reinforced the lead programme. Its aim is to develop a framework for decentralizing political, administrative to facilitate the proper functioning of local government and to further spur service delivery to local communities facing critical humanitarian conditions typified by appalling social and economic uncertainties.

The LDLD programme has been implemented amidst serious capacity dearth at national, sub-national and local levels. Many local officials lacked knowledge and capacity to undertake their duties and had little experience with both service delivery planning and execution, or information gathering and analysis – as these critical development functions were previously managed from Monrovia. It supports both the Governance Commission's (GC) formulation of Decentralisation policies and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) to lead transformation in local administration. It is connected with both the second and third Pillars of the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy (iPRS) - (II) Economic Revitalization; and (III) Governance and the Rule of Law. Strengthening governance and the rule of law and revitalizing the economy stand out as a pre-emptory model foreshadowing various national policies such as the County Development Agenda (CDA), the County Development Fund (CDF) and the National Decentralisation Policy.

There is evidence to show that the project has had a considerable impact on the lives of ordinary people at the community level and on the consolidation of participatory, open and community-driven development and governance in Liberia as a whole. The years of devastation affected both social and economic life, with physical infrastructure, thus resulting also in substantial lost of critical information for humanitarian interventions, recovery and development.

The National Information Management Centre (NIMAC) was designed to respond to essential information gaps as a way of informing policy, infrastructure and system reform. it has partly integrated the UN High Commissioner For Refugees (UNHCR) funded and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) supported Information Management Office (IMO) that has now been transformed into the County Statistics and Information Office (CSIO), and has assumed the earlier functions of the United Nations Office for Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) which in the immediate aftermath of the conflict had taken action to address the basic information void by collecting vital statistics and producing maps and other information that considerably informed emergency responses and the development of the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy. NIMAC is a joint UNDP and Government project designed as a response to

data and information needs, as well as the building of information management capacities for recovery and development.

Information and data generated by NIMAC have been very useful to the development of key policies and data bases (National Population Census - 2008) for informing various reforms, including decentralisation, which amongst other things seeks to reverse historical challenges that have systematically excluded the majority of the citizenry from governance and access to resources by centralising political power, thereby confining decision making processes within the elite at the centre, and perpetuating urban-biased policies, which concentrated infrastructure and basic services in Monrovia and excluded the rural hinterlands.

² The Government of Liberia - Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy (2006)

2. PURPOSE, METHODOLOGY AND SCHEDULE

2.1 Purpose

The overall purpose is to conduct a combined evaluation of the CST and LDLD programmes and the NIMAC project in Liberia, to inform and guide decision-making and programming processes such as the Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy II (PRS II) and the formulation of the new UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). For the said programmes and project, the expected outcome of the evaluation is to:

- Determine the extent to which the programme and project are achieving the desired objectives;
- Provide stakeholders with an external, objective view on the programme and project status and factors of success or otherwise, their relevance, how efficiently and effectively they are being managed and implemented, and whether the programme or project are likely to achieve their respective objectives;
- Assess whether programme partners and donors are effectively positioned to support the programmes under the current or an amended partnership strategy, and whether their respective contributions can be credibly linked to the achievement, in part or in whole, of the overall outcome to date; and
- Help programme/project management and stakeholders to draw lessons and best practices from project design and implementation so as to guide and inform further programming process and decision-making.

While the logic of combining the three evaluations is sound, time did not permit detailed harmonisation of the Terms of Reference (TOR) to cover all three before the evaluation team began its work. Hence, there is one TOR for the CST and LDLD and there is another TOR for NIMAC. In order to bring coherence to the three together, some aspects of the NIMAC TOR have been adjusted to align with the previously harmonised requirements of the CST and LDLD TOR, and to reflect inter-linkages and dependencies. At the same time it is recognised that there are elements of the NIMAC project (particularly at the national level) that correctly require dedicated evaluation outside any harmonisation with the CST and LDLD evaluation.

The original Terms of Reference are given in Annex A.1

2.2 Methodology

The addition of the NIMAC project to the scope of the combined evaluation after the commencement of the mission meant that the approach had to be reconsidered. Due to prior commitments given to stakeholders, UNDP requested the consultants to do whatever possible to stick to the original schedule of holding a Key Stakeholders Briefing on or about 29 February, but to continue afterwards to incorporate outstanding aspects of the NIMAC not fully addressed in the period 03 – 28 February, and to finalise and submit a complete draft of the Combined Evaluation Report by mid-March. This request was accepted and the methodology and schedule duly amended.

The evaluation exercise has been done through a combination of a desk study or inspection of important but not all documents, selected site visits and interviews involving key stakeholders namely:

- MIA, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA) and Ministry of Finance (MOF)¹, GC and three or more Line Ministries²;
- Representative sample of County Superintendents, Development Superintendents, District Commissioners, County Development Officers, County Statistics and Information Officers, County Gender Coordinators, and a representative sample of local civil society organisations;
- The UNMIL Head of Field Office (HOFO) and relevant staff in the counties visited;
- the European Union (EU) delegation, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the World Bank (WB), as well as the Long Term Technical Assistance (LTTA) provided by the EC to MIA;
- Partner Agencies including UNCDF, UNDP, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOPS and the UN Mission in Liberia;
- Liberia Institute for Public Administration (LIPA) and the NRC;
- LISGIS (where in-depth discussions and specific reviews were held); and
- Senior Management and programme staff of UNDP.

The methodology included looking at the interventions, programmed or otherwise, at different levels. The consultants have determined the methodology for the evaluation using best practice evaluation planning and techniques, not unreasonably taking into account timeframe constraints and the availability of key interlocutors.

The documents reviewed or inspected are listed in Annex A.2

2.3 Schedule

The schedule as finalised was based on, but not exclusively so, the draft schedule prepared by the UNDP Consultancy Management Team so as set up meetings in a timely manner in advance of the consultants commencing their work. However, due to an airline technical problem, the international consultant arrived one day later than expected, on Thursday evening, 02 February. Nevertheless, by front-loading the schedule with as many meetings as possible (03 – 10 February), the evaluation team with the considerable assistance of CST and LDLD management, was able to retain the field visits part of the original schedule (12 – 17 February). In total, the evaluation team held 99 meetings consisting of 21 meetings with central and line ministries and agencies, 31 meetings with county administrations and local line ministries and agencies, 3 meetings with civil society representatives (38 persons), 3 meetings with community beneficiaries (16 - 20 persons) of the LDF, 5 meetings with development partners, 30 meetings with UN agencies including UNDP, UNMIL and HOFOs, and 6 meetings with the CST / LDLD / NIMAC teams. The counties visited were Sinoe, Grand Bassa, Margibi and Grand Cape Mount.

A list of Persons Met is given in Annex A.3

The final Schedule is given in Annex A.4

¹ Note: The MOF and the MPEA have recently been amalgamated by Presidential decree, but for all intents and purposes at the time of this evaluation, were continuing to act separately in the areas of direct relevance to the CST, LDLD and NIMAC.

² Education / Health and Social Welfare / Commerce and Industry

In order to meet the deadlines set out in the original CST and LDLD TOR, which are understood to have significance for development partners, the evaluation team proposed to prepare and submit the necessary Reports as follows:

Stage One (submission: Friday, 02 March)

- A **Presentation** at a Key Stakeholders Briefing at highlighting the key findings, conclusions, lessons learned, recommendations and next steps regarding the CST and LDLD programmes, and a summary of the NIMAC-related conclusions and recommendations to date.
- A **work-in-progress draft Combined Evaluation Report (CER)** based on the complete assessment undertaken by the two consultants regarding CST and LDLD, as much analysis as possible relating to the NIMAC particularly relation to county level and below date and information capacity and systems as has been gleaned in the period 03 – 29 February, and initial comments at the Key Stakeholders Briefing.

Upon receipt of this first draft CER, stakeholders were in a position to commence reviewing the substantive text regarding the CST and LDLD programmes, and at the same time to become familiar with those aspects of the NIMAC project that have been evaluated to date at the County level and wherever possible, the National level.

Stage Two (submission: Monday, 12 March)

- A **complete draft CER** based on the complete assessment undertaken by the two consultants regarding CST, LDLD and NIMAC, including updating or corrections of CST and/or LDLD information since the Stage One submission as necessary. The NIMAC-related text will have addressed both national and sub-national issues, needs and opportunities not completed earlier.

Upon receipt of this now-complete draft CER, stakeholders were to be able to review the full evaluation of the NIMAC project - i.e. at National and Country levels – as well as updates or corrections to the earlier text regarding the CST and LDLD programmes.

UNDP to schedule a **Stakeholders' De-briefing and Feedback meeting on Friday, 16 March**, from whence the consultants should be able to consider all constructive comments and requests for clarifications.

Stage Three (submission: Sunday, 18 March)

- The **Final CER** based on the complete assessment undertaken by the two consultants regarding CST, LDLD and NIMAC, including any updating of or corrections to CST and/or LDLD and/or NIMAC, based on stakeholder feedback. In this way, the Report is finalised in close consultation with stakeholders before the international consultant departs Liberia.

3.0. THE CONCEPT AND DESIGN

3.1 Linkage to the Poverty Reduction Strategy

The CST and NIMAC initiatives preceded the formulation and adoption of the PRS. Nevertheless, their support interventions were in response to Government's needs at the time, and remain responsive. It is the LDLD that has the greatest direct linkage to the PRS.

In 2007, the Government was faced with great challenges as its institutions of political governance were severely beleaguered by the years of conflict. almost all its physical assets including bridges, roads, schools, health posts, communication and systems of maintaining social order were damaged as a consequence of the conflict thereby limiting the state's capacity to effectively govern and deliver basic services to all of its citizenry. It can be recalled that between 1987 and 1995, the economy of Liberia collapsed, with Gross domestic Product (GDP) falling a catastrophic 90 percent, one of the largest economic collapses ever recorded. By the time of the 2005 elections, average income in Liberia was just one-quarter of what it had been in 1987, and just one-sixth of its level in 1979. Initially, Government adopted various gap-filling and capacity development support mechanisms (i.e. GEMAP, LECBS, TOKTEN, SES etc.) to position it nationally. Since exclusion of the citizenry was identified as a critical factor that influenced the conflict, the Government promised to bring government closer to the people and give them a voice in policy formulation and decision-making through the PRS.

Pillars Two and Three of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, which emphasise Economic Revitalization and Governance and the Rule of Law respectively found expressions in the LDLD programme, which has supported the GC in the development of the Decentralisation Policy. This includes requisite legal and technical support incident to the preparation for constitutional amendments to facilitate the carrying out of the policy. It also includes the positioning of the MIA to guide the transformation of the local system of governance through capacity strengthening initiatives in the areas of policy review and development, capacity building and monitoring and evaluation consistent with the decentralisation policy document.

As a critical enabling function of the PRS, the decentralisation process initial rollout by the Government has engendered county-based development planning and monitoring and enabled local administrations to access County Development, Social Development and Local Development Funds, and have managed recurrent budgets since 2010-11. MIA, MOF, MPEA, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW) and Ministry of Public Works (MPW) among others, are undertaking are deconcentrating some of their functions as the first step towards devolution. Capacity development initiatives are being undertaken by MIA, MPEA, MOF, MOH, etc. and supported by EC, UNMIL, UNDP, UNCDF, WB etc. through the CST, LDLD and NIMAC programmes contributed to accelerating the transfer of power to the people and give them a voice in the decision-making processes surrounding their welfare.

Furthermore, the LDLD design utilises local investment funds both as a foundation of productive venture and a means of establishing operational and financial management abilities within the local government system. The programme's strategic focus of policy and strategy development for strengthening governance is for the most part reflected in pillar (3) of the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy (2006), which essentially focuses on redefining and refocusing the mandates, structures and functions of public institutions.

Embedded in this area is the objective of decentralising political governance and social responsibilities. LDLD proposed output ensures that a consensus has been achieved in terms of a Liberian policy and programme for decentralisation and that the necessary legal framework is established or reformed from the existing system. Inherent in the LDLD's goals is a commitment to support the development of a National Decentralisation Policy and other related legal frameworks.

LDLD has accordingly, supported the Government to define and initiate the operationalisation of a national decentralisation policy to reverse the historic centralization of the state and strengthen the functioning of the sub-national spheres of government – counties, districts, towns, and villages. This has entailed supporting the development of legal framework within the Unitary State that clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of these different entities (i.e. Counties, Districts, Towns, Clans and Villages).

It supports the work of the Government through key actors – GC, MIA, MPEA and MOF – to undertake the improvement of the system. The target is to have in place several frameworks - a legal outline for formalizing local governments' roles and functions, another for fiscal aspects and that for the decentralisation of sector management of programmes, as well as in setting up an efficient and effective civil service.

The programme framework, however, did not anticipate and thereby articulate a sustainability plan or time frame in which beneficiaries and Government would reasonably assume the obligation for furthering the objectives, apart from predicting a trickle-down effect of empowerment, or transfer of skills through capacity development and systems and policies reorientation. It is unclear how many beneficiaries within the local administrations, GC, or MIA the LDLD programme set out to target over the period, and also whether the ten-year timeframe projected for the implementation of the National Decentralisation policy is realistic for achieving the targets given the complexities of the undertakings.

In view of the leadership and supportive roles assigned to the MIA and GC, some believe there is need for further clarity on what exactly leadership or support would entail as between the MIA and the GC.

3.2 Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs

3.2.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

Prior to 2006, Government activities tended to be centred in and around the capital, Monrovia. This was not surprising as the capital was the centre of political and economic power. However, in 2006 the President recognised that achieving a sustainable peace would depend upon addressing the inequities and frustrations experienced by the majority of people, by delivering good government and improved basic services to the rural population that constitute approximately 75 – 80% of the nation. Arising from this, the President committed to bringing government closer to the people and for the people through a process of decentralisation to the county level so that both individuals and communities could first directly participate in the development planning and prioritisation process and then to hold government accountable for good governance and performance. This called for a fair and inclusive governance process that spanned not just from the centre to the counties but down to the districts and even village level.

In operationalising this new policy, officials from the line ministries and the Ministry of Internal Affairs³ encountered many challenges - access and infrastructure, premises, electricity, transport communications, and perhaps most importantly, institutional and human capacity. By way of response, in September 2006 the United Nations initiated a two-year project in support of the first of county-level coordinated UN teams, aptly named County Support Teams (CST), which would build on the local presence of UNMIL Civil Affairs officers as well as other UNMIL units. From there the initiative rolled out to cover the country.

The aim of the first CST joint programme⁴ (JP) for strengthening the capacity of sub-national administration in Liberia was to ensure that there is a coherent, consolidated and cost-effective UN approach to helping government address county-level challenges. It is to be seen within a wider framework of the country support team mechanism,

³ Equivalent to a Ministry or Department of Local Government in other countries

⁴ Covering the period 2009 – 11, and signed on 19 March 2009

by which the UN intended to maximise its effectiveness and impact on recovery and the restoration of State authority throughout the country. In taking a more developmental approach from the original programme, which focused more on premises, transport, communications with capacity development of local administration, the current programme sought to (i) increase administrative, technical and institutional capacity for sub-national service delivery, (ii) strengthening local-level statistics, information and data management, as well as monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacity, and (iii) the rehabilitation and construction of public buildings and the provision of communications capability to enhance sub-national service delivery.

As such there are no Objectives presented in first programme document but there are three JP Outputs listed. These are also captured in the document's Section 5: Results Framework. The Outputs reflected the three aims set out in the paragraph above. The JP document was revised in early 2011, to extend the JP activities by twelve months (June 2011 – May 2012). This latest document sets out four key focus or specific objectives:

- (i) To strengthen the capacity of local administration through intensive training, for service delivery;
- (ii) To restore county and district authority, functionality and administration through better public buildings;
- (iii) To strengthen and support local development coordination; and
- (iv) To strengthen county-level data and information management capacities for PRS and County Development Agenda (CDA) monitoring, MDG progress monitoring and to provide support for local-level coordination and planning processes.

The original and latest versions of the JP explicitly cross-refer to UNDAF Outcomes 2.1 and 3. In the current version the Results and Resources Framework⁵ lists one Intended Outcome and six Outputs:

- (i) MIA institutional capacity strengthened;
- (ii) Administrative and technical capacities of sub-national structures strengthened;
- (iii) Capacities for monitoring and reporting local development strengthened;
- (iv) Maryland County administrative building completed;
- (v) County-level coordination, planning and information-sharing enhanced for coherent, effective and participatory development; and
- (vi) Lessons learned and best practices documented and shared.

It is noted that according to the signed Programme Document, the current joint programme (JP) is to finish on 31 May of this year. The evaluation team has been informed that the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has been requested by UNDP to grant a no-cost extension of seven months (i.e. to 31 December 2012), and this is believed to be undergoing favourably consideration.

3.2.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

It is not clear how many beneficiaries within the local administration, GC or MIA the programme (i.e. LDLD) set out to target over the timeframe or time span for LDLD implementation, and consequently, the measuring of skills transfer and utilisation, may pose a challenge. The project design did not anticipate a transition, or sustainability plan, and lacks a clear result framework. The result framework is not very measurable, but even more so, it is not time-bound. It is also unclear as to whether the programme's design was informed by an assessment of partners' capacities to execute their roles.

⁵ JP Section 9 (pages 18 – 24)

The LDLD programme's aim is also to improve the living conditions of local communities by increasing access to basic social services, raising income, and supporting more, effective, efficient and democratic local administrations

The main objectives of LDLD programme as reflected in the EC - UNDP Contribution Agreement are to provide:

- (1) support to the GC in the drafting, enactment, and implementation of the National Decentralization Policy
- (2) support for the definition of institutional change and organizational development process that allows the Liberian local government system to effectively and efficiently implement their role as established under the emerging decentralized governance module
- (3) support the administrative and economic management capacities of local government at County, District and Sub- District levels by establishing systems, processes and procedures
- (4) support to undertake specific investments through the local government system with the joint objective of improving services and providing economic opportunities following a CDD approach.

The LDLD outputs are:

- Establishing Liberia's decentralisation policy and its legal framework
- Elaborating and strengthening procedures, processes and systems for effective public expenditure management at the County, District and Sub-district levels;
- Launching of a District / County Fund, designed to establish a generic fiscal framework for programming inter-governmental transfers, being part of the national system of public expenditure management
- The resultant effective management of the LDLD programme, whose processes shall promote Liberia's quest for decentralisation

Anticipated results and outcomes of LDLD include the full adoption of policies to strengthen fiscal decentralisation, administration and governance system in Liberia and the installation of adequate organisational capacity to promote pro-poor infrastructure, service delivery, local economic development and sustainable resource management.

3.2.3 National Information Management Centre

For Liberia the key to building effective policies, prioritising resource allocation, targeting development assistance and having effective monitoring is reliable qualitative and quantitative information and statistics. Prior to July 2006, most development policy and sectoral initiatives were developed in a data vacuum, with largely outdated and sometimes incoherent data sets. The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) was created by a Legislative Act in July 2004 as the NSO with a mandate to coordinate and carry out the collation/compilation as well as dissemination of most but not all official statistics. Not surprising, the nascent organisation lacked the necessary capacity and enabling infrastructure to deliver on this mandate. However, UN support and assistance was at hand.

Previously, the UN's Humanitarian Coordinator in Liberia requested OCHA to deploy a Humanitarian Information Centre (HIC) to provide information management products and services by way of support to the coordination of relief services. During the period leading up to June 2006, HIC-Liberia had acquired key data/information management resources and products including logistical materials, data management equipment and tools, databases, map products and most importantly a core staff with competencies in various technical areas

(database and web development/management, ICT, GIS, data analysis amongst others). In July 2006, OCHA having completed its withdrawal from Liberia, all material and human assets from the former HIC were transferred to UNDP as UN custodian, providing the opportunity for the establishment of the NIMAC project. This was established as a joint initiative of the Government of Liberia and UNDP to focus on the provision of technical support to and capacity building of LISGIS and other sectoral entities tasked with compilation of data and statistics to respond to national, sectoral and local developments plans and strategies.

This project has been supported the European Commission (EC) formulated in accordance with its guidelines. It has one overall objective namely, the strengthening of national and local level capacities for information management through the development of appropriate systems and tools support the implementation of the PRS and the CDAs. Within this there are three Strategic Objectives with eight Expected Results, all being set out in a Logical Framework:

1. Strengthening of the national statistical system with the successful transitioning of NIMAC's functions and assets into LISGIS in a sustained manner; support to the processing, analysis and dissemination of data from the national population and housing census 2008; continued technical support for the finalization of a five-year NSDS for Liberia particularly responsive to supporting the PRSP and CDAs.
2. Support the emerging decentralisation strategy of LISGIS by supporting initially the establishment of 7 County Statistics Units. Also, in coordination with the NSO and in collaboration with other initiatives such as LDLD, CST and IMO, support the strengthening of information management capacity of local governance structures to plan and monitor the development process; support the compilation of requisite quality data that will feed into national and local level M&E frameworks by assisting LISGIS in mainstreaming the use of standards in all relevant data collection instruments.
3. Support the development and deployment of a web-enabled aid-flows information system for tracking external resource inputs supporting implementation of Liberia's PRS, CDA and other national strategies.

3.3 Budget and Funding Mechanism

3.3.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

In the original and latest JP versions the estimated budgets are as follows (see Table 3.1):

Table 3.1: CST JP Budget (a) 2009 – 2011; (b) 2011 - 2012

Estimated budget: 2009/10: US\$ 4,285,564.00	Total Project Cost: US\$ 1,968,800.00
2011: <u>US\$ 3,033,664.00</u>	
Total budget US\$ 7,319,228.00	Contributions from Partners:
Allocated resources:	
UNDP US\$ 1,450,000.00	• Government US\$ 200,000.00
UNHCR US\$ 200,000.00	• UNDP US\$ 150,000.00
UNICEF US\$ 100,000.00	• UNHCR: US\$ 25,000.00
	• UNICEF -
	Total US\$ 375,000.00

In both cases, the fund management option was a combination of (i) parallel and (ii) pooled funds (with UNDP as Managing Agent). The funding from the UN agencies was through the pooled fund managed by UNDP. The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) began contributing through the UNDP pooled fund in 2009. The government's contribution in the period 2011 – 12 is through parallel funding.

As can be understood the expectation regarding funding availability from within and outside the UN in early 2009 was not unreasonably positive. However, the changes to the global economic situation coupled with ever-increasing demands on donors meant that there were shortfalls. Nevertheless, the outturns are not insignificant under the circumstances.

3.3.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

The initial LDLD programme intervention cost was estimated at US\$50 million over a five-year period taking into account the expansion to 15 counties from the initial three counties. Initial programme support was provided by UNDP and the UNCDF, jointly providing US\$ 5 million over five years. The Government committed to contributing about US\$ 15 million as well over the five-year period, through its support to the County level at around US\$ 3 million per year. There was a budget gap of US\$ 30 million in 2008, anticipated to be mobilized over the following five years, in order to facilitate to ensure that the phasing-in of additional Counties consistent with the envisioned programme. The Government committed itself to mobilizing the funding for the national decentralization programme from various development partners operating in Liberia including the EC, which also committed itself to contribute EUR 4 million. LDLD programme employs a Direct Execution (DEX) modality. However, various aspects of the programme's interventions appear to be underfunded because of unrealistic budgeting. The pressing needs of the people of Liberia and the government and partners' being poised to respond to the appalling living conditions across the country made the LDLD interventions more compelling and urgent.

In spite of the funding constraints and the need levels of the country at the time of the intervention, the evaluation team cannot say that the area covered were unreasonable. Notwithstanding, the evaluation team is of the opinion that instead of spreading the limited funds too wide, as in the case of the CDF, aiming for a critical mass of funding for intervention with one or two counties would have impacted the intended beneficiaries more.

3.3.3 National Information Management Centre

The budget⁶ for the NIMAC project is as follows, starting in 2009 and which is still ongoing:

Table 3.2: NIMAC Budget - Years One and Two

Area	In Euro (€)	In US\$ ⁷
a. Strengthening of LISGIS and the national statistical system; transitioning of NIMAC finalisation and roll-out of NSDS	182,850	228,500
b. Support to the decentralisation strategy of LISGIS; IM capacity development in the counties; increased availability and access to relevant data in the counties	400,000	500,000
c. Support to National Population and Housing Census	400,000	500,000

⁶ Project Proposal – Annex 3 (20 April 2008)

⁷ Estimate based on the advised EC official exchange rate (1 EUR = USD 1.25)

d. Support to the development and deployment of an Aid Information Management System.	120,000	150,000
e. UNDP overhead costs (7%)	77,200	96,500
Contribution to NIMAC Project Component (two year life span)	1,180,000⁸	1,475,000

The EC / UNDP Contribution Agreement has a total budget of EUR 4.0 million, which covers two components: (i) LDLD with a budget of EUR 2,635,520 and (ii) NIMAC with a budget of EUR 1,082,800.

An EC monitoring mission⁹ recommended a no-cost extension be granted to both the LDLD and NIMAC components, which was endorsed. On 31 October 2011, UNDP formally requested a time extension to 31 December 2012. This was granted by the EC under cover of its letter dated 10 November 2011.

In summary: whereas each programme and project, knowing that there might probably be a funding shortfall at some stage, aimed to support its key activities at all time, it is not clear how any shortfalls with each of the programmes and project were to be distributed amongst the counties being supported.

3.4 Timeframe

3.4.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

In the UN agency system, a Programme (or Project, as the case may be) Document ("ProDoc") contains only an indicative outline of the key activities to be undertaken during the lifetime of the said programme or project. This can be supplemented in the ProDoc by a tentative Year One schedule, with more detail on initial activities. The programme team prepares an Annual Workplan (AWP) in close consultation with the government counterpart ministry or ministries/agencies at the start of each year. The timeframe given in the ProDoc is "2009 – 2011", and although not specifically stated as such, it is reasonable to assume that the period covered could be either (i) 01 January 2009 to 31 December 2011, or (ii) three calendar years from the date of actual signing.¹⁰ However, the revised ProDoc shows the project period extended to May 2012. As discussed in Section 3.3.1 above, SIDA is the major contributing partner. A request has been made by UNDP to SIDA for a no-cost extension to 31 December 2012. This is currently under consideration. It is noted that MIA may require additional funding which has yet to be quantified.

The CST ProDoc including the AWP (2009) indicated that outputs and activities would be covered under three Components: (1) Support to County Information/Data Management and Monitoring (CIMM), (four outputs) (2) Capacity Strengthening of Local Administration for Service Delivery (two outputs), and (3) Support to Construction/Rehabilitation of Model District Administration Buildings and Communications (one output).

3.4.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

Both the UNDP and UNCDF have each committed themselves to furnishing US\$2.5 million; while another US\$ 3.6 million has been mobilized from the EC (under finalization) and Government of Liberia (County Support grants) US\$ 15 million. An outstanding budget variance of US\$ 6.4 million remains to be mobilized in order to

⁸ Allocations per budget item indicative. Transfers between budget items are allowed.

⁹ 04 – 15 October 2010

¹⁰ 19 March 2009

complete funding requirements for the LDLD programme. The EC – UNDP Contribution Agreement was planned to end by 2011 but has, however, been extended to 31 December, 2012 given technicalities surrounding reporting and fund remittance. Request for budgetary reallocation are now contingent upon revision of budget and correction of expenses allocation.

3.4.3 National Information Management Centre

As discussed in Section 3.3.3 above, the original schedule of the EC - UNDP Contribution Agreement was for the period 20 November 2008 – 19 November 2011. This was further extended by way of a no-cost extension of both LDLD and NIMAC to 31 December 2012.

4. IMPLEMENTATION – MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY

4.1 Organisation and Management

4.1.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

The CST programme is being executed under Direct Execution (DEX) modality by UNDP. By this is meant that the UNDP County Office assumes overall management responsibility and accountability for implementation. This is to be done in collaboration with Joint Programme partners, who have their own responsibilities for delivery under the JP.

A programme management unit (PMU) was established under a Joint Programme Manager. The other PMU positions included: (a) Deputy Programme Manager (now vacant), (b) Finance and Administrative Officer, (c) Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (now vacant), and (d) National Programme Assistant (in MIA, but now vacant). The PMU reports to the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO).

The PMU links directly to the Field Support Office within the Office of the DSRSG – Recovery and Governance. Each of the county CST offices is managed by a HOFO who is supported by CST Project Officers backstopped by UNMIL (Civil Affairs).

The JP is informed by a CST Technical Team chaired by the Deputy Minister - MIA, and composed of MIA focal points, MPEA, LISGIS, PMU, UNMIL (Civil Affairs), UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UNOPS, as well as representatives from the LDLD programme, NIMAC project and the LTTA team in the MIA supported by the EC. It is not clear how often the Technical Team meets. The evaluation team have seen minutes of three meetings¹¹; however, there is no indication in each case of when the next meeting was to be held, nor is there an attendance list attached to the most recent meeting.

A Joint Steering Committee (JSC) was established to guide and oversee the JP. It is chaired by the Minister of Internal Affairs and co-chaired by the DSRSG / UN Resident Coordinator. Members included focal points from the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA), Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) and LISGIS, as well as the ProDoc signatory UN agencies and the Mission - UNDP, UNHCR, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UNMIL (Civil Affairs) and UNOPS. The evaluation team has examined a number of minutes from the CST Joint Steering Committee (JSC) meetings¹², which show that four meetings were held in 2009, three meetings in 2010 and one meeting in 2011. The minutes reflect focused discussions and key decisions being made.

As the original CST programme sought to address a number of issues that fell within the remit of several ministries and agencies and given the weaknesses in those institutions at that time, the locus of the programme had to remain within the UN family. With UNMIL Civil Affairs taking the lead and with substantive support from UNDP, the joint programme utilised the considerable security, logistical and human resources of UNMIL with the development approaches, capacity building and procurement know-how of UNDP in a seamless manner. Given the fragility and uncertainty of security in the counties for a long time, the UNMIL hosting of the offices, communications, security and accommodation of the CST personnel made sound sense even to this day. The choice of implementing partners – UN-HABITAT (capacity building) and UNOPS (construction management) – was also sound, given their respective comparative advantages. The current CST project management team at UNDP is very small, with just the programme manager and a programme officer. In personnel terms the whole UNMIL and UNDP operation can be considered very lean, and given the results and impact to date (see Section 5 below), it is efficient. Indeed it is difficult to identify an alternative approach that would be both as viable and efficient.

¹¹ 14 July 2009, 16 September 2009 and 23 November 2011

¹² Ranging from No. 21 (04 June 2009) to No. 28 (15 August 2011).

4.1.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

Generally, LDLD has had notable effect in tackling long standing limitation in Liberia's public administration and governance culture. The programme also creatively blended critical support to both national and local institutions with community empowerment. Its implementation arrangement is driven by a Programme Management Unit (PMU) that employs vast cooperation with a web of actors in UNDP, MIA, GC, MOF and MPEA and is overseen by a steering committee.

The Inter-ministerial Steering Committee was established as the coordinating body to provided political support for advancing programmes for decentralized governance within the various ministries. See details of the Inter-Ministerial Committee / Inter-Agency Committee (IMSC/IAC) mandate in Annex B (1). The MIA, on the other hand, was entrusted technical-coordinating role to driver of the decentralisation process, through the PMU, headed by a Chief Technical Advisor (CTA). Both MPEA and MOF were assigned the role of providing planning support and overseeing annual budgeting and resource allocation. UNDP's role is to ensure effective management of the LDLD through monitoring and coordination of UN agencies' interventions. This is in addition to recruiting relevant staffing for county levels in conjunction with the CST. Resources to establish the County Development Fund and technical assistance is also provided by UNCDF, with other donors (EC, etc.) mobilised to support the expansion beyond the pilot phase. The timing of the programme appears to have been just about right as the prevailing needs (better governance and leadership for enhanced access to food, nutrition and basic services- health care, education and security) of the people were overwhelming.

LDLD programme implementation is divided into two phases (support for development of key policies and for implementation) and initially scheduled to run up to 2010 but, by the time the second phase got under way, it was recognized in 2010, that the programme was not immune to the problem posed by the lack of local capacity and so a no-cost extension by a year become necessary.

At this point, it is unclear as to the level of efforts exerted by the UNDP in forging active coordination of UN families or in encouraging or supporting the effective functioning of the IMSC/IAC and the LDLD Project Board. LDLD and CST as participants in the JSC at the outset appeared to have met regularly and the deliberations were well-documented (minutes, invitations etc), until MPEA at some point assumed responsibility for organising the Project Board meetings. It is not clear how often the Board met in 2011. It is also not clear to the evaluation team why LDLD and CST have been implementing separately and with nominal collaboration until recently in spite of the two programme designs and the development of joint annual work plans.

The evaluation team found no evidence of criteria set to guide the delivery of training to beneficiaries, or mechanism to track their progress and possibly establish a profile of beneficiaries post training engagements within the MIA, GC or at local government levels. Neither is there evidence of any training purposively undertaken to enhance LDLD's staff capacity or sharpen their skill in relevant areas of financial management, or project monitoring and evaluation.

A review of internal communication, quarterly and annual programme reports, procurement and financial policies indicate an appreciable adherence to acceptable standard, though there is need to improve records, M&E, project designs, etc.

Records reviewed showed efforts were made to develop and submit reports consistently covering financial and operational activities; and the enabling and disabling factors in achieving project goals. While some reports provided considerable content on related events and activities and on change processes, others were inconsistent. For instance, the financial report for the period: 16 May 2010 - 15 May 2011 was said to contain arithmetical mistakes, and some progress elements reported were unsupported. No pre-project assessment report could be located to support local government officials capacity improvement from 20% to 80% as asserted by the PRS 2009 review; measures need to be instituted to correctly track programme specifics such as the number of trainings and beneficiaries by institutions, kind etc.

There is also no indication that the programme created opportunities for management bodies of CST/LDLN/NIMAC, to share and learn-best practices or for Government at different levels to exchange information on techniques on deconcentration approaches with one another, given that some institutions are notably ahead in progress terms compared to others.

This is an indication that the programme has made more progress in some areas compared to others; while some ministries are showing better understanding and capacity to decentralize, others are lagging behind. The IMSC/IAC, a key decentralisation and aid coordination mechanism is yet to become a platform for key actors and national ministries to meet frequently. As far as can be ascertained minutes of its occasional meetings are not prepared and circulated in a timely manner nor are notices of its meetings.

A clear understanding and definition of what is expected in terms of capacity building was needed to be provided together with a set of clear and measurable benchmarks and indicators

Funded by UNDP, UNCDF, EC and the Government, the LDLN programme has mobilized resources from various sources to support different aspects of the intervention. This mode of resource pull resonates with the "One UN" goal under its emerging approaches to programming, labelled "*Delivering as One*".

This approach is critical for mobilising resources and for government leadership in the development of Liberia. It not only reinforces the Government's monitoring and oversight capacities, but enables national partners to have a holistic and transparent overview of UN activities and financing arrangements. In addition to creating greater strategic focus on key national priority areas, which is essential for reducing duplication and fragmentation? Another advantage of this approach is the systematic identification of gaps to be addressed either by the UN or through other development partners. More importantly, it reduces time and transactions costs for the government and development partners through a single consolidated programme approach.

However, the evaluation team did not find evidence as to whether the LDLN funding modalities set out to employ delivering as one as a fund mobilisation mechanism and thus cannot say that the *Delivering as One* has worked or not..

The total anticipated cost of the programme (2006 – 2011) is put at approximately US\$ 50 million. Implementation designs have seen this amount mobilized and delivered in phases, subject to reports. This contractual obligation has tended, however, to disrupt continuous and timely implementation of the AWP. This observation of the evaluation team is further confirmed by the Joint Programme Review report of 2010. As aspects of the programme are of particular interest to some donors and thus influenced the overall design and funding mechanisms, co-funding under the "*Delivering As One*" concept presents an added-value option here for future funding arrangements.

4.1.3 National Information Management Centre

The NIMAC project is being executed under DEX modality by UNDP. In exceptional cases and instances under this project, partial National Execution (NEX) modality can be used with clear justification and strictly under a Letter of Agreement (LOA). With the rationalisation of UNDP's portfolio and the adoption of Project Boards to oversee and guide one or more programmes and projects with common implementing partners and stakeholders, the NIMAC project is under the umbrella of the Economic Management and Sustainable Development Project ("ECOMAN").

The Project Board is chaired by UNDP and co-chaired by MPEA. Other members include Ministry of Finance (MOF), Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI), MIA, Ministry of Gender Development, LEITI Secretariat, LISGIS, the University of Liberia and the EC. It generally meets annually although they are supposed to be held

quarterly, but in 2011 there was no meeting held due to scheduling constraints on the part of counterparts tied up with the national elections. The evaluation team was only able to inspect the minutes of one meeting (14 July 2010).

The project is headed by a UNDP Project Manager. He has been with the project for some time but was obliged to take a break in service in 2011 so as to comply with UNDP contracting rules and regulations. At present (i.e. end-February 2012) the project team consists of the remaining posts: (i) Project Manager/Technical Coordinator, (ii) ICT Technician, (iii) Database & Web Manager, (iv) GIS Technician, (v) Customer Service Assistant, and a driver.

The question is what effect has the way the NIMAC project has been managed efficiently assisted LISGIS and the Aid Management Unit (AMU) in the MOF to increase their competency and capacity? LISGIS is recognised as the centre of reference on matters regarding statistics and sets the standards for all key surveys. It is usually the first port of call for development partners seeking national data and information, and is working with UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNDP regarding the national census, with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on National Accounts, and with other UN agencies such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) on sectoral surveys, and with UNHCR amongst others regarding protection data. It is respected for its ability to organise and backstop different surveys, and has produced numerous analytical reports derived from the census and other surveys. It is producing a range of products such as maps that are very helpful in presenting data and information to participants in various fora. Whereas LISGIS has achieved much and continues to achieve, the support of NIMAC has been crucial not only regarding training, equipment and transferred staff, but also in terms of the support to the CSIOs in the counties and how they work with and indirectly for LISGIS.

Something similar can be said about the impact of NIMAC project management efficiency on the work of AMU. Whereas there was someone from the UNDP Strategy and Policy Unit (SPU) covering UNDP support under the ECOMAN coordinated workplan for both the development of the Aid Policy and the aid tracking system, the NIMAC input only addressed the aid tracking system and related training. As will be seen in later sections of this report, the aid tracking system is at the heart of the AMU's work and has contributed to Government creating transparent, reliable data and information on aid flows disaggregated by sector and by donor.

4.2 Annual Workplans

4.2.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

In 2010 the CST and LDLD programme teams prepared a joint AWP for the first time, retaining the same planning structure but with adjustments to the title of CST Component One, as well as the number of outputs and titles. The joint AWP had LDLD activities grouped under its four ProDoc outputs followed by the CST outputs. For the 2011 AWP, as occurred between the AWP for 2009 and 2010, there were differences in the order and title of the CST-related Components, and as a result in the numbering of outputs. Notwithstanding the flexibility that a programme approach promotes and permits, it remains to be seen what impact these year-on-year changes have on the monitoring and reporting of progress in a coherent and consistent manner. This is discussed in Section 4.4.1 below.

In the 2009 AWP, there were three Components as listed in Section 3.4.1 above. In 2010, there was a renumbering of the Components, with Component Two (ProDoc plus AWP 2009) now becoming Component Three (AWP 2010), and Component Three (ProDoc plus AWP 2009) becoming Component Two (AWP 2010). No explanation is given for this change in order. The order of the first three Components reverted to that originally presented in the ProDoc but with the addition of a fourth Component: *Support to County Level Coordination*. Given that this is a joint programme formulated using a programme approach, this addition is acceptable assuming that there are sufficient funds available, either from reallocation of existing funds or the introduction of new funds, to support it being implemented in the stated period.

All AWP Outputs have indicators and annual targets, a timeframe in quarters, identify the responsible implementing partner(s), the source of funding, the UNDP budget code and the sum involved. This is good practice. However, there are no baselines given for the CST outputs.

In the 2009 AWP, the three Components had three, four and two Outputs respectively. In the 2010 AWP, the three Components (adjusted to follow the ProDoc order) had two, two and one Outputs respectively. There were some errors in referencing as Output No. 8 (page 13) has its related Key Activities and Annual Targets coded as 9.1, 9.2, etc. with no Output No. 9. In the 2011 AWP, using the three Components as originally ordered in the ProDoc, there were two, one and one Outputs respectively plus two outputs under the new Component Four. Again, given that this is a programme, in principle there should be no concern with outputs being dropped from the AWP listing provided either they have been completed, or they have been superseded or outranked by emerging needs-driven outputs. Nevertheless, for overall reporting on the programme as a whole it is best to maintain all original outputs plus new outputs as they occur. This is discussed further in Section 4.4.1 below.

4.2.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

LDLD programme's implementation is guided by annual work plans-AWPs that outline key activities, roles and responsibilities of partners, resources requirement, plus clear targets, with indicators. It is nevertheless, unclear as to whether or how the next steps outlined in progress and annual reports actually inform the ensuing AWP. The plans also include sources of fund.

All AWP Outputs have indicators and annual targets, a timeframe in quarters, identify the responsible implementing partner(s), the source of funding, the UNDP budget code and the sum involved. This is good practice. However, there is some confusion over baselines and what they are supposed to represent. For instance, baselines are sometimes stated as outputs (e.g. Decentralisation Policy document approved by Cabinet), whereas on other occasions, the baseline is so vague as to be meaningless in monitoring terms (e.g. low capacity of MIA and county administrations to deliver basic services). Proper baselines can or should indicate the situation or measurable status of progress towards stated goals and not simply outline activities undertaken. All baselines can be starting points but not all starting points are baselines. Although stating achievements are important for indicating success, but unless those achievements are communicated in term of degrees of or extent to which they actually impact the level of efforts required to reach the target, they cannot be considered as fitting baselines. Since baselines are important for setting and tracking progress towards targets, it is critical that they are obtained or defined prior to the outset, to inform the design of programme implementation activities. Formulating baselines, targets and indicators during the drafting of AWPs may be a helpful practice but not necessarily as meaningful in determining progress towards overall goals in the absence of an initial baseline.

The evaluation team was not aware of a general or overarching programme workplan from which quarterly and AWPs were extracted, nor did the evaluation team always find a clear relationship between some activities undertaken and their indicative results. Strategically designed logical frameworks with actions aligned to desired end results are critical to improving efficiency of delivery and monitoring of progress towards results.

4.2.3 National Information Management Centre

The evaluation team has inspected NIMAC-related AWPs for the four years 2008 – 2011, and also the proposed AWP for the period January – December 2012. It is noted that (i) there is one strategic Output listed, and (ii) that over the five years, there are subtle changes in the description and focus of that Output.

All AWP Outputs have indicators and annual targets, a timeframe in quarters, identify the responsible implementing partner(s), the source of funding, the UNDP budget code and the sum involved. This is good practice. However, there are no baselines given for the NIMAC outputs except for AWP 2012.

4.3 Expenditures

4.3.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

The CST budget and expenditure tracking system records data under three key categories: (i) human resources, (ii) equipment and supplies, and (iii) other costs and services. In the project period covered by this evaluation (November 2008 – February 2012), expenditure data are available up to 31 December 2011 (refer to Annex B.2 (a) which has been prepared and submitted by the CST team). A more detailed assessment of expenditures by individual budget line would have to be undertaken by others.

Looking at the budget vs. expenditure table, one can see that the expenditure-to-budget ratios (EBR) were close to or above target, with an EBR for 2009 of 85.7% and an EBR for 2010 of 103.1%. The overshoot in 2010 was due to more activities being undertaken in Component One: Developing Capacity of County Officials. In 2011, the EBR is only 47.5%, which would seem to be accounted for by (i) no expenditures regarding Component One, and (ii) under Component Three: Restoring Functionality of County Administration Buildings, delays in the construction of the Harper, Maryland County administration building, with only US\$ 125,000 spent out of a budgeted US\$ 700,000. In this case the unspent sum of US\$ 575,000 has been carried forward to FY 2012, during which the building is expected to be finished and handed over.

4.3.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

The details of the actual expenditures by budget line were not available for review by the evaluation team. The team did not find any consolidated budget for the entire programme action covering the five years. Rather only a one year budgetary plan for the action was found in the programme document.

LDLD – Financial Summary below for the periods - 2008 to 2011, shows a schedule of parallel funds commitment and allocated with outstanding balances per donor, plus GOL contribution. It is, however, unclear how and when the outstanding resource will be mobilised, as the evaluation team did not come across any plan on methods or timing.

A review of project-related communications between the EC and the UNDP, divulges EC's concerns of unilateral over-expenditure regarding "LDLD Equipment and Supplies"- budget line 1.2 by the UNDP without formally communicating such excess of budgetary allocation to it, in violation of article 9.2 of the General Conditions of the Contribution Agreement. The Agreement in article 9, requires prior communication to the donor referencing transfers between headings amounting to more than 15% of the original budget. It is unclear to the evaluation team as to whether a request for reallocation has been submitted. The evaluation team however, noted that there has been a delay in the remittance of further funds as the financial report was considered short of the 70% pre-financing criteria. In effect programme implementation was stalled. This situation persisted over a period of at least five months prior immediately to this evaluation (Oct.-2011- Feb.-2012.) Details of funds committed and disbursed can be found in Annex B. 3 (a). In Annex B.3 (b) the data show a disaggregated budget per pilot county against total expenditures and the balance funding requirements for local economic development initiatives in six counties

4.3.3 National Information Management Centre

The NIMAC budget and expenditure tracking system records data under three key categories: (i) human resources, (ii) equipment and supplies, and (iii) other costs and services. In the project period covered by this evaluation (November 2008 – February 2012), expenditure data are available up to 31 December 2011 (refer to

Annex B.4). According to the NIMAC files, high expenditure-to-budget ratios have been achieved, particularly once the EC funding came into play. It is not clear why there was a low expenditure-to-budget ratio for the major part of 2008 regarding equipment and supplies and also other costs and services, but this may have been due to constraints on UNDP's core funding at the time prior to the arrival of EC funding. The EBR (2006 – 07) is 54%, the EBR (Jan – Nov 2008) is 54.1%, and the EBR (Nov 2008 – May 2011) is 97.5%. The EBR (May – Dec 2011) is only 51.3% but the underlying figures do not take into account the UNDP's cost-sharing payments (refer to Annex B.3, footnote 2).

Looking at the requested extension period 01 July - 31 December 2012, the NIMAC Project Manager estimates that there will be shortfall of US\$ 325,000 (equivalent to EUR 250,000), but this may not have been communicated to the EU delegation to date. The evaluation team understands from inspecting correspondence between the EC and UNDP that the EC has advised the UNDP to analyse the financial needs for the extended period and if necessary to ask for a budget re-allocation alongside the request for extension. This could be possibly from budget lines such as data and information management involving LISGIS, which one would have expected to sit with NIMAC, all other things being equal. There may be other budget lines that could also be re-examined in this light or where progress to date suggests that budget lines will not be exhausted by LDLD. Having done so, if there still remains a shortfall, then the case for seeking additional support to address that shortfall will be rational and all the stronger.

4.4 Monitoring and Reporting

4.4.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

There are at least two key aspects to monitoring – (i) regular reporting of progress against the plan and the budget, and (ii) validation by the project management team on the progress reported by implementing partners. Monitoring of CST is believed to have been undertaken by the Programme Management Unit (PMU), but there is no way of quantifying how often PMU members visited each county over the three years to date. This is a shortcoming in the reporting format as is, more importantly, the absence of reporting on budget vs. expenditures. In this way, stakeholders are unable to see what has been undertaken, what has been achieved, what did it cost and was it value for money spent.

In the case of the CST programme, it can be seen that there has been an improvement in the quality of the progress reporting over the period 2009 – 11. For instance, in the 2009 Annual Progress Report¹³, there is reasonably good presentation of the activities and achievements under the three Components listed in the ProDoc. This is supplemented by the same plus complementary information in the Results Matrix attached to the report, particularly in the column titled "Progress towards expected outputs/results". However, as far as the evaluation team can see, there is no real discussion on progress towards expected results. Part of the difficulty is the vagueness with which the three Components are formulated:

01. Increasing Administrative, Technical and Institutional Capacity for Service Delivery.
02. Strengthening Local-level Statistics, Information/Data Management and Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity.
03. Rehabilitation and Construction of Public Buildings and Provision of ICT to Enhance Sub-national Service Delivery.

There are a number of issues here: (i) defining "increasing", "strengthening" and "to enhance" in quantifiable terms or at least in terms with which key stakeholders can agree, (ii) defining the baselines for the three objectives, and (iii) defining the three expected results, all from the outset. Hence, it is not surprising that the 2009 Progress

¹³ Section 5: *Summary of Activities and Achievements during the Reporting Period (Jan – Dec 2009)* – (pages 5 – 8)

Report was weak in this area. Nevertheless, there was an improvement in the 2010 Progress Report, where there was once again a Section 5 similar to that in the 2009 Progress Report, but this time there was a specific section¹⁴ on analysing key results achieved. Here the discussion was about identifying the specific contributions the CST made to key result areas. However, once again the vagueness of the objectives prevents rigorous discussion on progress towards clearly defined results. Regarding the Results Matrix¹⁵, the final column is now titled: "Progress towards expected Results". This and the contents are an improvement on the previous year, but there are still concerns for instance such as the results statement: "*a cadre of skilled and experienced civil servants in place to support delivery of essential services*." The concerns here are that (a) it is not clear whether the Report is referring to the county administration officials (CS, DS, CDO, etc) and/or the officials from the line ministries, and (b) there is no acknowledgment of instances where officials are appointed by MIA, Line Ministries and LISGIS but do not appear to reside or attend to duties in their designated county, as observed by the evaluation mission.

A separate concern is the statement¹⁶: "*.... Construction of Country and District Administrative buildings were reported to have strengthened the capacity of local administration to effectively plan, coordinate, communication (sic) and deliver essential services ...*" As these buildings are a major element of the CST budget (refer to Section 4.3.1 above and to Annex B.1), one would expect the CST to have made it a point to assess, on a continuous basis, based on personal visits to a representative sample of target counties over the course of one or more years, exactly how the completed buildings were contributing to strengthening capacity in quantifiable terms.

Regarding the Progress Report (2011), the format of Sections 6 and 7 are the same as in the Progress Report (2010). What is different this time is that at the very end of Section 6, there is a short paragraph that simply states: "*... Though the CST programme has made significant contributions in support of national development efforts, there are still huge challenges in the area of weak capacity especially at sub-national level for service delivery ...*". This is a step in the right direction regarding identification and critical review of factors affecting progress towards and the achievement of quantifiable key results. Unfortunately the topic was not developed in the Report. This goes to the heart of Results-based Management (RBM) and monitoring will be discussed further in Sections 5 and 7 below.

One suggestion to strengthen the oversight of the CST at the county level has been to see if the introduction by the Government of a County Budget Bureau with oversight of county-level activities might not also be charged with some aspect of oversight of the CST programme. This would enhance national ownership of the programme.

4.4.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

LDLD and LDF implementation monitoring are done by the M & E Division at the MIA and the UNDP. The programme has a results framework or monitoring plan that should enable the appraisal of results at the overall programme level, but monitoring plans tend to emphasize work completed rather than results tracking. The evaluation team found no broad workplan covering the programme components with benchmarks, quantitative and qualitative deliverables, and dates that can be monitored and measured

The evaluation team also looked at the monitoring reports to form conclusions on the frequency, volume and type of issues captured in the LDLD's routine observations as regards the status of beneficiaries and the programme's pursuit of stated objective amongst others. It is unclear as to how often and whether follow-up actions have been taken to reverse shortfalls and address problems discovered in a timely manner.

Good and consistent programme performance monitoring and appraisal are critical to programme success. At best they can provide consistent information to guide the management of the program towards production of the

¹⁴ Section 6: *Summary and Analysis of Key Results Achieved* (pages 8 – 10)

¹⁵ Progress Report (2010), Section 7 (pages 11 – 13)

¹⁶ Progress Report (2010), Section 6 (page 9, paragraph 5)

expected results; at worse they generate misleading information and contribute to flawed decisions, added costs, and delays in release of donor funds, and at times unnecessary paperwork. It appears that some key programme concerns are lost to slack reporting; thereby, undercutting the effective communication of monitored problems (Desoe Town Mill Centre).

The current programme has been implemented in two phases with no prior evaluation (mid-course) to identify lapses, opportunities and challenges, to inform any adjustments. Program specific financial audit has not been carried out since the program inception, although periodic audit under the UNDP DEX modality has taken place every two year, in addition to audits for advances to GC.

4.4.3 National Information Management Centre

The evaluation team inspected three draft Progress Reports (20 Nov 2008 – 20 Nov '09; 20 Nov 2009 – 15 May '10; 16 May 2010 – 15 May '11) made available by the NIMAC project team and one submitted progress report (16 May 2010 – 15 May 2011), which forms part of a combined Progress Report¹⁷ with LDLD and which it is understood is still awaiting approval.

Starting with the 2008 Progress Report, it can be seen that the NIMAC format is an improvement on the CST format. It includes a section on Achievements to Date, Risks/Issues and Constraints and also a Financial Summary. However, the section on Risks/Issues and Constraints lists four Risks/Issues but only one (i.e. *Premature end to the implementation of the NIMAC project's transition strategy*) has had the risk assessed. One of the other Risks (or is it an Issue?) has an unusual formulation namely: " .. *Willingness of LISGIS to remain engaged in the decentralisation agenda of the statistical system*". The accompanying text seems to suggest that LISGIS has shown serious commitment to various processes, etc. Hence, the evaluation team is of the opinion that perhaps a more appropriate word is "ability" rather than "willingness". Nevertheless, this section in principle is signalling an effort to identify and discuss difficulties to achieving the expected results. There is no Results Matrix used, although in a section called Next Steps, there is reference to "... *the few implementation challenges ...*". The Financial Summary is concise and helpful in understanding budget vs. expenditure reconciliation, exactly as presented in Annex B.4

Regarding the 2009 Report, the format is the same as in 2008. It is noted that in the section on Risks/Issues and Constraints, three of the four Risks (Issues?) and accompanying text are direct copies of the equivalent Risks in the 2008 Report. The text regarding Linkages with LDLD/CST is a direct copy of the equivalent 2008/09 text. In the section on Next Steps, there seems to be further copying of text in the 2008 Report. It is not clear to the evaluation team why there is such similarity between the two reports in these two key sections. Furthermore, in the Financial Summary there is some confusion over the 2008/09 Expenditure data and the 2009/10 Expenditure data as they are both exactly the same (i.e. EUR 428,859.42 equivalent to US\$ 549,392.93), which is remarkable for two streams of expenditures over two different twelve-month periods. Interestingly, the five expenditure component values in 2008 are each different from their direct equivalent component values in 2010, yet the two total are exactly the same.

In the draft 2010-11 report there is a direct repeat of two of the four Risks/Issues and accompanying text. Similarly, the text regarding Linkages with LDLD/CST is a direct copy of the equivalent 2008/09 and 2009/10 texts. The evaluation team is unsure how to interpret so much repetition of text. However, there is a very detailed Financial Summary table in Euros covering the period November 2008 – May 2011, with no-cost extension projections included for the period 16 May 2011 – 30 June 2012. It is understood that there is a procedure for report vetting and clearance within UNDP. A programme or project manager submits the draft report to the appropriate Assistant Resident Representative for clearance. It is then submitted to the Deputy Resident Representative (Programme), after which it is submitted to the Partnerships Development Officer. Finally, the document is submitted to the Country Director for signature. In the Progress Report (16 May 2010 – 15 May 2011) the text of the draft report is reflected in full, and the financial data are incorporated into its Annex B.3: Revised Interim Financial Report.

¹⁷ UNDP formal submission to EC – 18 January 2012

5. PROGRESS, RESULTS AND IMPACT

5.1 Progress towards Objectives

5.1.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

From examining the CST Annual Progress Reports (2009 / 10 / 11), the evaluation team notes that progress is reviewed in different parts of the text. For instance, in the 2009 Report, there is Section 5: Summary of Activities and Achievements during the Reporting Period, but there is no discussion on progress towards the Objectives. Nevertheless, in the Results Matrix, as discussed in Section 4.4.1 above, there is a column titled: Progress towards expected outputs/results. What this column contains appears to be a reiteration of completed activities and outputs but with no discussion on progress towards the objective or expected results and equally important, what remains to be done to achieve them.

2009:

In summary for the year 2009, the completed activities and achievements of significance are:

Component 1: Capacity Strengthening of Local Administration

- A five-day Training of Trainers (TOT) implemented by UN-HABITAT focussing on leadership for service delivery;
- As a follow-up to the TOT workshop, 15 county-based training workshops for line ministries and agencies, held simultaneously across the country, led by the CDOs with assistance from the M&E Assistants and backup from the CST Project Officers (Civil Affairs);
- A country-wide capacity assessment carried and a draft Liberia Local Government Capacity Assessment submitted to MIA;
- Recruitment of Training Associates to work with UN-HABITAT and to sustain the training initiatives; and
- Continued support for coordination and planning processes at county level by the CST Project Officers, through regular PRS-related Pillar meetings and County Development Steering Committee (CDSC) meetings.

Component 2: Support to County Information/Data Management and Monitoring (CIMM)

- All Information Monitoring Officers (IMO) transferred and fully embedded into MPEA (CDOs) and LISGIS (CSIOs) organisations and managed by them;
- Additional manpower including 15 M&E Assistants and 15 Database/Administrative Assistants deployed and paid for by the CST in all 15 counties;
- Computers, GPS, other office equipment and furniture provided to CDOs and CSIOs;
- Various training events held including an important two-day event on the use of tools and templates for monitoring the PRS / CDA deliverables at county level;
- A network of 300 Monitors for protection monitoring and tracking recruited and deployed in all 15 counties, with multiple refresher training events held. In addition, induction training was held for ten County Clerks;
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) signed with MPEA and LISGIS for the management of county information monitoring and tracking of the PRS and CDAs.

Component 3: Support to Construction/Rehabilitation of Model District Administration Buildings + ICT

- Inspections completed of the 15 sites allocated and pre-construction activities for the three model district administration buildings, with a draft report submitted to MIA;
- Mapping exercise completed, Bills of Quantities and Scope of Works for the three model buildings produced, and bidding documents finalised.

2010:

As discussed in Section 4.4.1 above, there was an improvement in the format and content of the CST Progress Report. There is now under Section 6: Summary and Analysis of Results Achieved, a broad discussion on the contribution of the CST towards the achieving of results. However, there still remains the question of a gap analysis on what remains to be done so as to actually achieve and sustain the expected results, although with the new Section 8: Risk Management and Section 9: Challenges and Lessons Learned, steps are being taken in the right direction. However, there is insufficient analysis presented to substantiate many of 15 lessons learned. In the Results Matrix column: Progress towards expected Results, the evaluation team notes some general statements (i.e. *County authorities are kept abreast of development issues; Service delivery and performance improved by 30% (MIA Capacity Assessment Report); ...Involvement of key stakeholders specially women in decision-making ...; State authority and administration restored*, and so on) which may be true to one degree or other but are not substantiated in the Report. In summary for the year 2010, the completed activities and achievements of significance are:

Component 1: Capacity Strengthening of Local Administration

- Three regional TOT workshops in local elected leadership held under UN-HABITAT, with the intention of developing a critical mass of national trainers to support, roll-out and sustain future training programmes and related training initiatives. The training targeted approximately 250 participants. As a follow-up, no less than 45 county-based training workshops were held throughout the 15 counties;
- A three-day Local Economic Development (LED) regional workshop targeting three counties¹⁸ conducted to expose participants to locally owned and driven LED approaches and tools;
- Continued CST support for planning and coordination processes at the sub-national level, further institutionalising and strengthening the regular PRS-related Pillar meetings and the CDSC meetings.

Component 2: Support to County Information/Data Management and Monitoring (CIMM)

- 225 Field Monitors and 15 M&E Assistants re-deployed (down from the network of 300 mentioned in the 2009 Report above) to track and report on PRS/CDA deliverables. Tracking and reporting continued satisfactorily;
- A land-cruiser and 15 motorbikes provided to MPEA to implement the CIMM component;
- 15 LaserJet printers and laptops provided to MPEA for use by the CDOs;
- Internet services outsourced so as to enhance CDOs' timely reporting and communications;
- Six refresher regional workshops on PRS and CDA monitoring held.

Component 3: Support to Construction/Rehabilitation of Model District Administration Buildings + ICT

- All three Model District Buildings¹⁹ completed and handed over;
- Savings accrued expected to be put towards basic furniture in 2011.

The evaluation team noted that whereas the two district buildings inspected²⁰ were generally well constructed, there seemed to be issues of cracking (Compound No. 3) that may or may not be of a structural nature,

¹⁸ Bong, Lofa and Nimba Counties

¹⁹ (i) Sinjeh – Bomi County; (ii) Compound No. 3 – Grand Bassa County; and (iii) Geetroh – Sinoe County

and broken guttering (Geetroh) that may be down to a simple lack of maintenance by the District. One observation was that the attitude of the respective District Commissioner might be important on whether these buildings are properly maintained or not.

2011:

Continuing the trend in improving the quality of reporting, the CST Annual Report contains a lot of useful information that allows stakeholders to take a view on achievements. Section 6: Summary of Key Results Achieved and the Way Forward has a realistic analysis of what actually has been achieved and what the challenges are (i.e. ... *there will be a problem of institutional memory gap and short-fall in well functioning of county administration* ...). Section 8: Risk Management addresses the issues of inadequate capacity in (i) MPEA to manage, coordinate and sustain the implementation of the CIMM, and (ii) MIA to support and sustain the ongoing capacity building initiative of the CST. There are concerns raised at the challenges UNDP has faced and continues to face regarding procurement of goods and services, which other stakeholders have noted as well. Under Section 9: Challenges and Lessons Learned, major concern is raised over the weaknesses in security and maintenance of equipment, facilities and support given by CST, with complaints of theft and a lack of care in use. As in the Progress Report (2010), there is some confusion over what constitute issues and constraints and what are genuine lessons learned. In summary for the year 2011, the completed activities and achievements of significance are:

Component 1: Capacity Strengthening of Local Administration

- The holding of a two-day interactive workshop on CST Impact, Best Practices and Lessons Learned, which led to the preparation of a report or action plan on what further capacity building support might be needed;
- 60 county-based training workshops in local-elected leadership were held at which there were approximately 600 participants from line ministries, project management committees, civil society organisations (CSOs), chiefs – paramount/town and clan, city mayors, DDCs and youth leaders; and
- Ongoing CST support for planning and coordination processes at the sub-national level, further institutionalising and strengthening the regular PRS-related Pillar meetings and the CDSC meetings.

Component 2: Support to County Information/Data Management and Monitoring (CIMM)

- Ongoing support for the 225 Field Monitors and 15 M&E Assistants re-deployed to track and report on PRS/CDA deliverables. Tracking and reporting continued satisfactorily;
- CST continued support to CDOs' and CSIOs' and field monitoring staffs' critical reporting and communications through the procurement of Internet modems and payment of monthly subscriptions; and
- Continued and improved tracking and reporting of protection incidents.

Component 3: Support to Construction/Rehabilitation of Model District Administration Buildings + ICT

- CST direct support to the construction of Harper, Maryland County administration building by UNOPS;
- Preparation of drawings and Bills of Quantities, and commencing the bidding process; and
- Provision of a two-day training workshop on civic and social mobilisation addressing issues relating to cost-recovery, maintenance and sustainability of the administration building once completed and handed over.

5.1.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

²⁰ Compound No. 3 – Grand Bassa County; and Geetroh – Sinoe County

The LDLD programme is on course to meeting its primary objective of supporting the Government to strengthen policy and strategy development, system and institutional development, while promoting local sector-specific investments, and in the process, shall ensure the effective management of Liberia's innovations in restoring local government.

It is understood that the Government is satisfied with the programme and requests its continuation, based on their own needs assessment and considering the size of their own resources. The LDLD support has also attracted the contributions of talented and knowledgeable professionals, to drive reform and development planning, execution and monitoring at national and sub national levels.

There is no question that the programme is relevant to the needs of the country. Government interlocutors would prefer National Execution (NEX) modality over DEX modality given that the perceived bureaucratic procedures at UNDP sometimes delay implementation, and concerns have been raised about of the quality of the materials procured by the UNDP for counterpart use. Question that need to be answered include: (i) how does the LDLD Capacity Development Initiatives dovetail with the wider National Capacity Development Strategy, (ii) how does it relate to and learn lessons from previous/other capacity development initiatives, essentially the SES²¹, and (iii) where is the exit strategy to disengage in time and hand it over to Government?

The progress reports contain a detailed narrative and descriptive outputs, and tend to highlight more work completed than addressing actual changes or results traceable to the LDLD interventions²².

There is limited evidence to show how the Project Board is pro-active in furthering its role, particularly in overseeing the PMU in the implementation of programme activities. Consequently, it is the opinion of the evaluation that the Committee re-exert itself and ensure effective monitoring. In addition to which it must make deliberate effort ensure gender balance to the extent possible in recruitment of staff of the PMU, which currently not gender balanced.

There is no exit strategy or transition plan for the LDLD to sustainable, national ownership, which must be placed into the wider context of governance reform and capacity development.

In terms of efficiency the programme is managed by the UNDP under the Direct Execution (DEX) modality which means that the UNDP is accountable for the funds disbursed under the programme. There have been several fund transfers to the Governance Commission for the implementation of specific activities under a partial NEX modality feature that reimburses rather than advances. This is to pave the way for adopting a full NEX modality.

A further expression of LDLD efficiency is found in its implementation arrangements. The evaluation team noted that the programme created a wide web of actors that has created an enormous resource base that supports the execution of planed activities, in addition to building capacity at national, sub-national and local levels in expansion of the decentralisation process. Through the LDLD support, the GC and MIA have undertaken various studies, including informing different aspects of the decentralisation

5.1.3 National Information Management Centre

From examining the NIMAC Progress Reports²³, the evaluation team notes that progress is presented as "*Project Results against Objectives*" and "*Achievements*". Hence, the evaluation team has distilled the Achievements towards Objectives in this Section and discusses Key Results (against Objectives) in Section 5.2.3 below.

²¹ Which has deployed County Development officers across the different Counties to support local administration since 2008

²² For example, as seen in the Annuals Progress Report (16 May 2010 – 15 May 2011)

²³ (i) 20 Nov 2008 – 20 Nov 2009, (ii) 20 Nov 2009 – 15 May 2010, (iii) 16 May 2010 – 15 May 2011, and (iv) a provisional draft progress update: 16 May – 31 Dec 2011.

Nov 2008 – Nov 2009:

In summary for the year, the NIMAC achievements were as follows:

Specific Objective No. 1: Strengthening the National Statistical System

- Continued implementation of NIMAC transition strategy leading to increased capacity in LISGIS for developing data management tools;
- A fully functional Local Area Network (LAN) complete with a secure server system;
- 2008 National Population and Housing Census report was finalised, printed and officially launched;
- Supported LISGIS in the facilitation of a four-month induction training programme at the University of Liberia in basic data collection and statistical data management techniques – up to 89 junior and middle level staff from line ministries and agencies attended;
- A functioning NSDS Secretariat facilitating meetings of the NSDS Technical Committee and related bodies; and
- Availability of standard dissemination tools, systems and media, including LiberiaInfo (ver. 1.0) and a fully functioning web-site (www.lisgis.org).

Specific Objective No. 2: Support to the emerging decentralisation strategy of LISGIS

- Establishment and operationalisation of CSIOs in fifteen counties;
- Procurement of fifteen motorbikes (to meet off-road specifications) for the CSIOs;
- Delivery of seven in-country training workshops for data collection and information management - approximately 60 staff trained;

Specific Objective No. 3: Support the development and deployment of a web-enabled aids flow information system

- Supported the MOF Aid Management Unit in enhancing the functionality of the aid flows tracking system hosted by LIBTELCO. Questionnaires distributed to development partners on a quarterly basis.

Nov 2009 – May 2010:

In summary for this period, the NIMAC achievements were as follows:

Specific Objective No. 1: Strengthening the National Statistical System

- Continued implementation of NIMAC transition strategy leading to increased capacity in LISGIS for developing data management tools;
- Supported LISGIS in the ongoing thematic data analysis of 2008 Census;
- Supported LISGIS in the conduct of the nationwide 2010 Labour Force and Core Welfare Indicator Questionnaire (CWIQ) survey;
- Ongoing support for the efficient functioning of the NSDS Secretariat in its key role, with an annual review report and a mid-term evaluation of report of the NSDS implementation completed;

- Support for the compilation, printing and launching of the first Statistical Bulletin by LISGIS, after a gap of 26 years since the last one; and
- Continued support for dissemination tools, systems and media such as (i) drafts of the national data-sharing policy, a micro-data access policy and a LISGIS data dissemination policy, (ii) LiberiaInfo (ver. 2.0) containing updates from recent surveys, and (iii) an Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) customised, populated²⁴ and launched.

Specific Objective No. 2: Support to the emerging decentralisation strategy of LISGIS

- Supported the CSIOs with additional office and field equipment;
- Supported delivery of further training to CSIO staff members;
- Procured a custom-built 4-wheel drive vehicle with a public address system for use in the counties; and
- Supported CSIOs in four counties²⁵ in holding training events for local administration officials on standardised data collection techniques and the use of statistical products for planning and monitoring.

Specific Objective No. 3: Support the development and deployment of a web-enabled aids flow information system

- Ongoing support for the MOF Aid Management Unit to carry out its tasks. Data now being used as part of the MOF Budget Bureau Unit's work in budgetary allocations.

May 2010 – May 2011:

In summary for this year, the NIMAC results were as follows. It is noted that in this progress report there is repetition from the previous report, which can raise doubts in the mind of the reader. Tighter editorial control would have been welcomed:

Specific Objective No. 1: Strengthening the National Statistical System

- Continued support for transition, with NIMAC staff now fully integrated into LISGIS and facilitating training for LISGIS staff;
- The LAN system now provides enhanced usage for over 100 LISGIS staff members. Four ICT staff members received one-year's customised training in effective monitoring and management of the network and servers;
- With the successful completion of the nationwide Labour Force Survey (2010) and the CWIQ Survey (2010) there is increased availability of disaggregated data for PRS and MDGs tracking and for establishing baselines for the national visioning exercise and the PRS II formulation;
- The consolidated draft report on the Census 2008 thematic analysis completed and undergoing review by specialists in UNFPA;
- Ongoing support for the efficient functioning of the NSDS Secretariat in its key role; and
- Continued support to LISGIS to provide access to data for a range of public and private users.

²⁴ Data from DHS (2007), CWIQ (2007) and NPHC (2008)

²⁵ Bomi, Grand Bassa, Grand Kru and Lofa Counties

Specific Objective No. 2: Support to the emerging decentralisation strategy of LISGIS

- Ongoing support to the CSIOs in the field, with 45 CSIO staff members receiving training; and
- Four in-country capacity building events supported and facilitated in different locations.

Specific Objective No. 3: Support the development and deployment of a web-enabled aids flow information system

- Ongoing support for the MOF Aid Management Unit to carry out its tasks.

May 2011 – Dec 2011:

The period in question fell within the timeframe for the Presidential and Legislative elections (November 2011), a very important milestone for Liberia. According to NIMAC, most but not all planned activities in the AWP (2011) were stalled due to the absence of LISGIS counterparts. In summary for this period, the provisional NIMAC achievements are as follows:

Specific Objective No. 1: Strengthening the National Statistical System

- LAN capable of being sustained beyond the end of NIMAC;
- Support provided for the National Data-sharing / Exchange Guidelines and the LISGIS Dissemination Policy completion and printing;
- Support for the compilation, printing and launching of the second Statistical Bulletin by LISGIS;
- Joint support with UNICEF for the advanced training of three LISGIS staff in DevInfo, in New Delhi, which in turn led to the updating of LiberiaInfo from version 2.0 to version 3.0;
- Support for the hiring of fourteen national consultants to work with two UNFPA-supported international consultants, to undertake the analysis of selected themes from Census 2008 and included a three-day validation workshop with government, civil society and development partners;
- Support for the new NSDS National Coordinator and his functions; and
- Technical support to (i) the GIS Division for the production of customised maps, and (ii) the Data Processing Division for the development of two data-entry screens to capture field survey data, specifically for the Agriculture Survey (2011) and the survey of personnel and facilities in the health sector.

Specific Objective No. 2: Support to the emerging decentralisation strategy of LISGIS

(Nothing reported by NIMAC at this time, but ongoing support to the CSIOs in the field is noted)

Specific Objective No. 3: Support the development and deployment of a web-enabled aids flow information system

(Nothing reported by NIMAC at this time)

5.2 Key Results

5.2.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

Component 1: Capacity Strengthening of Local Administration

There is little doubt that the CST programme has contributed significantly to the building of capacities at the country and district level, as well as in the MIA, MPEA and LISGIS who all have an important role in supporting and guiding sub-national planning and administration. Not only are there examples in the sample counties visited by the evaluation but one would imagine that this is replicated throughout the country to a greater or lesser degree. According to the CST progress reports at least 1,200 local government officials have been trained in one or more the core courses. However, one must look at all the components of capacity namely human resources, institutional framework and other resources, to see if the results are sustainable. This links into the “hard” and “soft” capacity building perspective of the NCDS (2010).

First, there are the human resources with the appropriate range of technical, managerial and administrative competencies. Certainly quite a number of the interviewees seen by the evaluation team were clear about their roles, confident in their empowered ability to get on with their job, and insightful to the extent that they knew what additional training they needed to do their work better. They appreciated the training that they had been given and the ongoing facilitation by the CST Civil Affairs personnel in the county. Secondly, capacity also covers institutional framework including clarity of mandates, mission, organisation structure, job descriptions and lines of reporting as well as the basic support infrastructure to allow them to do their work. By this is meant having an office that has furniture, equipment, ICT, water, electricity and transport, as well as “soft infrastructure” such as quality assurance by and technical back-up from the ministry or agency at the centre as well as continuous improvement through mentoring and reinforcement, and also maintaining discipline. Thirdly, there are the other resources critical to operationalising capacity such as having an appropriate annual operating budget and timely cash-flow, preferably devolved to the county office, covering such things as fuel, Internet connection charges, mobile phone top-up cards, office consumables, maintenance and repairs. Finally, there is the wider capacity aspect of access to target beneficiaries and geographic areas of interest, oversight visits from the relevant ministries or agencies, as well as the ability to travel to training events as required. National infrastructure is beyond the control of a capacity development programme such as CST.

Notwithstanding the lack of a baseline and the vagueness of the definition of success, from the direct evidence given by the public officers, the evaluation team is satisfied that in terms of the human resources element of capacity building, the CST has achieved a significant result. Interestingly, on being questioned on whether there were any “missed opportunities” regarding training, nothing of importance was mentioned and overall, the UN-HABITAT training programme, supplemented by the course manuals for reference, was much appreciated.

Regarding the second element – institutional framework – the evaluation team is also satisfied that considerable mission-critical inputs were delivered by the CST in terms of institutional strengthening and hardware support. Everywhere the evaluation team went there was evidence of manuals, laptops, printers, Internet access, vehicles and motorbikes, as well as the engagement of the MIA, MPEA and LISGIS. The facilitation by the CST field teams of the county- and district-level CDA formulation, PRS Pillar meetings and the CDSC meetings has been crucial in offering county officials action-learning opportunities while embedding good practices. On the third element, the evaluation team notes that some consumables and connectivity have been covered by CST. However, annual operating budgets and timely cash-flow are both the litmus test for and fault line of Government’s commitment to sustainability. From the on-the-ground evidence the evaluation team has seen in the counties, these remain major problem areas for the Government.

The broader question of prioritising national, county and district roads (i.e. access) is expected to be addressed in PRS II, due out around mid-2012.

Component 2: Support to County Information/Data Management and Monitoring (CIMM)

The assimilation and re-deployment of 225 Field Monitors and the 15 M&E Assistants from the previous NRC programme was a major undertaking, as was supporting the CDOs and CSIOs and the CDA planning and monitoring processes. One might even say that without the value chain of Field Monitors and M&E Assistants – CSIOs – CDOs, the monitoring of the CDAs feeding into the PRS would not have become a reality, and as such this is a really important result for Liberia, as it should promote better decision-making and resource allocation. There are believed to be linkages to the formulation of the National Decentralisation and Local Governance Policy, but these have not been assessed by the evaluation team. There is still work to be done in embedding and reinforcing what has been achieved, but this is a very good starting point.

Component 3: Support to Construction/Rehabilitation of Model District Administration Buildings + ICT

The completion of the three model district buildings and the eventual reconstruction and refurbishment of the Harper Administration Building are adding to the sense of re-establishing the focus and presence of State power in the counties and districts. The evaluation team had the opportunity to inspect two of the district buildings and noted the respective districts' appreciation for and the use of the building. However, there are instances of generators not being supplied by county authorities, with the knock-on effect that there is no light, no water (due to no pumping) and no ICT.

There is little doubt that a functional building facilitates and empowers local administration, but with over 125 districts in the country, the evaluation team wonders what the Government intends to do with the lessons learned from these three model buildings. The evidence that at least two counties could not provide a 10 KVA generator²⁶ to operationalise the new district buildings properly, does not auger well. The evaluation team wonders if sufficient funding will be collected or made available for the operations and maintenance of the buildings. From the evidence of Geetroh's broken and unfixed guttering, small as it may seem, something is not quite right.

5.2.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

The evaluation team found notable evidence that LDLD has achieved the following key results. The evaluation is uncertain as to whether there is a clear national framework for local development planning as there appears to be a disconnect between community/district level planning presided over by the MIA and County/ national planning administered by MPEA. Key results identified however, included:

1. National Decentralisation Policy drafted, disseminated
2. County Development Agenda developed and implemented to a somewhat limited extent in furtherance of the Poverty Reduction Strategy
3. Constitutional referendum bill drafted -house has had two public hearing as part of process for approving the bill
4. Local Government Reform Act developed
5. MIA has established five new Divisions (ICT / M&E / Capacity Development / Decentralisation /Community and County Development)
6. Capacity building plan elaborated through the combined and coordinated actions of national and local agencies and other development partners executed
7. From de-concentration to devolution – system defined
8. Deconcentration and Fiscal Decentralization underway - MOE/MOHSW are already effecting same at county levels.

²⁶ Approximate cost ~ US\$ 2,000

9. Laws and regulations that define centre-local relationships revised, but yet to be adopted to guide interaction at the various levels
10. Fiscal decentralization framework established.
11. Structures of participatory planning and decision making established at district and community levels and to an extent driving decision making at the local levels.
12. Sector/ministries and agencies de-concentration/delegation implemented and dovetailed to devolution
13. Capacity requirement of relevant national and local administrations for implementing decentralisation reviewed and defined.
14. Decentralization Unit established at GC and Decentralization M&E Units established at MIA, but require support to properly function.
15. Local Public Expenditure Management adopted and implemented (District and County Development funding).
16. PFM instruments developed and in use-Budget, Procurement Manuals, local develop fund guidelines etc.
17. Inter -Ministerial Committee comprised of GC, CSA, MIA, MOHSW, MOF, MOA, MOE, MPW, MPEA, MYS, LM&E has been established but is not considered active as meetings are irregular.
18. Decentralisation and Local Governance course introduced at the University of Liberia-undergraduate and graduate schools with 32 students enrolled.
19. Seven sector consultants seconded to decentralisation task force in line ministries to train and provide technical guidance to facilitate staff formulation of decentralisation implementation strategies for their respective sectors.
20. MIA with support from the LDLD/UNDP have launched a Management Training program that witnessed the recruitment of young university graduates in various disciplines. Currently, there are 14 Management Trainees deployed in various divisions and units at central office.

Both LDLD and LTTA have made significant progress in elaborating guidelines for districting planning, which are yet to be endorsed by the MIA and MPEA.

5.2.3 National Information Management Centre

Specific Objective No. 1: Strengthening the National Statistical System

NIMAC has effectively transitioned completely, with just logistical support being offered as required under the LISGIS-endorsed AWP. There is full and explicit ownership and leadership of national statistics services by LISGIS. A range of statistical products are now available, with associated mapping down to county level and below upon request. The information from the CSIOs in the field is feeding into the PRS monitoring, but for whatever reason feedback is not being given to the CSIOs. This may be due to an operational constraint rather than a policy decision. As no organisation can afford to stand still, there will be a need for LISGIS to identify and prioritise its ongoing needs in terms of capacity in the widest sense of the word, to perform its designated functions. There will be areas for improvement regarding technical data analysis and statistical product development and dissemination, but this falls within the realm of organisational development and business planning, which is a dynamic and continuous process.

Specific Objective No. 2: Support to the emerging decentralisation strategy of LISGIS

The CSIO concept has been successfully adopted and is visibly working. The CSIO is one of the most important units in the county administration, as well as being a key link for getting PRS-related data and information from the county to the centre. As discussed above, what is missing is feedback from the centre on PRS achievements, disaggregated by county and district. This in turn feeds into the next challenge for the counties namely, revising the CDAs in line with the forthcoming PRS (II), which will need realistic baselines county-by-county, and even district-by-district. Products, services and functions provided by the CSIOs locally, depend on the availability of operational budgets.

Specific Objective No. 3: Support the development and deployment of a web-enabled aids flow information system

There has been NIMAC support extended over the years to the establishing of the aid management platform (AMP) within the MOF AMU. There were a number of difficulties encountered along the way regarding the AMP which are being resolved. Overall, the AMU is processing aid flows data and information such that they complement the MOF Budget Bureau/Unit's work in reporting budgetary allocations as well as expenditures.

However, notwithstanding the gradual building up of competency within the AMU, the biggest challenge is the lack of salaries and operational budget from within the national budget. In effect the AMU is totally dependent upon development partners as is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future.

5.3 Impact

5.3.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

The CST programme has been designed with three focus areas in mind – (i) strengthening capacity, (ii) improving mission-critical information, and (iii) providing fit-for-purpose premises. This can be summarised as: *"...supporting government in its attempt to have the right person in the right place at the right time with the right information and the right resources so as to do their work..."*.

Looking at the CST results to date (Section 5.1.1 above), it is seen that CST has delivered on supporting the MIA and the county administration in all practical respects as defined in the ProDoc. The impact of all this is not only improved functionality but also greater visibility and the re-assertion of legitimate authority, thus creating a positive dynamic and virtuous circle. The State now has a recognizable locus in each county from which to carry out local planning, administration and monitoring, as well as a locus for the public dispensing of justice through the Magistrates' Court, and the public has an opportunity to meet government so as to promote its legitimate interests. The impact of better data and information-related processes and products is also being experienced at central and local levels, but in the medium term can expect to be seen in improved plans (i.e. PRS II and revised CDAs), budgets (national, county, Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)) and funding allocations (sectoral, County Development Fund (CDF) grants, SDF grants, development partner support) that target real needs based on disaggregated data and information that have been properly compiled, validated, analysed and shared.

The impact of the completed public administration buildings is not direct *per se* but rather enabling. Having a potentially usable building without having the necessary personnel properly supported through office space, equipment, electricity and consumables all in place, is unlikely to have an impact on public administration and service delivery. Welcome as the completed administration buildings are, impact will depend on the use to which the buildings are put over time.

5.3.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

The evaluation team views the overall impact created by the LDLD in three prongs - (citizens participation and empowerment, strengthened local governance and administration and burgeoning service delivery). The programme objectives have been considerably achieved at especially the national and county levels, but much remain to be done before similar impact may be spotted at the district levels, where infrastructure, basic equipment and capacity remain constraining factors for effective local governance and service delivery and where poverty is evident. LDLD's support to the institutionalization of DDC to strengthen district and sub district planning, implementation and monitoring and the Introduction of the District Development Fund as a block grant mechanism to support district planning was noted by the evaluation as essential to stimulating growth and development at the grass root levels

(a) Citizens Participation

There is evidence that the LDLD interventions has contributed immensely to the reversal of the remarkable and systematic exclusion of rural residents and communities from the decision making processes for development, accessing resources and political leadership. Most of the national investments for modern infrastructure and basic social services were concentrated in the so call cities. This urban rural bias not only further impoverished the people, but subjected them to undue hardships and risks. The perpetuation of this policy by successive governments, ensure the prolong prioritization of the wishes of the people of Monrovia, where political authority was concentrated.

Local administrators were only accountable to their superiors in Monrovia, who exercised unquestioned authority and dictated virtually everything. However, with LDLD emphasis on participatory approaches, and their delivery of leadership, communication, and local economic development trainings to local government officials and rural community dwellers, citizens are now demanding their involvement in governance and development planning, execution and monitoring and evaluation.

Through the County Development Agenda formulation processes, District Development Committees, Project management teams and County Development Steering Committees amongst other, ordinary citizens are voicing their concerns, shaping processes, informing key policies (Poverty Reduction Strategy, National decentralisation Policy etc., and assuming the responsibilities to join in the execution and monitoring of local governance programme. This is not to say that their participations have been without problem, but the quest of rural dwellers has only arisen to match the forces of local politics and manoeuvres that seek to hush them.

This rising quest has only been further bolstered by Government's commitment to bring government closer to the people (decentralisation). Since the inception of the LDLD programme, certain aspects related to the participation, empowerment and involvement of the citizens in the policy or decision making process have raised fierce and heated debate. This issue is even more stringent when placed in the political, economic and social contexts (women in public life) of a nascent democracy like Liberia, majority of whose citizenry were for long alienated from public life and have very limited skills in budget tracking, or other relevant experience in civic engagements.

Until recently the most common and largely accepted form of public participation for most citizens was voting. The capacity of the citizens to elect public officials and to mandate them the right to represent the "*popular will*" comes hand in hand with other basic democratic principles, of extreme importance for a "sound" and effective government, such as accountability and transparency. Perhaps surprisingly, there is growing societal appreciation and recognition for public participation that it is been embraced at all levels steadily.

As citizen participation gains impetus in Liberia's public spheres, citizens' engagement remains a critical trust in influencing the quality of Liberia's public processes, decisions, policies, program responsiveness, and in preserving the public confidence. Ensuring receptive and responsive settings is critical to engendering participation. As citizens participate, for many it is more than just voicing their concerns; it connotes the power to change and influence how their affairs are managed.

(b) Improved Governance and Local Administration

Service Delivery

With Government recognition of the consequences of centralized (i.e. Monrovia-driven) service provision and management mechanisms and characterized by significant weaknesses, the decision to decentralize has become very appealing. However, the process of transferring decision-making powers from central ministries and agencies to intermediate bodies (County Education Board (CEB), County Health Team(CHT)), local administrations,

communities, health facilities and schools, requires much careful considerations as it requires strong political commitment and leadership in order to succeed. The evaluation team has established through various discussions with the different stakeholders that the path, depth, and ultimately, the outcome of decentralisation reforms depend on the motivations for reforms, the initial county and sector conditions, and the informed interactions of various actors within the process. The evaluation team found that thus far, the extent of the transfer varies as regards administrative deconcentration to much broader transfer of financial control to the regional or local level. The evaluation team further noted that people generally had a different understanding and expectations of the process of decentralisation. Many however, hoped that it will substantially improve efficiency, transparency, accountability, and responsiveness of service provision at the local levels. A number of others expressed confidence that decentralized education and health services hold the promise of been more efficient, reflect better local priorities, encourage participation, and, eventually, improve access, coverage and quality.

The indications are that deconcentrating services for the issuance of driver's licenses, birth certificates, pass and the processing of business registrations at the counties levels, would harness the access of local people and indeed take government closer to the people. The evidence suggests that devolution to sub-national governments may not be sufficient in and of itself without support and increased interactions between and amongst local governments/ service providers and communities of end users and beneficiaries. This is supported by the MOE's move to not only recognize the of benefits of the participation of users, but is further confirmed by the Ministry's incorporation of a PTSA Director within its structure to promote local ownership through parents teachers, students and, community-management of schools. The CEB in Margibi noted that their oversight and collaboration with PTSAs has resulted in lower rates of students' and teachers' absenteeism alike.

The transfer of service delivery/provision systems demands harmonization of a complex set of functions. The challenge that remains is determining how far to devolve decision-making in each of the sub-sectors, and to whom. The need for selecting a model county administration and ministry is vital for leadership and demonstration purposes, and as a stimulus to drive and get the attentions of others lagging behind, to take more concrete steps drawing on the actual experiences of the model as lessons learned. By and large, the availability of benefits to locals from the delivery of deconcentrated services remains critical to encourage local actors to both embrace and support the pace with which the implementation of the decentralisation process may proceed.

5.3.3 National Information Management Centre

There is little doubt that an ever-strengthening LISGIS is having an impact on raising the general awareness of the importance of data and statistics in government and in the public at large, as well as the improving quality and production of statistical products critical to more effective national and sectoral planning and resource allocation. These products are being sought by the public and private users of statistical data and information, as well as by development partners and by researchers. The current five-year NSDS has been a useful roadmap to date, but has been seriously underfunded. It will be coming to an end soon, requiring a new strategy and budget will be required.

The CSIO function at the county level has impacted the way planning and monitoring are done at the county level, as well as undertaking important monitoring of PRS-related activities at the district and county levels, feeding the collected data and information back to the centre. It has the potential to be more responsive if it too could process district and county data locally, as well as preparing and disseminating statistical products including maps without having to go to headquarters. As reported by NIMAC, the MOF AMU is preparing data and information that are useful in the national budgeting process. Exactly what further impact could have been expected at this stage is hard to ascertain, but certainly having an operational AMU, however constrained at present, is better than not having one at all.

6. PARTNERSHIPS AND LINKAGES

6.1 Partnerships

6.1.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

Under the original ProDoc (2009 – 11), certain UN agencies were to support field activities of particular interest through parallel funding, and others were to be direct Implementing Partners (IPs). The supporting UN agencies were UNHCR and UNICEF, and the IPs were UN-HABITAT (training) and UNOPS (administration/district building construction and rehabilitation). The two key partnerships were (i) between the Government of Liberia and the UNCT through the CST as a Government-owned programme, and (ii) between UNMIL, led by Civil Affairs, and the UNCT, whereby facilities and services were provided to several UN agencies in the counties.

A significant tie-up, which could be considered a form of partnership, was where the CST together with UNHCR and the NRC supported the establishment of the IMOs in eleven out of 15 counties. This partnership later facilitated the transition of the network of 225 Field Monitors and 15 M&E Assistants originally mobilised under the NRC project, were transferred and re-deployed under the county CSIOs, now being supported by the CST. The funding for this came from SIDA through the UNDP-managed pooled fund.

In the revised ProDoc (2011 – 12), the same two key partnerships continued, but now UNICEF had no further funds to invest and the UNHCR pooled funding contribution was US\$25,000. Nevertheless, the evaluation team understands that both these UN agencies are expected to return with funding during 2012, once again in areas of particular interest to each of them. One important development was that due to the success of the earlier CST phase, the Government wished to participate with its own financial contribution towards the construction of the three model district administration buildings. This speaks volumes.

6.1.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

The LDLD programme design envisioned several key actors as partners, and the programme implementation has reflected the invaluable roles of GC pioneering mandates and functions review and policy formulation. The MIA provided oversight and leadership for the decentralisation process, with MPEA supporting planning, and CSA directing civil leading service reforms. The EC and members of the United Nations family²⁷ have also partnered in the execution of this programme, thereby pooling together considerable means for the mobilization of required resources for timely implementation. The CST programme in particular laid the foundation for the restoration of civil authority to the counties by not only constructing county administration buildings, but by building the capacity of local authorities through various training courses conducted in partnership initially with LIPA. UNCDF introduced a unique perspective to programme interventions through its Local Development Fund (LDF) and community empowerment initiatives. The evaluation team noted that poor communications, information management and coordination between and amongst partners created gaps and at some point interfere with smooth implementation occasioned by delay in remittances. A concern was raised that the UNDP bureaucracy regarding recruitment and procurement caused frustration for the GC and MIA.

6.1.3 National Information Management Centre

The primary partnership for the NIMAC project is that involving the EC and UNDP. The Contribution Agreement was signed in November 2008, with NIMAC and LDLD brought together under a single agreement for administrative and coordination purposes but they were still to operate as a separate programme and project.

²⁷ UNDP, UN HABITAT, UNMIL, UNCDF and the CST programme

In November 2011, a mission for the UN Peace-Building Support Office (PBSO) in New York visited Liberia to assess the need for support to the Government's efforts in aid management and on the disaggregation of data to ascertain the funding going to peace-building programmes. If this was viable, a partnership with UNDP would be established to implement the support project to the AMU. It is understood that the EC has provided some initial funds to the PBSO to look at Liberia the Central African Republic as possible pilot programmes in this regards. The evaluation team has been informed that a draft proposal is being examined and funding is being sought.

6.2 Linkages

6.2.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

The CST JP was not only a vehicle for implementation in the three components it was also to be a facilitator of other UNDP programmes and projects. There was a potential linkage with the LDLD programme from the outset, particularly in the area of CST Component One - capacity building at the central and at the county and district levels. Many stakeholders interviewed by the evaluation team have queried if there was any real substance to this linkage or whether they were just two parallel programmes trying not to step on each others' toes, so to speak. A further linkage was that with the NIMAC project, under CST Component Two – CIMM, again dealing with capacity for PRS and CDA monitoring at the centre (MPEA and LISGIS) and the county level (CDO and CSIO). This seems to have been more genuine and substantive in nature. It is also noted that the staffing of CDOs is supported by the Senior Executive Service (SES) initiative.

There are linkages to other UNDP-led programmes and projects such as the Community-Based Recovery and Development (CBRD) and the Justice and Security Programme (JSP) amongst others. Others spoke of "missed opportunities" through CST not holding joint monitoring visits and not making greater efforts to share county information so as to inform or promote a common picture on what is happening at the sub-national level. Separately, there were concerns raised that insufficient attention may not have been given from the outset to gender responsive planning and budgeting, as well as promoting greater awareness of the importance of gender dis-aggregated data at all levels for planning and monitoring at sub-national levels. However, the evaluation team was informed that this situation has now begun to improve and a real opportunity existed to embed this at the heart of national budgeting, PRS II and the CDAs as they are revised.

6.2.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

LDLD interventions were implemented with strategic linkages to a number of recovery efforts. The programme represented a very good alignment with the Poverty Reduction Strategy and the County Development Agenda. While it had particular affinity with aspects of the CST and forged a joint implementation agenda that found expressions in the 2011 AWP, neither its design nor its contribution agreement clearly presented any intrinsic link.

In the scheme of the larger Public Financial Management Reform process, the programme supported the development of essential regulatory instruments such as a manual and guidelines in collaboration with MOF and the Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC), and for this it is to be commended.

6.2.3 National Information Management Centre

From the outset NIMAC has always sought to forge linkages with CST and LDLD, starting back in 2008 when NIMAC collaborated with LDLD to build on synergies to enhance the promotion of the decentralisation agenda. This manifested itself in areas such as (i) facilitating LDLD access to data and other CSIO information so as to help LDLD build the capacity of local administration officials, (ii) using LDLD-generated training materials (such as on the decentralisation) to supplement CSIO workshops, and (iii) coordinating with CST and LDLD in promoting awareness and understanding of MDGs for local level planning and monitoring and localisation activities.

In 2008 there was also a joint strategy by which UNDP – CST and NIMAC – would work closely with UNHCR and with NRC in providing information management support to government at various levels. This involved amongst other, establishing information management offices (IMOs) - the precursors of the CSIOs – in counties. While CST was working closely with UNHCR and NRC on implementing the IMO concept, NIMAC was assisting LISGIS to link up with county-level administration through the IMOs. At that time so as to ensure coordinate support, NIMAC was to continue to chairing the monthly CST information management working group, and UNHCR was to continue to participate in the PRS M&E working group.

This type of linkage continued through the project period, with NIMAC collaborating with the CST programme to facilitate collation of the PRS and CDA deliverables through both technical and financial support to the CDOs and CSIOs in the counties. Other joint initiatives included collaboration between CST and NIMAC in conjunction with MIA, LISGIS and MPEA as well as each County Superintendent, to update the County Information Packs (CIPs), originally compiled in 2007. The data from these CIPs were instrumental in the formulation of the CDAs.

6.3 Resource Mobilisation

6.3.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

In Section 3.3.1 above the budget and funding mechanism were discussed. As can be seen, at the beginning of the programme period 2009 – 11, the CST had an estimated budget of US\$ 7,319,228 of which US\$ 1,750,000 was funded. This left an unfunded portion of US\$ 5,569,000. Prior to that UNDP approached SIDA about the opportunity for supporting the CST programme through the CST JP pooled fund, and in this regard SIDA made a grant²⁸ of SEK 10 million, equivalent to US\$ 1,572,327. Further SIDA grants²⁹ were made in 2009 and 2010 for a combined total of US\$ 2,939,066.14. It can be seen (refer to Annex B.2.(b)) that, according to the CST Programme Manager, there is a funding shortfall for the period July – December 2012:

Table 6.1: NIMAC Estimated Expenditures (July – December 2012)

• Support to CIMM (i.e. salaries etc for Field Monitors and M&E Assistants)	US\$ 145,800.00
• Three training events	<u>US\$ 60,000.00</u>
	Subtotal: <u>US\$ 205,800.00</u>
• Three regional TOT events in Local Economic Development	US\$ 60,000.00
• Three regional TOT events in Local Financial Management	US\$ 60,000.00
• Three regional TOT events in Local Financial Management	<u>US\$ 60,000.00</u>
	Subtotal: <u>US\$ 180,000.00</u>
• Administrative and other related costs	US\$ 50,000.00
	Grand Total: US\$ 435,000.00

²⁸ SIDA reference: 2007 – 002079 – Component 7400326201

²⁹ SIDA reference: 2009 – 000319, component 52090001-02; SIDA reference: 2010 - 016276

6.3.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

LDLD remains an ambitious intervention that has not only sought to economically empower the most impoverished of communities in six counties across Liberia, but notably through its support to strengthening national institutions and policy development, has impacted the Liberian public governance and local administration culture that was plagued with complacency, under-performance, wasted loyalties, cronyism, corruption, and such like. The scale of the programme's involvement requires significant resource and finance in order to effectively execute and achieve set goals in a sustainable manner. However, it is not clear to the evaluation team that a resource mobilization strategy exists.

As far as the evaluation team can ascertain, the fund allocation outturn from the UNCDF to support local economic development was too meagre to derive any real impact on the beneficiary communities such that replication is possible. The evaluation team observed that whereas local administrations were now housed in suitable buildings and local authorities receiving various capacity building training, they continued to lack essential things, which otherwise could be addressed by basic support. In the Wee clan, District Number Three, Grand Bassa County and in Robertsports in Grand Cape Mount County access to electric power/ generator accompanied by stable fuel ration, computers, regular office supplies and a means of mobility will do much more in strengthening the capacity of local administrations - District levels.

To date, the programme has received financial support from EC, UNCDF and Government, and technical assistance from LTTA, UNMIL, UNDP, UN-HABITAT. From 2009 to 2012 the EC has contributed a culminated total of US\$ 4,000,000, UNCDF has contributed US\$ 450,000 and there has been US\$ 10.5 million in parallel funding from the Government. At the micro level, a commitment of 20% from the various farming groups (the number varies from site to site) will eventually go towards district development when realized at the end of the farming cycle and the sale of surplus farm produce.

It is unclear how the programme plans to resource itself if an extension is considered. The evaluation team however, finds the UNDP is well-suited to harmonize the formulation of a well-thought-through periodically disaggregated funding plan that is contingent on a transition plan and covers the considered periods of the programme life, mobilises other donors, and coordinates assistance.

6.3.3 National Information Management Centre

As can be seen Annex B.3, (i) from July 2006 to December 2007, funding for NIMAC came from UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BPCR) to the sum of US\$ 1,200,000, and (ii) for the period January – November 2008, funding came from UNDP's own TRAC II to the sum of 325,000. After that, the EC – UNDP Contribution Agreement came into play, with an EC grant of EUR 1,102,800 (equivalent to US\$ 1,433,640) for the period November 2008 – June 2012. This was supplemented in 2011 by UNDP cost-sharing payments towards the salary of the international Technical Coordinator (Project Manager) for NIMAC. Based on the provisional figures shared with the evaluation team, as of 31 December 2011, there was believed to be a carry-over of approximately US\$ 120,000 into 2012, but this will need to be confirmed by UNDP.

The NIMAC Project Manager has estimated (refer to Annex B.4) that planned activities for the period July - December 2012 are unfunded to the value US\$ 325,000 (equivalent to EUR 250,000).

7. FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

7.1 General Findings and Conclusions

7.1.1 General Findings

A Summary of the key findings in terms of Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability are given in Table 7.1 below. Tabulation in this way permits cross-programme comparisons. Detailed findings and conclusions, programme by programme, are presented in Section 7.2, with Best Practices highlighted in Section 7.3 and Lessons Learned extracted in Section 7.4.

(a) Policy and Strategy

The evaluation team has found that there is no clear link between decentralisation and the Civil Service Reform (CSR) and what is known as Public Sector Reform (PSR)³⁰. There are gaps and ambiguities in these policies, which should have been closely coordinated in their formulation. These are further widened in the strategies. As far as can be ascertained, there are real difficulties being encountered in implementing the CSR in individual ministries, and although the status of the PSR is not known but it too is also thought to be experiencing resistance. This will have implications for how to formulate any follow-on initiative to the programmes and project.

The Government and development partners put a lot of store in the National Capacity Development Strategy (NCDS) when it was launched in June 2010. It talked about “hard” and “soft” capacity building, which resonates with the discussion in Section 5.2.1 above. This was after all three ProDocs were signed and implementation was well under way. However, the evaluation team found little mention of the NCDS being brought into any adjusting or updating of training programmes, nor is it mentioned in the various progress reports. One would have expected that reference to and consideration of the NCDS would have been made in the preparation of the AWP for 2011 and 2012 and in the related training events and materials.

(b) Definitions and Terminology

There are a number of misconceptions that have given rise to poor definitions and use of terminology. These include (i) alternating between the terms “programme” and “project” in the CST and LDLD ProDocs, suggesting misunderstanding as well as poor editing, (ii) incorrect Performance Indicators such as using Means of Verification (e.g. “review reports”), and (iii) unquantifiable or inappropriate Baselines (e.g. “Technical capacity within GC is weak, uncoordinated and isolated, and does not address governance reforms holistically nor the complementarities of individual reform process”; “Two draft studies on fiscal impact of decentralisation and linking local governance to local government completed”).

Decentralisation carries different connotations to different people, depending where they stand, and this can be crucial in the central / local discourse and in expectations. Similarly, there is misunderstanding that local administration is the same as local government, which it is not as there is no democratic, public forum at which locally elected representatives hold local administration officials and line ministry officials to account. While Liberia is commencing on the long road to effective decentralisation and within that, local representation, decision-making and accountability, there is an immediate need to continue improving and strengthening the local administration function for security and basic service delivery. It is noted that a gap in the current decentralisation policy is the absence of a mechanism for a local democratic forum and also clarity on how local representation mechanisms should relate to and co-exist with the national legislature. The current proposal is to elect the County Superintendent, the Development Superintendent and the District Commissioners, which may or may not be the optimal long-term answer. The key, in the absence of a local mechanism - such as an elected county council - for democratic decision-making and accountability is an empowered and pro-active civil society to engage with the public administration.

³⁰ The PSR is not a specific programme *per se* but rather a functional analysis and right-sizing exercise that ministries and agencies are undertaking alongside the CSR and decentralisation.

TABLE 7.1: Key Findings

Key Area	CST	LDLD	NIMAC
1. Relevance	The CST as designed and implemented continues to show that it is one of the most relevant UN initiatives in support of restoring the State's authority at the sub-national level and in promoting peace and stability.	The LDLD Programme design represents a novelty that responds to Liberia's historic challenge of exclusion of the majority of the citizenry from decision making and governance. The programme is extremely relevant to addressing the needs of the Liberian people following years of civil and political decadence	The NIMAC has offered focused and demand-driven support to the strengthening of the designated national agency (i.e. LISGIS), as well to the county-level function (i.e. CSIOs) and to the establishing of an aid management platform and office, critical to informing national development planning, resource allocation and monitoring.
2. Efficiency	Through the UNMIL Field Office mechanism and the choice of implementing partners, the CST has delivered on its aims and objectives more efficiently than any other modality possibly could.	The LDLD is been implemented efficiently through partnership with the GC, MIA CSA and an array of UN agencies (UNMIL, HABITAT, CST etc.), which places at its disposes a range of resources for undertaking its interventions.	By complementing other D/P contributions, LISGIS and MOFAMU have been supported efficiently By linking with CST and LDLD, the project has been able to deliver its outputs and results in a timely and efficient manner at the county level.
3. Effectiveness	The CST has been visibly effective in that the county administrations are applying the skills training they received, are working in dedicated buildings, and critical PRS- and CDA-related planning, data and information systems are operational.	The evidence of the effectiveness of the LDLD abounds. The programme has not only lent considerable support to the drafting and dissemination of the National Decentralisation Policy, it supported the forging of consensus and has been at the heart of strengthening local administration capacities on PFM and local economic development and others.	LISGIS and the CSIOs are operating effectively as a result of NIMAC support but not exclusively so, although both have room for improvement. The effectiveness of the support to the MOF AMU is more difficult to ascertain as other factors are involved, and should be considered a work-in-progress for now.
4. Impact	As a result of the CST support, visibility of the State functioning at the county and district levels is promoting community and citizen engagement in planning and is fostering a tangible sense of civic normality, engagement and expectations.	LDLD support to MIA/GC has indisputably culminated into the formulation of essential legal frameworks (draft Local Government Act) and trigger deliberate effort on the part of Ministries and agencies to start deconcentrating key aspects of their functions to the counties (MOHSW/MOE)	LISGIS and the CSIOs operating effectively and efficiently, albeit within their constraints, are having a visible impact on planning and monitoring. It may be too early to assess what impact the supported AMU is having on national budgeting and resource allocation
5. Potential Sustainability	The software and hardware for county administration have been supported, with visible national ownership of the processes and systems. Sustainability will depend on leadership, continuous training and reinforcement, centre-to-county feedback, transparent prioritisation and resource allocation, and receiving timely and appropriate operations budget and cash-flow.	As Liberians embrace and develop a participation culture and the MIA gathers the capacity to effectively lead and provide oversight of local administration, the country will require unremitting efforts to consolidate governance reforms and sustainable and equitable growth and development	Technically, in terms of competencies, LISGIS and the CSIOs are well positioned regarding potential sustainability. As with the MOF AMU, there is an issue of insufficient national resources being allocated to sustain and strengthen the functions.

(c) Programme Coherence and Oversight

The CST and LDLD programmes seem to be parallel programmes with no obvious synergy in implementation as currently observed. This seems strange as the CST was in existence when the LDLD was being formulated, and both are being implemented by UNDP. It is not clear why it was decided to have two different interventions instead of integrating at very least the soft component of LDLD in CST thus ensuring a more cost – effective, coordinated intervention. The evaluation team sought to answer this but did not receive a cogent argument from any quarter as to why the LDLD initiative was not embedded and formulated within the CST framework as an existing joint programme between the UN and Government focussing on strengthening sub-national administration and governance. This could have been done whilst retaining all the elements of the current LDLD. Indeed, if done thoughtfully including due attention being given to baselines, it would have brought seamlessness to the design and delivery of capacity building as a coherent whole, and also greater complementarity in terms of the scope and sequencing of other components. This was a missed opportunity. Having said that, there is still an opportunity to re-examine the draft joint AWP (2012) and greater coherence be brought to bear, including appropriate NIMAC elements addressing sub-national needs.

While the formulation of the NIMAC project and the linkages to both CST and LDLD are clear, it is quite likely that (i) there will be unfinished elements currently under NIMAC that programmatically could and should be considered part of the CST/LDLD AWP (2012), as well as any future joint programme. Logically and programmatically other current NIMAC elements such as support at the national level to LISGIS and to the AMU at the Ministry of Finance should remain outside (refer to Section 7.2.3 below), possibly to be captured under the UNDP's current ECOMAN programme but no longer under NIMAC. For oversight coherence the Project Board should now consider CST + LDLD + NIMAC as an interlinked and interdependent initiative and as such be reviewed by a single Programme/Project Board.

(d) Monitoring and Evaluation

The evaluation team examined the reporting of progress and results by the three programmes and project. While the progress can be acknowledged, what seemed to be missing was an assessment of what remained to be done at any point in time. The key question is while the achieved results are necessary, but are they by themselves sufficient? Capacity building – which is at the heart of the three interventions - has to do with multidimensional processes as well as political, cultural, economic and societal changes. These processes if successful can produce game-changing transformations, but by their very nature are very complex with a lot of inter-linkages and inter-dependencies. While results from these processes may take a long time to come about, they nevertheless manifest themselves at different levels of the results chain, and at different times. On careful examination of all three programmes and project, the finding is that the vagueness of the objectives (not having been articulated through an RBM lens) has inadvertently led to only the reporting of what should be considered as partial responses regarding results. The old saying: “*if you don't know where you are going, then you won't know when you have arrived!*” captures the essence of the problem. The way results are reported in the progress reports are in terms of achievement or positive changes from the perspective of a starting point, whatever that may be, which was ill-defined in the first place due to the absence of a relevant baseline.

While this is understandable under the circumstances, what is needed is reporting on progress from the perspective of the desired End Result. The missing element is identifying the gap between the emerging or intermediate results and the final desired end result. This is part of a RBM monitoring approach, and usually summarised by three key questions:

- (i) At any progress reporting point in time, what remains to be done so as to achieve the desired End Result or Results? (*i.e. identifying the gap*)
- (ii) Can the gap be closed in the time available and by whom? (*i.e. identifying the time required and the actor or actors*)

- (iii) Do we and/or appropriate actors have sufficient resources to close the gap within the time available? (*i.e. identifying the resources required by the appropriate actors*)

By standing at the End Results line and looking at the oncoming completed outputs and intermediate results, one can assess whether they are sufficient or not, and if not what else needs to be addressed and by whom. In this way emerging needs, gaps and constraints not originally identified or anticipated in the programme design can be picked up, prioritised and addressed by appropriate actors, so as together with the scheduled outputs and results, should lead to the desired End Result.

(e) Resource Mobilisation

While the funding to date for all three programmes and project has been significant, when indicative budgets in the respective ProDocs are compared to actual resources mobilised (refer to Section 6.3 above), it was seen that there were challenges. With the turbulence in the global economy now in its fourth year, one is led to believe that there will be continued difficulties in this area for some time to come. The UN took steps to address this disruption by formulating and endorsing a resource mobilisation policy paper in 2010 but as far as can be ascertained, this has not been implemented. The situation is not helped by the absence of a regular Liberia donor coordination forum at which the Government and development partners could identify funding gaps in priority sectors and programmes, and agree on allocations or re-allocations as the case may be.

There is another perspective on funding shortfalls, and that is UN-formulated programme or project documents may be inherently ambitious in scope, timescale and likely funding. One wonders if by adopting an RBM programmatic approach, a proposed Government/UN programme could be rolled out in more tightly designed phases, with each phase funded on a zero-based budgeting approach and building on previous achievements. By tightly designed is meant that only a critical mass of mission-critical outputs and results - anticipated or emerging - are considered in any given period.

(f) Sustainability

This is probably the key finding of the evaluation team – sustainability. There are many elements to sustainability – leadership and management, institutional, human resources, information, access, funding and so on. Government interlocutors have signalled to the evaluation team that there is leadership to the decentralisation process, county administration, statistics and aid management but more support is needed across the piece. Whereas some have expressed concerns regarding the strength of MIA in its leadership role, the arrival of a new senior management team at the MIA may give the necessary impetus. Time will tell, but national leadership that takes full responsibility for all aspects of Government's commitment is crucial, including dealing with constraints and issues such as absenteeism, misuses of fuel allocations, and such like.

As discussed elsewhere, notwithstanding the presence of motivated professionals in the county administrations and central ministries and agencies ready to continue to do their jobs to the best of their abilities, there is clear evidence of the absence of a meaningful operations budget in many cases, which is directly affecting the overall sustainability of the results of the three programmes and project. Many have already recognized that sustainability efforts must be linked to a multi-year budget such as a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), and the ability of lead ministries and agencies, such as MIA and MPEA, to monitor key strategies and budgets.

In particular fuel budgets seem to be inadequate (not counting any abuse that may be going on) as well as being delivered late, but these issues are probably symptomatic of the wider funding problem. What struck the evaluation team was that there was no guidance on what county-based officials - county administration or line ministries/agencies - were to do to carry out their functions in the absence of transport and/or fuel. There is no confidence that making expenditures from one's own pocket will be acceptable for reimbursement. Another aspect was the absence of electricity, with some line agencies having to supply generators to their officials who were based

in county administration buildings with or without continuous power. The absence of small generators for the model district administration buildings is yet another example. The conclusion is this whole issue of recurrent budget sufficiency and timing has to be carefully considered from now on, which is a primary responsibility of Government.

However, recurrent budget difficulties are not the only factors influencing the sustainability or otherwise of the outputs and results of the three programme and project. Other factors include weaknesses in MIA capacity to lead the decentralisation implementation process, the IMSC/IAC has not been sufficiently active, a lack of clarity, linkage, political will and leadership regarding the harmonisation and implementation of decentralisation policy, CSR and PSR, amongst others. In this regard, local staff retention and incentives are also a major factor, confirmed by direct evidence to the evaluation team by the absence – continuous in some cases - of assigned county officials up to the highest levels missing from their posts. Several times the evaluation team was informed of the need for an approach to the provision of suitable, secure housing for line ministry staff assigned to counties. There were also issues of officials leaving their post for several days to collect their salaries.

The conclusion from all this is that a comprehensive approach between Government and development partners is needed to properly address the problems associated with the recurrent budget. The evaluation team would hope that with the formulation of the PRS (II), such matters will be taken into serious consideration in the accompanying MTEF and the negotiations that flow from it.

(g) Exit Strategy

The finding is that there is little or no discussion of an exit strategy in the CST and LDLD programme documents, not even component by component. To a degree this might be understandable but not excusable where CST and LDLD programmes are concerned. For its part NIMAC explicitly addresses exit strategy in its project document under Specific Objective No. 1 and reports progress against this. This is not an academic exercise; there is a real question to be answered namely, should the next CST manifestation be moved into Government ownership as UNDP will be applying DEX from 2013 onwards, or, if perhaps Government is not yet ready, should it remain with the UN for a specific period (i.e 12 – 24 months)?

A real exit strategy implies that the created structures are financially sustainable, capable of producing resources. Usually phased increases in the use of national resources are at the heart of most exit strategies. As a general principle, by forcing oneself to set out an exit strategy from the beginning – both in the round and component by component - sooner or later one identifies the potential barriers to sustainability. The issue then becomes one of deciding what to do about them. For instance, at a very simple level one might ask if say, CST should cease to undertake any further capacity building, data/information management support and public building construction/rehabilitation and just support the operational budget in part or in whole, in some or all counties in cash or in-kind. By extension this raises issues of where are the greatest added value opportunities for UN and development partners in supporting Government to progress the decentralisation and local governance agenda in Liberia.

(h) Transition

The UN Mission in Liberia is preparing for drawdown and has been holding discussions with Government. This has been widely known for some time and is being very carefully studied so as to arrive at a minimal disruption to ongoing critical operations vital for sustaining peace, security and continued reconciliation. Transition must not be thought of just as transferring UNMIL capability to UNCT or UNDP. It also raises issues of what would need to happen in order for the UNMIL Civil Affairs operations in the counties to transition to either (i) Government responsibility, or (ii) to a UNCT-led or UNDP-led field operation generally based on the same model. These are key issues and as discussed in (f) and (g) above, raise questions regarding Government commitment, leadership and resources, as well development partners' commitment. The evaluation team was informed that when UNMIL pulls out, it must take all its facilities and logistics with it. Hence, transition is not a case of merely handing a fully functioning compound including office, housing and support facilities, but a case of the UNCT or UNDP having to

decide on how it might supply, support and render secure a completely new arrangement of local offices, housing and transport in all counties.

There were several points that were brought to the attention of the evaluation team. One key message was that the transition should be equally seen as an opportunity and not just a challenge. County-level coordination in substantive terms is missing, and county-level meetings need to be more effective. But how? - by taking steps to strengthen processes and systems to reinforce local ownership and commitment, coupled with timely feedback on monitoring, and reinforcing a real sense that the meetings are added-value. Suggestions made to the evaluation team have included looking at other means of ensuring the programme continues successfully in one form or another by (i) exploring more support to the CDOs, (ii) more support to and through line ministries, (iii) having enhanced monitoring mechanism and capacity, and (iv) strengthening the centre - county linkage with a specific commitment to adopt a fit-for-purpose county structure. For instance, one suggestion was to have each County Superintendent could be empowered to oversee the CST and LDLD programmes' activities in their county, including some powers of reprimand and sanction, provided the CS was in turn properly monitored.

Germane to all this is a major concern regarding the limited decision-making authority of County Superintendents, sometimes coupled with their limited knowledge of development issues and statistics. Possible response? – To empower the County Superintendents to plan and to facilitate resource allocation decisions. On the other hand a concern has been raised with the evaluation team that Superintendents, as political appointees, would be precluded from monetary-related matters, with CDOs in a better position to handle development. Another element for improvement in this general area of local ownership and leadership is to review and improve the CDF decision-making process so as to be more transparent and to reflect inclusive deliberations with other stakeholders including civil society. Another suggestion was to focus on the County Development Officers and the deconcentrating ministries, as the driving forces of county and district development and service delivery.

Although the focus of the three programmes and project is on administration and development, the finding is that there is little or no consideration of security issues. The evidence is that the civilian justice and security sector is not sufficiently developed just yet, and this will have to be acknowledged in any transition planning. This has implications for the counties, as well as for any UN staff that might be located in the counties. There is also the UN's policy on civilian staff members being stationed in remote, low security areas, which has to be taken into consideration. The evaluation team is aware of the HUB modality under implementation, whereby key UNMIL support will be centred at up to five locations. At this time one HUB is under construction³¹ and depending on the cost outturn on that, two further HUBs³² may or may not be constructed depending on available funding. The final two HUBs³³ are in abeyance until further funding is mobilised. Indeed, following the same model it has been suggested that the Government could look at three – five regional support centres. This would have to be very carefully teased out so as not only to offer value for money as a way of complying with and promoting the Decentralisation Policy but also not to inadvertently establish friction with county administrations regarding decision-making over resources.

Regarding internal UN considerations, another concern was the challenge that the UNCT or UNDP will face in transitioning the current UNMIL Civil Affairs international UN Volunteers (UNVs) into UNDP-based UNVs or alternatively replacing them with national UNVs as required on a case-by-case basis. Another issue is that from anecdotal evidence, it is understood (but the evaluation team has no way of confirming this) that young Liberian professionals do not find the UN's UNV programme financially attractive particularly for assignments in remote areas.

In summary, the transition needs to be properly seated in a government-led programme that is informed by PRS(II), and has a realistic timeframe (up to three years has been mooted). In particular it must look at the sequence of what/where/when of not just the overall transition programme but also how each county should be addressed.

³¹ Gbarnga

³² Harper and Zwedru

³³ Buchanan and Tubmanburg

7.1.2 General Conclusions

The general conclusions are that (i) the three programmes and project have achieved important results, (ii) there are some foundations for potential sustainability in place, (iii) UNDP has added value through its comparative advantage of programme design, management and implementation in wide-ranging multi-level capacity building initiatives that no other UN agency can offer, (iv) there are ongoing and emerging needs in this area still to be met, (v) Government would welcome continued support in this area, and (vi) notwithstanding whatever logic lay behind having LDLD separate from CST originally, there is no case for formulating more than a single, coherent follow-on programme that incorporates elements of all three including NIMAC. The evaluation team has inspected the assessment report³⁴: Review of Joint Programmes of the independent consultant, and understands that any new joint programme formulation would take the accepted recommendations of this report into consideration.

There are likely to be elements current supported under the NIMAC project that need to continue at the national level but which have no direct linkage to sub-national capacity building and support. Such elements, as and when agreed between Government, UNDP and development partners may well fit into an existing UNDP programme such as ECOMAN.

7.2 Programme-specific Findings and Conclusions

7.2.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

(1) Support to Capacity Building of Local Administration

(a) Training

From the evidence presented and from personal statements made by public officials at central and county levels, the evaluation team has found that CST through its implementing partner, UN-HABITAT, has delivered fit-for-purpose training in key competencies. This appreciation extended not just to the content but also to the facilitators, events, manuals and logistics. In seeking to validate various statements, officials were asked to identify any areas which they believed should have been covered as part of the courses and workshops they attended. There were no criticisms in regard to gaps; indeed, most interviewees could identify what further training they personally would like, and this was to be seen as the next steps. Suggestions included the need to contextualise the training and the preparation of an Induction Manual for incoming staff, which would tie in with induction training. This last point is probably more related to LDLD at this time.

Concerns were raised with the evaluation team: (i) notwithstanding the good training, there was little or no follow-up and reinforcement, (ii) the success or otherwise of the Training of Trainers (TOT) approach, (iii) how well was training linked to changes in systems, processes, organisational change and actual job descriptions, (iv) there appeared to be uncertainty about what transition arrangements were being made by UN-HABITAT regarding continuity and sustainability, and (v) how training could be prioritised and made more strategic.

Regarding these various issues, the CST programme has implemented a Training of Trainers (TOT) programme country-wide with the result that there is a cadre of three or more lead trainers resident in each county. These training leaders include officials such the DS and CDO in a county, and the TOT programme is overseen by a Training Associate at the centre. The evaluation team is not in a position to assess how well these lead trainers are

³⁴ October 2010

performing, but assumes that this roll-out is being quality assured and reinforced by UN-HABITAT. The issue of continued mentoring after the conclusion of training is being addressed to quite a degree by the HOFs and their staffs being physically present on the ground and providing direct day-to-day support to local administration. There are also ties with the Capacity Development Division at MIA and with the LDLD. Strictly speaking, training needs analyses (TNA) should be undertaken periodically so that any planned training is both fit-for-purpose and demand-driven, organisation by organisation, tying into changes in systems, processes, organisational changes and actual job descriptions. However, the reality in Liberia is characterised by a state of flux regarding the implementation of the CSR, the PSR and the Decentralisation Policy. Hence, the evaluation team is not unsympathetic to the situation training providers find themselves in at present. It is not clear to what degree one or more TNA were carried out by CST possibly in collaboration with LDLD, but from the feedback received, the conclusion is that the training received was useful and appreciated.

What is not clear is what steps have been or are being taken to empower a national training provider such as the Liberia Institute for Public Administration (LIPA) to backstop and further develop the CST-provided training programme. This touches on another issue raised with the evaluation team namely, the efficiency or otherwise of having UN-HABITAT as a training provider. UN-HABITAT was part of the formulation of the CST due to its comparative advantage as training provider in the area of capacity building of local administration. It has a long track record in providing such training, and its inclusion in the formulation in 2008/09 is not a surprise. As far as the evaluation team can ascertain, it has carried out its work well and has been well-received. On the question of partnering with one or more national training providers, it is not clear to the evaluation team what discussions were held with LIPA, the University of Liberia or other national institutions, on their possible involvement in delivering, backstopping and sustaining the UN-HABITAT designed programme. From the CST ProDoc (2009 -11)³⁵ it can be seen that LIPA is identified as an Implementing Partner, and the evidence is that LIPA was present at several Joint Steering Committee meetings³⁶. Indeed, at JSC meeting No. 28, it was stated that MIA intended to engage LIPA on local governance to develop a methodology that trains local leaders online. With this in mind, the conclusion is that LIPA was involved in the CST programme³⁷ but to what degree is unclear as there is no mention of LIPA in the CST Progress Reports for 2009, 2010 and 2011. Nevertheless, before the current CST programme comes to an end, this issue of transfer and sustainability should be taken up by CST and UN-HABITAT, a point underlined some time back by the World Bank³⁸ and also a major recommendation in the CST Best Practices and Lessons Learned Workshop Report³⁹. This action would also tie in with progressing towards making training a more strategic and sustainable response to the needs of ministries, agencies and county administrations.

The evaluation team has noted that a key workshop on Impact, Best Practices and Lessons Learned of the CST training and capacity building undertaken, was facilitated by UN-HABITAT in 2011. As a result, a report including action plan has been developed that will inform future capacity development initiatives. Further training needs typically include more on M&E, more on LED, development themes, and on project planning and proposals.

It was noted that several of the line ministries' lead officials in the counties, did not receive training either under CST or LDLD. Not surprisingly, these same officials expressed interest in being included in any further training that might be provided. The conclusion is that training should be reinforced and applied if at all possible with an action-learning component with oversight by responsible ministries / agencies.

(b) Processes and Systems

Processes and systems apply at different levels, and a major challenge in restoring a working public administration at the sub-national level in a country that lost so much, is to identify, design, coordinate and sequence

³⁵ CST Programme Document (2009 – 11), Section 5: Results Framework (page 16)

³⁶ JSC meeting No. 22 (23 July 2009); JSC meeting No. 26 (04 August 2010); JSC meeting No. 27 (02 November 2010), and JSC meeting No. 28 (15 August 2011)

³⁷ CST Workplan 2011 (page 12) but not CST Workplan 2010.

³⁸ Minutes of JSC meeting No. 27 (02 November 2010), (page 5)

³⁹ Report on Best Practices and Lessons Learned (2008 – 2011) Workshop (07 – 08 March 2011), Section 11: Recommendations (page 11)

often complex restoration and reforms so as to avoid gaps and contradictions. The Decentralisation Policy notes this but in the main addresses institutional issues and processes. Nevertheless, the backdrop are the various reforms which include processes and systems (such as public financial management, public procurement), as well as the CSR and the PSR. Information flows amongst the different levels is still evolving, but by framing planning and monitoring from county to the national levels around the PRS, there is at least a good framework on which to build. However, there are gaps in the scope, quality and timing of monitoring and reporting from the district level, and from what the evaluation team can ascertain, is due to designated monitors not being empowered through appropriate awareness-raising, M&E training and resources to carry out the function. There is another issue of how this information is shared with development partners, but again, as far as the evaluation team can see, the Pillar meetings and the CDSC meetings are fora for the exchange of information and for appeals.

The evaluation team has examined how the county administration officials led by the County Superintendent have treated the planning and monitoring process. The CDA was and remains a catalyst of sorts not just for decision-making and resource allocation but also for engaging with the districts, traditional leadership structures and communities. The evidence clearly points to the CDA consultation and formulation process being greatly facilitated by the CST Civil Affairs teams in counties. But producing a document is not an end in itself. The next step is for the county administration to identify possible sources of funding and local implementation partners such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and guide them in the selection of priority projects. However, it is understood that only some counties were able to do this. Most were influenced by MIA's prioritisation of PRS-related deliverables and the centrally allocated funds tied to these PRS priorities.

For most counties the CDA is regarded as well-intended but ambitious, a working tool but still only a roadmap of sorts. Several county officials expressed concern at the unrealistic expectations on the part of the communities, but acknowledged that having brought the people into the process, why should they not expect the CDA to be transparently prioritised, funded and operationalised? The evaluation team sought clarification during their field visits regarding the connection between CDF, the Social Development Fund (SDF) and the CDA. The evidence suggests that the CDA may or may not be considered in the prioritisation of projects for funding under the CDF and where available, the SDF. There is a gap in timelines and in contributions – government, citizens and development partners including the UN. Several counties indicated that their CDA will be reviewed and revised, particularly with the advent of the PRS (II) shortly. There is evidence that indicators are not used in monitoring the CDA, that district-level plans are not on paper and that action plans are not being implemented and monitored.

Originally, UNMIL was facilitating the holding of county-level sector meetings. Once the PRS was approved, the emphasis switched to PRS-related Pillar meetings being held on a monthly basis. A typical structure⁴⁰ the evaluation team observed was as follows:

Table 7.2: Management Arrangements for Pillar Meetings at County Level

Pillar	Chair	Co-chair	Secretariat
1. Peace and Security	County Superintendent	Liberia National Police	Bureau of Immigration and Naturalisation
2. Economic Revitalization	Ministry of Agriculture	Forestry Development Authority	Ministry of Labour
3. Governance and Rule of Law	Ministry of Justice	Ministry of Gender and Development	LNP - Women and Children's Section

⁴⁰ Observed at Grand Cape Mount County

Pillar	Chair	Co-chair	Secretariat
4. Infrastructure and Basic Services	Ministry of Agriculture	Ministry of Public Works	Ministry of Education

Feedback received suggests that there is widespread recognition that UNMIL Civil Affairs and CST have made a very important contribution by facilitating these meetings and also the follow-on County Development Steering Committee (CDSC) meeting each month. Facilitation also included enforcing participation, discipline and timely circulation of agenda and minutes including follow-up and action points.

However, there remain shortcomings, which are not necessarily the responsibility of the CST. First, there is the higher issue of how the CST proceeded in the light of the weaknesses in national ownership, formulation and coordination of the roadmap CSR, the PSR, the Public Financial Management Reform and the NCDS. Did it act properly or did it act in a vacuum? From the evidence available to the evaluation team, the finding is that the CST did indeed act properly staying within the bounds of good practice in a time of flux in its dealings with and support to key national and county actors. To the side, there have been criticisms of development partners, and in context, one understands that this applies to NGOs, about not being flexible enough when requested to work on priority areas in the CDA.

The evaluation team has seen evidence that attendance is falling at meetings, and also in some instances, a line ministry attendee may not be the most senior official and as a result contributes little. On the other hand, some line ministries have concerns that planning capacity is at county level only, and there is no information exchange system outside the Pillar meetings in county. The evaluation team has learned that County Superintendents often lack knowledge of statistics and development planning. On a positive note, and building on genuine personal interest in promoting county development, a number of CDOs and CSIOs interviewed said that there was no feedback from MPEA. Hence, they would welcome an annual forum for inter-county comparisons, information exchange and networking, possibly hosted and back-stopped by MPEA in consultation with MIA and LISGIS.

There are county-specific challenges such as the geographic isolation of county seats such as Buchanan, Robertsport and Voinjama from their respective county hinterlands. It is not clear if county administrations in these and similar counties have attempted to rotate Pillar and CDSC meetings to other more accessible venues in the county. Where needed line ministries may have to adjust their directives/mandates so that county officers attend key meetings, and are given the resources to do so. A challenge is that key stakeholders do not have transport to/from meetings, which is closely linked to the bigger issue of staff retention in counties been addressed through targeted incentives.

One concern that was raised by development partners was that they knew little of how CST was carrying out asset management and handling the transfer of programme assets to Government at different levels. The evaluation team understands that there is a system within UNDP for this function, but must leave it to UNDP/CST to give a proper briefing to development partners.

(c) Government Response and Institutions

Given the importance of re-establishing the State's authority at the sub-national level, one might ask how well has Government responded to the UNDP's and development partners' support. The evidence is that the Government not only embraced the CST concept but engaged in the design of the programme, and has remained an enthusiastic partner in maximising the benefits of having the CST programme in all counties. During the course of programme implementation, there is ample evidence that key government actors – MIA, MPEA, LISGIS, County Administrations – all welcomed the support of the CST, and did what they could to involve CST in planning and

consultation exercises such as the PRS and CDA formulation, in prioritising training, in coordination such as the framework of PRS Pillar and CDSC meetings, and in engaging with civil society. The commitment of Sinoe County to contributing US\$ 30,000 towards the construction of the model District Administration Building at Geetroh, is exemplary, and there are many more examples under LDLD regarding county and districts responding to CDD training and initiatives. At no time did the evaluation team hear during its visits and meetings any criticism of the CST not being there for dialogue and planning with counterparts. One could reasonably conclude that if the national and sub-national budgets were in a better position, there would be more complementary actions taken.

Although covered in more detail in the LDLD section below, there is evidence of weaknesses across numerous ministries and agencies, which have an impact on what happens at the county level. These include, among others – poor staff monitoring and disciplining by ministries, acceptance of wasteful behaviour and poor work attitude, poor record-keeping, poor reporting little or no operating budget, particularly for fuel, and poor logistics. It is not just the county administration that is impacted; the line ministries local offices and officials are also affected. This vicious circle has an effect on staff morale, and all of which leads the evaluation team to conclude that a needs assessment is required for each county. In the same vein, there is a need to strengthen public administration systems including ministry accountability and core job specifications, which are part of the CSR and PSR initiatives and are covered in more detail under the LDLD sections.

(d) Civil Society

One might ask if it is clear for what is all the capacity building being undertaken. From discussions with civil society organisations in each of the counties visited, the evaluation team is unsure to what degree a people-centred service delivery focus is genuinely brought into and reinforced in the various training programmes. There is little doubt that there are improvements in the way county administrations are working. The litmus test is whether these improvements are translating into directly measurable improvements in the lives of rural Liberians. One can acknowledge that people are being empowered with all the changes – political, administrative, economic – that continue to occur, but basic questions remain. For how long must someone normally travel to reach a school, a clinic, a market or community centre, and how has this changed in the last two/three years? Do people know what priorities are being set and how they were set for the development of their county and district? Are they part of the monitoring effort in their location regarding what is being implemented? Do they have an opportunity to ask questions of decision-makers? If they had a good proposal for improving some aspect of their community be it health, education or economic, would they know where to go and how would they be or have been received? In direct terms relating to this evaluation, the major concerns of civil society interlocutors met are as follows, not necessarily grouped in any order of priority:

- No mention of budget or plan - need more information;
- People are not aware of what CDA projects are going ahead and why;
- Poor CDA implementation and transparency - could not better use of the Social Development fund be made and the people informed?
- Must avoid marginalisation within counties;
- Is it not possible to have more timely interventions, with more attention paid to roads (main and feeder)?
- Greater information dissemination and awareness-raising are important;
- Would it be possible to provide seed bank for all counties?
- Why not have greater involvement of disabled persons, youth and women?
- CSOs should be more involved in making proposals for government nominees;
- Local government could become more responsive by improving flow of documents and information (for baseline studies), as making available more information on court dockets and persons held (human rights), and full implementation of the Freedom-of Information Act at the local level, amongst others;
- There should be better empowerment after skills/craft training, such as the provision of tools, equipment, materials, workspace, etc.- in essence: Follow Up And Follow On!

- Various suggestions on (i) financial and in-kind support to CSOs, (ii) capacity building of CSOs at the local level, (iii) better market provision, and (iv) the CDF should look closely at supporting CSOs, especially those for women.
- Support for local finance and micro-finance
- “Less talk – more action”!

The evaluation team is not clear what the local CST officers do with the CSO feedback. It is understood that in some counties there used to be a Stakeholders Forum with *ad-hoc* meetings on project selection but with little or no follow-up or information feedback as the mechanism is not there. The conclusion is that greater use of weather-protected public information notice boards outside not only the County Administration Building but also the line ministries’ local offices. Similarly, better use could be made of local radio.

An important issue that was raised by others was the need for CSOs to fully understand the concept of “civil society” and the role it (and they) play locally and nationally. This goes to the heart of the opportunity for a special Liberian partnership between government and civil society to maintain and strengthen peace, through pro-active oversight of equitable, transparent and sustainable county development particularly during this transition period to decentralisation.

(e) Gender Responsiveness

The evaluation team interviewed the County Gender Coordinator (CGC) in each of the four counties visited. In some instances the CGC was the only person in what is supposed to be a five-person Gender team, did not always have an office with office furniture or equipment, as well as not having a regular fuel allowance if transport had been provided. In some instances, the CGC shared an office with another ministry. This is not unusual, as in another instance the evaluation team was introduced to a representative from a line ministry who had been in the county two years and still had no office. This official was relying on the generosity of others in the county administration building to allow him access to any vacant desk on a day-to-day basis, plus use of a computer, printer and photocopier from time to time. Overall, the conclusion is that there are serious problem with ministry support and logistics here, as evidenced across the four counties visited.

On the substantive aspects of gender responsiveness (GR), the evaluation team is aware that progress has been made in GR planning, data/information gathering and budgeting, although there was no real focus until now with conceptualisation being weak. What UNDP is trying to promote is a holistic approach that brings GR directly to the heart of the development process, with awareness-raising and also training provided to key actors such as MPEA, LISGIS, MIA, MOHSW, MOE and Ministry of Agriculture, as well as to several counties. The conclusion is that this should be continued at the county level, with MIA liaising with MGD on coordination and mutual support.

(f) Constraints to Economic Growth

Although not central to the CST approach as in the LDLD approach, the evaluation team has been made aware of a number of key constraints that impact on county-level economic growth and development: (i) land tenure system, (ii) common land contributions are low, (iii) insufficient capital available for investment, and (iv) a very poor county road network. The conclusion is that these constraints cannot be ignored in the scoping and planning of country-level development, administration and governance initiatives.

(2) Support to the Establishment and Running of the County Information Management and Monitoring System

From the evidence presented to the evaluation team, the establishing of the CIMM has been considerable result for the CST that is having direct and immediate impact on county-level data collection, feeding into the sub-national monitoring of the current PRS, and also to the formulation of PRS (II). The taking over of the network of Field Monitors and M&E Assistants was coordinated and handled well under the circumstances. There is

believed to be a real opportunity for the LISGIS and the CSIOs to gather and analyse disaggregated data at the county level and below, so as to monitor progress in basic service delivery and inform decision-making. This has arisen out of the census and other key surveys, which have given rise to the baseline (MGD led the validation process) now owned by LISGIS. There are further details on the GR budgeting in the Ministry of Finance under the LDLD section below.

Having said that, there are a number of issues of which the evaluation team is aware: (i) payment delays have been experienced by Field Monitors and have been brought to the attention of UNDP by others, (ii) VSATs have been broken after just three months in some instances, with neither the technical expertise in the counties to repair them, nor indeed the funds to pay for any such repair let alone the replacement of costly components, and (iii) the Internet does not always work, and monthly top-up are provided by CST but there is no operations budget as a standby. There is ample evidence that sustainability and maintenance of equipment remains a challenge for county administrations, and even more so at the district level.

A concern raised by all counties visited is that there is little or no feedback to the counties on protection data and statistics, from MGD and Ministry of Justice. Protection is a critical but not the only indicator of security in the communities, and when government at whatever level is perceived, rightly or wrongly, as not doing enough to address protection, it begins to lose the trust of the people. This is contrary to the objective of re-establishing the State's authority. With the sharing of protection-related statistics, the county administration, in consultation with the LNP and communities, can see how to prioritise and target high-incidence areas. The need for sensitivity in handling such data is recognised by those in the county administration who feel strongly that they should be part of the county's response.

The evaluation team wondered if UNMIL and CST could broker an appropriate need-to-know protection data-sharing protocol based on best practices from other transitional states.

(3) Support to County and District Infrastructure Rehabilitation/or Construction

The general sentiment from the counties is that CST is a dependable partner for county administration, and none more so than in the refurbishment of the county administration building in 14 out of the 15 counties to date. The remaining one⁴¹ is scheduled to be completed and furnished in 2012. As part of the latest phase of CST three model district buildings were constructed, and in at least one case⁴², the county administration allocated US\$30,000 as co-funding in a true sense of partnership.

Taking a generally well-regarded county administration building⁴³ as a representative example of what a two-storey county building should look like (plan area ~ 1,000m²) and which functions should be housed there, the evaluation team inspected the building and noted the following, not including toilets and storerooms, etc:

Table 7.3: Functional Use of a Typical County Administration Building

sl	room function/allocation	sl	room function/allocation
1	County Superintendent	13	Conference Room
2	County Inspector	14	Ministry of Public Works

⁴¹ Harper, Maryland County

⁴² Sinoe County

⁴³ Buchanan, Grand Bassa County

sl	room function/allocation	sl	room function/allocation
3	Land Commissioner	15	Civil Service Agency
4	Country Development Officer	16	National Security Agency
5	Religious Advisor	17	Coastal Protection Office
6	CSIO	18	Ministry of Labour
7	Magistrates Court	19	Department of Immigration
8	Traffic Court	20	Ministry of Gender & Development
9	Magistrates Chambers	21	Dev Office 1 – Dev Superintendent
10	County Attorney	22	Dev Office 2 – Dev Project Planner
11	Law Library	23	Dev Office 3 – PIU
12	LNP Sub-station (in basement)	24	County Financial Mgmt Office
Outside	Drugs Enforcement Agency		
Outside	Fire Service		

There was evidence that there a shortage of office space for other ministries and agencies at this administration building, something that the evaluation team observed in all counties visited. The question this raises is whether one such building of this size could ever realistic hold all the functions people expect of it. The conclusion must be no.

However, a building by itself is only part of the response. There needs to be power and water, as well as Internet connectivity. Some line ministries while having accepted the office accommodation have supplied their office with a generator. The evaluation team observed the sharing of electricity between ministries, as the building generator had been turned off in the past when the County Superintendent was not in residence. Several ministries and agencies stated that they would prefer to be out of the county administration building completely in their own dedicated premises and with their own generator. Regarding the model district buildings (plan area ~ 300 m²), the evaluation mission inspected two out of the three. These were single-storey, with eight or so functional rooms including a conference room but not including toilets and storerooms. In both cases there was no generator from the county administration, even though both buildings were opened in mid-2011. Needs identified included local meeting room for commissioners and traditional leaders, office equipment and also operations and maintenance funding. Sustainability and maintenance of buildings remain a challenge for local administrations, but the leadership and standards of the district commissioner or superintendent seem, to the evaluation team at least, to have a bearing on how well the district building and its environs were maintained. The contrast between the upkeep of the Compound 3 district building and the Geetroh district building speaks volumes.

One late suggestion put to the evaluation team was to examine how the district administration building contracts were implemented, which was expected to throw some light on problems encountered and the perception that there might have been weak supervision and weak links between the centre and the county. Time did not permit the evaluation team to go into such detail, but it notes that there were a number of other possibly related concerns

raised by stakeholders, giving the impression that this was not the first time such concerns were raised. It is quite possible that CST and/or UNOPS have addressed all these concerns previously with the stakeholders:

- No beneficiary input to design or construction of district building;
- No local employment opportunity during the construction;
- Cheap building materials might have been used, and questions about UN supervision; and
- Impression that CST might have paid too much for the model district buildings.

In Monrovia, the evaluation team was informed by several interlocutors that within the spirit of the decentralisation strategy, the Government would like each county administration to have a Government or County Centre (exact title not fixed at this stage) on a campus of somewhere between 25 and 50 acres relatively close to the centre of the county town. There are likely to be a number of challenges in realising this, not least of which is that all counties visited there were several ministries or agencies which already had what appeared to be fit-for-purpose premises⁴⁴, some on a sizeable plot of land. For instance, the Ministry of Agriculture county office in Margibi has a twelve-acre campus, which included training/instruction building, seed beds, green houses, warehouse, etc.

Although there is little doubt that there is a hundred or more district administration buildings to be built or refurbished throughout the country, the question is whether UNDP should be in the business of organising the construction of public buildings, notwithstanding its role in the past. It comes down to comparative advantage and area of focus. Germane to this discussion are the criticisms (rightly or wrongly) voiced by national stakeholders of UNDP's procurement process and a perception in some counties that UNDP/UNOPS does not give local contractors a chance. There may be valid reasons for the large number of local building contractors not pre-qualified to undertake the construction of important public buildings in rural Liberia, but nevertheless, there are perception and communication issues here for UNDP and UNOPS to address.

7.2.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

(I) LDLD Support to Decentralisation Process: Establishing Liberia's decentralisation policy and its legal framework

(a) General

Information gathered from assessment undertaken by the evaluation team, showed that LDLD support to Government (i.e. MIA and GC) Decentralisation processes has significantly impacted the development, endorsement and launch of the National Policy on Decentralisation. Through inquiries, and inspections, the evaluation team found that GC/MIA with resource and technical assistance from LDLD has made considerable progress in the formulation of correlated legal frameworks for decentralisation (formulation of Local Government Act pending as studies are ongoing), Constitutional Referendum Bill drafted, Draft National Strategy on Decentralisation developed). A number of essential processes including mandate and functions review, deconcentration of line ministries and agencies functions to counties, fiscal decentralisation-heralded by MOHSW and MOE, local administration capacity development and production and utilization of PFM manuals are ongoing.

The evaluation team did not see any baseline to guide the measurement of advancement towards the achievement of programme objectives, "Model County Administration" and or roadmap for decentralisation. The evaluation team did not see evidence of pursuing the CSR hand-in-hand with the Decentralisation Policy, although there are undoubtedly substantial human resource challenges at both national and sub-national levels. De-concentrated functions will require specific capacity and skill for effective administration and service delivery at especially the county levels. From a review of the National Decentralisation Policy, the evaluation team was unable to

⁴⁴ MOE in Buchanan; Ministry of Agriculture in Kakata (Margibi County)

identify a clear link between the proposed County Legislative Assemblies and the National Legislature, neither did the team find indication of the electoral constituency base for members of the national and county legislatures (i.e. are administrative districts exclusive or part of political or electoral districts?).

From discussions had with the UNDP and others, the evaluation team came away with the impression that deconcentration is ongoing: in substance – yes; but the form – not clear. UNMIL Civil Affairs recounted the enormous challenges to decentralisation and local administration, pointing to the lack of mechanisms and failure of ministries to monitor, translating into wasteful behaviour and attitude, poor record-keeping, poor reporting and poor logistics. There was a suggestion for a needs assessment to provide a benchmark to track progress. The Superintendent - Sinoe County found LDLD very helpful, but stressed the need to design a step-by-step approach that outlines a definite course to be pursued for deconcentration, delegation and devolution. He emphasized the need to redefine “health service delivery” so that it includes the kind of facilities and package, a de-concentrated health centre should offer.

On further examination by the evaluation team, it was clear that there is also a need to focus on access/roads and infrastructure and educational infrastructure that seek to address the apparent lack of incentive for children and youth to attend and stay in school. Access to school may required more than just erecting a facility. It might entail examining other enabling factors (tuition assistance scheme for poor and deserving, social activities - environmental distractions etc.).

While LDLD interventions are not focused on infrastructure, the evaluation team found that the absence of basic housing, health care facilities and roads represent a critical challenge for devolving power to local people and advancing service delivery at sub-national levels. Thus a multi-layer single program that furthers relevant activities or component other interventions like the CST are amongst important considerations to be made.

The inactivity of the Project Board was determined to be a missed opportunity for better management of the programme. Perhaps the UNDP could do more given that it co-chairs the Board? The evidence suggests that there is a need to enhance the capacities of the PMU staff in programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and strengthening the terms of reference of the Monitoring and Reporting Associate to complement the tracking of progress and key results of the programme with the M&E Officer in MIA. This, amongst others, would position it (i.e. the PMU) to be more effective and efficient,

b. Local Economic Development

From the evidence gathered and discussions had with various stakeholders, both in field with project beneficiaries and local government officials such as District Commissions, the evaluation team finds that the LDLD is a very good benchmark for community focus. Utilizing its CDD participatory model, the programme combines both economic and skill empowerment. In Grand Bassa and Sinoe Counties where the LDLD is rolling out the Local Economic Development component of its programme (which is not to be mistaken for the LED training module under CST), the evaluation team saw evidence that the initiative has mobilized beneficiaries into an industrious force for the production of locally-grown produce such as rice, pineapple, cassava. In addition to the economic benefits that may accrue to those local people, the programme provided basic tools (cutlasses, hoes, axes, shovels, wheelbarrows) and farming equipment such as power tractors to facilitate the tilling of farm land, skill training in aquaculture, tuber and root cultivation etc. While beneficiaries were appreciative of the support provided through the programme, they had concerns. The community level project management team (PMT) when interviewed in Geetroh indicated their plan to have their cassava milled into Gari/Farina, but was worried that there was no market and no transport to sell their surplus produce. This appears to contradict what the District Commissioner, who had been interviewed earlier, had indicated namely, that purchasers were coming to Geetroh from Zwedru, Buchanan and Greenville.

Generally, access to markets, preservation mechanism such as cold storage, mobility and the sustainability of the intervention given the small amount of land cultivated (14 acres for a beneficiary community of 32- 45 families,

who are entitled to retain 80 % of harvest-sale proceeds), constituted their key concerns. It was unclear as to whether the amount of land cultivated, was consistent with the indications (49 acres) in the programme document. From observation from the evaluation team which was further confirmed by local beneficiaries during visits to the project sites, the farm land cultivated was about 14 acres in measurement not 49 acres as stated in the programme document. A similar concern arose about the accuracy or otherwise regarding the alleged figure of 52 acres cleared and planted in the cassava farm in Geetroh. The evaluation team is unclear how the measurement was done and by whom (i.e. whether the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy or Ministry of Agriculture were involved). Discussions held with the Ministry of Agriculture Officer in Sinoe County highlighted the insufficiency of tools as a challenge (County Administration did the procurement). The evaluation team further noted from the same conversation, that while the profits were to be split: 20% overhead charge going to the district fund and 80% of profit to be distributed amongst the selected farmers, there was no discussion, guidance or procedures on replenishing the investment funding through deduction.

Some inadequacy of the LDLD's local economic development investment was also emphasised by the Development Superintendent of Sinoe County. He highlighted support for Fisheries as a need and in the same vein pointed out that local imprest funds is too small (~ US\$2,500) given remoteness from Monrovia. A representative of Civil Society in Grand Bassa County said LDLD has "failed" as it did not liaise with Ministry of Agriculture and Civil Society (i.e. agriculture-focused NGOs) was not involved - hence the problem of crop selection and of getting crops to markets. He also expressed concern and showed a sense of helplessness about the sizes of the farms-stressing "small farms are unproductive – what to do?" In this regard, the possibility of establishing cooperatives is something for beneficiaries with CSO guidance could take up with the Ministry of Agriculture.

The Development Superintendent of Grand Bassa County also thought the LDLD/LED mix of cultivated crops represented a missed opportunity as it has created a competition with projects in rice, cassava and pineapple in one location. It was unclear to the evaluation team how the farming crops were determined from area to area. It might be important to allow farming communities to have a say on what to grow. Discussions with the Geetroh PMT revealed that cassava is easier than rice to harvest (– but is that the only reason to do it?) and give the impression that beneficiaries did not understand why one crop was chosen for cultivation over another.

It is evident to the evaluation team that prompt efforts are required on the part of local administration officials to facilitate timely access of communities to farming equipment acquired under the LDLD programme. For instance, the evaluation team understands that a Chinese milling unit and generator have been paid for by the LDLD but as yet remain to be collected because the no one from the District Administration will travel to Monrovia to advise the supplier on where to deliver the purchased items.

The evaluation team found that the agro-processing hall construction, which started since 2010 is yet to be completed. From an inspection of the structure which is supposed to host cassava and rice mills, the evaluation noted what appeared to be poor quality of the materials and of the construction in general. Some pillars were found to be free-standing, disconnected from any tie beam or roof truss. The contractor, who the DC said was selected by the Development Superintendent, complained of the unavailability of cement and sand to facilitate the work.

The evaluation team also noted that the bricks being used in the construction of the hall, are been produced locally by community people. The evaluation team was not aware of what quality control, including materials testing, regime was in place, and therefore wonders if the building will be fit-for-purpose over its expected lifespan, but must leave it to others to check this.

c. Facilities and Incentives

(i). Facilities (housing, health and education)

It was discovered by the evaluation team through interviews conducted both in Monrovia (MOE) and Sinoe County (County Health Office, Ministry of Gender and Development (MGD) and MOE local offices) that the absence of decent and adequate housing, health or educational facilities pose a serious challenge to the discharging of deconcentrated functions, as obtaining skilled personnel with families to reside and work in the counties, is difficult. Accordingly the few willing to take up posts are often unable to efficiently perform their duties because they commute between Monrovia and their respective areas of assignments from time to time to seek medical attention, thus their continuous absence undermine the delivery of key services. Many simply refuse outstation assignment because there are no functional schools for their children to attend.

Although the evaluation team found evidence of deconcentration in the areas of education, health etc., the biggest problem is no living quarters for teachers, nurses and midwives – renting is not always possible or viable. Decentralisation is new to Liberia and as such must have leadership, protection and monitoring of the process. The evaluation team also observed that while decentralisation has the potential to improve equity in the distribution of infrastructure as local administrations across the counties gain more latitude and funding to serve their citizens, the existence of certain infrastructure was deemed critical to deconcentration and effective service delivery at the local levels. The evaluation team noted concerns expressed by line ministries and agencies' staffs in Grand Cape Mount and Margibi Counties regarding the poor situation of basic infrastructure in somewhat isolated segments of the counties.

As the decentralisation process unfolds, Government will be under increasing pressure to ensure the quality and consistency of infrastructure. There is a need for establishing a network plan, choosing locations, setting standards and formulating maintenance systems in order to assure the well-being of citizens in various locations, and local or sub national governments seek to provide services that meet local needs.

d. Salaries

The evaluation team noted the importance of salaries to attracting and retaining trained individuals. However, this is one part of a bigger challenge for Government namely, the focus, political will and the resources to implement the relevant parts of the CSR linking to salaries / incentives / career development to real performance and educational/professional training. From interviews in various counties the evaluation team learned that allegedly that the public salary structure is the single biggest disincentive for recruitment. People with skills, often obtained through Government and/or development partner-supported training programmes are in demand by large employers in the private sector, who are able to pay substantially more for talent and potential. What this means for a person in local administration employment is that it is easier to find greener pastures elsewhere. The implications should be clear. It is now more important than ever to retain the skilled members of teams who have been involved in leading or implementing key reforms.

The evaluation team is not aware of evidence of a uniformed pay and incentives structure across the various government entities. Fuel allocation for example was different from ministry to ministry. Civil servants similarly situated in terms of ranks and job function appeared to be entitled to varying level of incentives or allowances. The CSR reflects pay and grade reforms, which are critical to hiring choices (which should be merit-based) through a competitive process. The evaluation team learned that this did not for instance cover national security institutions such as shte police, the army and the National Security Agency (NSA). Hiring individuals who are truly competent is vital to effective performance and enhanced government capacity to deliver the public goods. With the right salary structure, talented people who are performing well and realising real results in their positions tend to be satisfied with their work and can easily remain in public service for an extended period of time. A simple recognition ("Thank You" letter from the Minister, or certificate) of such individuals for their efforts may go a long way in making them feel that they are valued and appreciated.

(II) LDLD Support to Strengthening of Local Administration Capacities elaborating and strengthening procedures, processes and systems for effective public expenditure management at the County, District and Sub-district levels.

a. Linking Decentralisation and National Capacity Development Strategy

Amongst the most critical challenges to the ongoing decentralisation process, is the dearth of capacity. Accordingly, the LDLD interventions include attempts 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.

Though necessary, the evaluation team did not find evidence of linkages between LDLD's capacity building initiatives for local administrations within the wider National Capacity Development Strategy, nor did it find the LIPA to be strategically attuned to and positioned to further the sustainability of the pressing capacity needs of the public administration.

The NCDS is a ten-year plan with clear mechanisms for coordinating capacity development initiatives. It includes an agenda that highlights Liberia's capacity development priorities and outlines the roles of partners in supporting the new capacities required to kick-start and sustain the country's development. Its approach is systemic and emphasizes a comprehensive move towards capacity development and the need to realize synergies. The strategy anticipated a cohesive framework for the coordination of the multiple CD initiatives within its national development planning and ongoing visioning process. In its list (Liberia Emergency Capacity Building Support (LECBS) Project, the Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) and the Senior Executive Service (SES)) of ongoing capacity interventions, the NCDS does not reference pioneering CD initiative such as CST or LDLD.

The conclusion is that future CST/LDLD capacity development initiatives need to bridge such a disconnect by ensuring that interventions are tailored to dovetail with the NCDS. This will not only add value but foster interventional coherence, limit duplication of efforts, ensure quality assurance, and the channelling and coordination of capacity development intervention to where it is most needed. From the perusal of internal communication, quarterly and annual programme reports, procurement and financial policies, the evaluation team noted an appreciable adherence to acceptable standard. Nevertheless, LDLD's PMU indicated that it would benefit from targeted capacity strengthening in programme management, monitoring and evaluation.

b. Information Sharing and Coordination

Several persons and institutions interviewed by the evaluation team emphasised the existence of a communication gap about the decentralisation specifically, the ongoing deconcentration of functions by the different government entities and other key national processes and programmes.

The evaluation team sampling of views in and out of Monrovia, provided validation about the lack of clear and coordinated information on key national processes, including the ongoing de-concentration in furtherance of the Government's plan to decentralise. It was not clear to the evaluation team that institutions perceived themselves as members of a team, nor was there evidence that they understood their roles, and responsibilities within the ongoing decentralisation process- others feel that they are being left out of the loop.

It was, however, clear to the evaluation team that there was no effective communication of the key steps and indicators of deconcentration. Consequently, it is unclear to the evaluation as to whether all institutions are on the same page. There were indications for more robust efforts on the part of the lead intuitions GC and MIA to ensure the inclusion of all stakeholders in decision making process, especially since the decisions will affect their institutions

as well. This can help to create a culture of involvement and will generate new ideas and perspectives that might not have been thought of. There was proof that ministries and agencies look forward to a forum that harness the sharing of knowledge and information - that will be equally beneficial in recognizing model institutions, stimulating feedback and identify loopholes - continuously. The evaluation team could not find a strong link and real interactive communications between line ministries and their local axillaries in the county, which could result in frequent feedback, basic support and oversight, thus enhancing functions and performance.

The conclusion is that the UNDP could play a lead role in advancing communications about LDLD and the wider reforms and decentralisation process by applying greater efforts to ensure and sustain the proper functioning of already established coordination mechanisms such as the IMSC/IAC. This is important given that the evaluation team found no evidence of the existence of a clear communications strategy to guide the collection, packaging, and dissemination of information relative to the program and the ongoing decentralisation.

(III) **Launching of a District or County Fund, designed to establish a generic fiscal framework for programming inter-governmental transfers, being part of the national system of public expenditure management**

a. Public Financial Management at Local Government levels

Liberians have for long aspired for shared governance, which entails the assumption of authorities, demonstration of capacity and management of resources for efficient local governance and the effective delivery of services. In consideration of the discussions had with MCI, UNDP, MOF, MIA, GEWEE JP etc., The evaluation team was able to find evidences of fiscal decentralisation and emerging commitment by local administrations to utilise the financial and procurement regulatory framework, CDF guidelines and to adhere to best public financial practices using Budgeting and Procurement Manuals, produced with support from LDLD and in partnership with PPCC, LIPA (initially at least), MOF, MIA, UN-HABITAT etc.

The evaluation team further discovered that MOHSW and MOE had initiated the transfer of fiscal responsibility to counties using different approaches. MOH County Health Offices now operate their own budgets, have in-house administrators, accountants and procurement officers who implement, record and report periodically on financial transactions and expenses incurred by the county team in the delivery of health services. However, there are restrictions and authorizations are required if the expenditure on a particular item exceeds a certain amount. Funds are requested periodically and replenished only after the submission of reports and following certification. The MOE on the other hand, has set up County Educational Boards, which provide oversight for staff-teachers recruitment, development -training and authorizes expenditures from periodic County School Grant, which are transferred to the counties for the purchasing of school equipment, text books etc.

From discussions held with members of the County School Boards in Grand Cape Mount and Margibi Counties, the evaluation team noted that the CEBs were challenged in the execution of their responsibilities given the lack of allocated and facilitating resources (operational budget/ vehicles)-board members live at different points and constant movements were difficult, in addition to the fact that the County Education Officer (CEO) and District Education Officer (DEO) had little or no support. Where a motor bike was provided, refuelling posed a challenge as only five gallons of fuel/gasoline was provided per month and even that was provided on a quarterly basis. In the case of Grand Cape Mount County, the Chair of the CEB (i.e. the CEO) did not reside in the County and as such was not available to attend Pillar meetings. Consequently the CEB have not been able to meet, plan and execute CEB activities.

On the other hand, the evaluation team found evidence that the CEB of Margibi County was making progress despite the odds, and was planning a County Education Conference for this July. This CEB had already commissioned a survey of the school system, which identified that while the MOE had budgeted for 173 schools in

the county, there were actually 280 - hence the inadequacy of the allocation. The survey according to the CEB also identified the lack of qualified teachers as the biggest challenge in the county school system.

From additional inquiries on fiscal decentralisation through personal interviews, the evaluation team determined that the focal person for decentralisation in the different ministries and agencies required training to facilitate the process and that establishing financial institutions such as banks in the various counties were critical to make possible certain transactions. Both MIA and MOF were recommended for capacity strengthening in Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB), which was acknowledged as a new phenomenon in Liberia. The evaluation team noted that the absence of banks in the several rural parts of the Country represents a serious challenge to fiscal decentralisation (i.e. transfers). It cannot be overemphasised that training and studies are necessary for operationalising fiscal decentralisation and that given the role of the MOF in providing oversight and monitoring MOF capacity would require support in acquiring the tools for GRB and strategic training in M&E in order to effectively play its role.

From discussions held with the HOFO in both Grand Cape Mount and Margibi Counties and the CSIO in Grand Cape Mount County, the evaluation team found indications that attendance at training organised at the local levels was hinged heavily on whether or not "sitting fees" were provided. This impacts essential skills and building local knowledge of key concepts, and as such remains a challenge. The evaluation team is unclear about how MIA and GC intend to tackle this issue, but emphasising and incentivising skills upgrading for career progression would send a strong message to local civil servants. Additionally, aligning training priorities and plans with the strategic priorities of lines ministries and agencies, as in the case of the strategic plan of the MIA, is critical to meeting the large training needs at both the national and sub-national levels.

b. Gender Responsive Budgeting:

The evaluation team found evidence that the initiation of GRB has begun. This is particularly important for drawing synergies and promoting public - private partnership envisaged in the joint action plan to reduce hardships amongst women and girls. It is also crucial to ensuring access to assets, to improving productivity and incomes, as well as to health, education and skill development, and the welfare of not just women and girls but also of families and society at large.

It was, however, unclear to the evaluation team as to how well this concept is understood within government institutions and how much more effort was necessary for it to be adopted as a pillar of government budgeting. Nevertheless, there is evidence that points to the MOF and UNDP desiring to adopt and promote GRB so as to eliminate gender inequalities, by emphasising budgetary allocations and programmes that potentially benefit women.

(IV) The resultant effective management of the LDLD programme, whose processes shall promote Liberia's quest for decentralisation

a. Sustainability and Transition

The rationale of a programme like the LDLD and the support it has garnered for the government and people alike, goes beyond just attaining a decentralised system of governance with functioning local administrations that are competent enough to propel the efficient management of public resources and the delivery of basic social services. Its ultimate aim resonates further with the aspiration of ordinary Liberians for improved living conditions, equal access to justice and resources, equitable development and shared governance.

This no doubt requires deep-rooted civic culture, persistent local engagements and ownership grounded in informed citizens' actions that strengthens linkages between communities and local governance for continuous improvement in public affairs, long term growth and development.

Strengthening civil society capacity alongside government remains a critical trust for sustained citizens' involvement that exacts accountability.

b. Sustaining, national security and the rule of law

UNMIL's drawdown and partnerships presents a favourable prospect for national ownership. The scale-down and staged withdrawal of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) is a process that hinges on the ability to develop sustainable capacity within Liberian institutions and individuals to prevent a return to conflict or disorder.

Civil Society Organisations' (CSO) role in leveraging its constant monitoring and advocacy of the potential for better governance cannot be over-emphasised. CSOs will, however, require strengthening in order to assume protection responsibilities in especially the monitoring and reporting of threats to human security, peace and governance. Expanding the space for CSO engagement is essential to ensuring citizens' participations and for positioning them to actually make sure that government officials do not go unchecked or abuse power or public resources. This oversight role of civil society is long-established by the Government M&E framework for the monitoring of the PRS and the CDA.

The evaluation team noted that while the PRS Tracking Network with support from the UNDP and others has been monitoring the PRS, amongst other things, to determine how effective services are delivered and assess citizens' participation and understanding of governance and budget processes, the CDA has not been similarly systematically tracked. The inactivity of the some of the DDCs and the implication for county development planning, execution and project monitoring at the district levels are noted. The governance assessment mechanism to monitor decentralisation and local development in Liberia acknowledges the critical role of non-state actors and notes the funding difficulty faced by CSOs in institutionalizing systematic monitoring mechanism across the country. MIA, GC and development partners will probably need to support the establishment of civil society's involvement from the outset and throughout implementation of the national decentralisation policy as a requirement.

Sustaining a decentralized governance system that would allow considerable leverage of self-government would indeed contribute to peace, security, and protection by enabling the majority of citizens, including vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, to directly participate in the decision-making and development processes taking into consideration their needs and circumstances. The evaluation team has concluded from its site visits that CSOs are not currently as well-positioned as one would have hoped for to ensure that when decentralisation takes place, governance does not only exists in the structural form only, but in practical form as well, so as to avoid the danger of frustrating local population and fuelling conflict associated with unmet needs, or repressive local authorities.

The evaluation team found that in Grand Cape Mount County, as in other places visited, CSOs lack technical capabilities in computer operation, know-how in evidence-based advocacy, public policy analysis and basic resources (computers, mobility etc.) to facilitate their work. Access to local administration information regarding budget, programmes and the perception of local authorities that CSOs were their "enemies" was also contributing to tensions and the isolation of seemingly independent CSOs from local decision-making processes.

7.2.3 National Information Management Centre

(a) Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services

(i) LISGIS – The Voice of Government on Statistics

LISGIS is the designated Government agency with the mandate to coordinate and disseminate information and data, to carry out analysis and to comment of statistical matters.

The Liberian National Statistics System (NSS) is comprised of 18 line ministries, and there are many stakeholders. There is a LISGIS Board made up of a Chairperson and thirteen members. The Minister – MPEA chairs the LISGIS Board but due a very busy schedule has not been able to convene meetings regularly. It is understood that no delegation of this authority has taken place when the Minister has been away. This may be as a result of the importance MPEA places on this function, but alternatively it may also be a missed opportunity. The Board met only once in 2011. Whereas the Board has an important role in the oversight and guidance of LISGIS, concerns have been raised that it is reluctant to amend LISGIS Act⁴⁵. This is a need first raised in 2008⁴⁶ and reiterated to the evaluation team by some stakeholders who have expressed concern that in government, statistics are not taken as seriously as they should, to amend the Act. The aim is to strengthen LISGIS by (i) giving it a stronger coordination mandate, (ii) clarifying issues relating to functions of LISGIS and other ministries and agencies, inter-linkages, and the promotion of activities consistent with an NSS, (iii) reducing the size of the current Board to Chair plus eight members, with a different composition and enhanced powers, and (iv) renaming LISGIS with a simpler, clearer name. A Technical Committee for Statistics exists – but it is understood to be more about LISGIS informing members about its activities. Another concern raised is that line ministry representations have been infrequent and often changing.

Statistical data and management in Liberia are still evolving. LISGIS has networks across the country and is making efforts to improve. The challenge is how to coordinate analysis by sector. There is a focus person in LISGIS for major sectors, but the evaluation team has been led to believe that counterparts in line ministries are weak. Development partners may be keen to strengthen not only LISGIS but also line ministries in this regard. A concern raised was that Government needs to give greater priority to statistics and thus to supporting the work of LISGIS through the national budget. This was underscored by concerns that MOF does not truly understand the importance of better, accurate and timely statistics, and as a result the insufficient annual allocation to LISGIS. Another concern raised by some stakeholders is that LISGIS can be distracted by donor-driven surveys. The conclusion was that it needs to stay focused on its core functions.

(ii) National Strategy for the Development of Statistics

The NSDS was issued in July 2008 and its over-arching objective is that by 2015, the national statistics system in Liberia will be well-coordinated, harmonised and efficient with performance that is consistent with national, regional and international standards and is responsive to the country's development agenda. It emphasises that public trust in the quality and value of official statistics is vital. The Strategy has five long-term strategic objectives:

01. Making Statistics Relevant to National and Local Development
02. Devising an Efficient Capacity Building Plan for Liberia's National Statistics System
03. Developing a Coordinated, Harmonised and Effective National Statistics System
04. Ensuring the Adoption and Consistent Use of Relevant Statistical Methods and Standards
05. Developing and Managing an Efficient Approach to Information-Sharing

The original estimated cost⁴⁷ of implementing the NSDS was put at US\$ 47 million (2008-2012), of which Government funding was expecting to cover US\$ 24.49 million with the balance of US\$22.66 million to be funded by development partners.

From the evidence to date, the evaluation team has concluded that it has been a struggle to pursue NSDS implementation, and that Strategic Objective No.3 is perhaps the biggest challenge facing LISGIS. This goes back to the difficulties raised in sub-section (i) above, regarding the authority of LISGIS. However, this is not the only issue.

⁴⁵ The National Statistics And Geo-Information Act (2004)

⁴⁶ NSDS (July, 2008) – Chapter Six (page 25)

⁴⁷ NSDS (July, 2008) –Annex C (pages 35 - 37)

Although some sectoral analysis is being done by LISGIS, stakeholders have concerns regarding the depth of competence within LISGIS to both undertake highly technical analysis and also to quality assure the sector analyses undertaken by line ministries. The conclusion is that this must not be allowed to continue.

The evaluation team is aware of issues regarding the National Accounts (2010) prepared by LISGIS but which, it is understood, have not been validated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Rather these are considered to be “experimental”. As far as can be ascertained there are a number of weaknesses among which are (i) the lack of cooperation from big trading organisations who refused to complete and return the data questionnaire, (ii) the absence of the informal sector in the Household Income Survey (HIS), and (iii) the Consumer Price Index (CPI) is based on an outdated “basket”, which goes back to 1964. As a rule, national accounts surveys need to be done annually. The World Bank is trying to help LISGIS with the latest National Accounts exercise and is funding two consultancies covering: (i) the Establishment Survey, and (ii) the HIS. In the World Bank’s estimation LISGIS needs approximately US\$500,000 for carrying out and compiling the HIS annually. This is crucial as the HIS must be undertaken not only in its own right, but also to develop better skills in LISGIS under a learning-by-doing or action-learning approach. The expectation is that a realistic and comprehensive set of National Accounts will be completed in 2014. In the same vein, the conclusion is that core surveys must be carried out as scheduled.

(iii) Capacity Building and Education

There has been a lot of capacity building for LISGIS, not only from the UNDP but also from other development partners such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank. The finding is that LISGIS has the experience and expertise to formulate, undertake, validate and quality assure surveys, there is evidently a need to strengthen the skills for sectoral and more technical analyses. However, LISGIS does not operate in a vacuum. Welcome as the capacity building to date has been, LISGIS itself has raised a concern regarding who is supposed to train line ministries and from which ministry’s or agency’s budget? From LISGIS’s experience of various Pillar and County Development Steering Committee meetings, it has become clear that line ministries lack the capacity to collect and validate proper data regarding their own operations in the counties. This sentiment has been confirmed by development partners - line ministries require training in sector data collection, validation, management and usage.

This is linked to another issue namely, the weaknesses until recently in the national tertiary education system to provide trained statistics graduates. For a long time, statistics was only offered as a module within a Mathematics or Science degree course at the University of Liberia (UL). There is a one-year Certificate course in Statistics offered, but for Masters and Doctorate level studies, students must travel abroad. However, LISGIS in partnership with the UL initiated a degree course in population studies, and UL has already graduated two classes of undergraduate students in Demography. A full bachelor’s degree course in Statistics is about to be launched but the exact date is unknown at this time.

Another weakness is that some County Superintendents are unaware of the use (and abuse) of statistics. Through the CST, and NIMAC, local training is offered in development issues, planning, monitoring and evaluation, which touches on data, information and statistics issues. The evidence suggests that a more focused training course is needed for the CS and DS, with linkage to and input from the CDO and CSIO, on proper data and information management and statistics at the county level. In parallel, while CSIOs have the know-how to collect and compile data, they are unable and possibly are not encouraged to analyze them. The finding is that this situation needs to be rectified and a more specific training course on county data analysis should be offered to CSIOs, and also to CDOs if needed.

A mid-term review of capacity building for statistics was undertaken⁴⁸, but it is not clear to the evaluation team what happened since, as it has not sighted this report. In addition, from the evidence available, greater expertise in GIS and cartography is needed.

(iv) Operations and Funding

LISGIS believes that it has the necessary financial management capacity to use and properly account for budget support or project funding from development partners. It has been receiving funds from UNDP under a partial NEX arrangement, and prefers NEX over DEX. If this is so, and here the evaluation team must defer to UNDP's assessment of LISGIS fiduciary management record, then the conclusion is that UNDP should explore how it could move to a full NEX modality regarding future support to LISGIS. As mentioned in sub-section (i) above, LISGIS has had funding difficulties due to the budget ceiling, so it must rely on development partners for support.

The evidence is that the CSIO concept is working – but there are shortfalls in operating budget. The evaluation team was informed that CSIOs are only entitled to salaries and fuel. Mobility is a serious challenge, both for central and field staff, and as a result LISGIS is unable to oversee field operations as much as it would like. Nevertheless, the evaluation team has been informed that discipline is being applied regarding county level absenteeism, which is commendable. There is nothing in the budget for LISGIS decentralisation; LISGIS is relying on development partners. Maintenance and spare parts costs for vehicles are very high, and can be increasingly problematic the further one gets from Monrovia. In practice vehicles are not maintain routinely, and often only when there is an upcoming survey which has a budget line for vehicles. There are options for consideration regarding how LISGIS might better support its field offices for decentralisation, among which is the concept of “regional centres” (like the HUBs discussed in Section 7.1.1 (h) above).

From discussions with LISGIS and others, the evaluation team has learned that the Civil Service Agency's pay and grading system is the cause of much frustration. A major complaint is that the CSA salary scales framework does not recognise statisticians as a “specialist” category, in the way that doctors are recognised by the MOHSW and teachers are recognised by the MOE. This has led to people having been trained leaving LISGIS to take up employment elsewhere, particularly in the private sector. A similar issue is discussed in the next sub-section below regarding ICT personnel.

(v) Data Processing, GIS and Information & Communications Technologies

These three service Divisions have a range of responsibilities from managing Liberia Info and updating the sites of the various line ministries (Data Processing), offering statistics-based geographical information products and services (GIS), to ensuring appropriate, reliable and secure information hardware and communications at all times (ICT). All divisions have staffs but they need more training in order to be more productive. LISGIS produces a lot of information, but communicating such data to end-users in a user-friendly format has been a challenge. Currently LISGIS is looking at disseminating survey representations in the form of maps, be they national, county or district.

In general the evaluation team was informed that working conditions not conducive. The evaluation team visited the offices of each division to see for itself. The evidence is that original computers and printers, understood to have been supplied by NIMAC, are in the main not working, and in several cases staff members are using their own laptops. A concern raised was that LISGIS as an organisation needed to appreciate more and respect the equipment received from development partners including NIMAC. The equipment donated by NIMAC was not assigned to persons with the requisite knowledge for operating them. There is no log to track users, and it is understood that some equipment may have taken away for personal use. If this is correct then it is evidence that there is no asset management system as generally understood in place, which clearly needs to be rectified.

⁴⁸ *Assessment of the Statistics Training Needs of the Liberia Statistical System – Paris21 and GIZ (Nov 2010)*

The Data Processing Division lacks basic equipment (computers and basic statistical packages) for effective functioning. Software tools requires periodic updating, as the Division is currently using the 2007 desktop version, while there is a 2010 version available.

The GIS Division has its own challenges. LISGIS provided advanced foreign training to six GIS staff in Ghana, but only one is still remains in the Division – the other five have moved on to more gainful employment in the private sector. The Division has also conducted a nine-months training in GIS for interns, who like their former Data Processing colleagues, may move on in the near future, particularly as LISGIS advocacy for their being included in the government payroll has not been successful even after two years of trying. Having just six-month contracts does little to foster job security. Support is required to facilitate county offices moving from manual map-making to electronic mapping. Current software in use is version (9.1) with only one license which has operational limitations (i.e. one user at a time) for the current scale of work in LISGIS. The Division indicated that having version (10.1) IGIS with multiple licenses will be very helpful in carrying out their work.

Regarding the ICT Division, two 2 Terabyte (Tb) servers purchased by NIMAC less than 18 months ago are broken due to local power outages and/or surges. They were supplied for whatever reason without a surge protector or universal power supply (UPS). Upon enquiry it seems that local companies are unable to repair them. Currently LISGIS has only one other server working without back-up other than saving to compact disks or small external drives. Good practice is that one should run at least two servers side-by-side, with one as a primary and the other as the backup. These are normally alternated on say, a weekly basis. There has been a new request submitted to NIMAC for a 5 TB server plus surge protector, as there are increasing demands for information and processing. What has not been submitted is a request for a 72-hour battery, the local price of which is approximately US\$ 85,000. Why a 72-hour battery is needed as distinct from a 24-hour or 48-hour battery, is not clear. The flow of information coming from the counties is estimated to be 1 – 1.5 Gigabyte (Gb) per county per quarter, thus indicating a need for 60 – 90 Gb of capacity alone per year for this. If UNDP were to supply a new 5 Tb server, LISGIS may be able to purchase new boards to upgrade the existing 2Tb server to 5 Tb and thus offer an appropriate and secure backup. There is also understood to be an issue with insufficient software licenses that is unresolved to date.

External training for ICT staff has been supported by NIMAC but more is needed. One suspects from comments received that LISGIS staff are not interested in training without being offered “sitting money”. Nevertheless, it is understood that some one-on-one is happening. This brought up the issue of there being no ongoing training for UNDP staff/consultants transitioned from NIMAC to LISGIS⁴⁹. It is not clear to the evaluation team if this is UNDP policy or an oversight, as the question must be raised as to who is responsible for continuous development of the NIMAC transferees? At present LISGIS cannot afford to pay for training for its own staff, let alone that of the transferees, and is dependent upon development partners. There are no VSATs for LISGIS, and the opinion was offered to the evaluation team that they would be very useful for communication between the field and LISGIS.

The overall position was that much as the NIMAC support to date was appreciated, LISGIS would hope that NIMAC can continue its support for a while longer and to expand its support for the maintenance of other skilled staff.

(vi) Dissemination and Customer Service

The evaluation team was informed that there is no budget for the dissemination of statistics products. Line ministries demand LISGIS products free of charge, insisting that as they have been produced by a government entity, they should be free to other government entities. In LISGIS's opinion, some development partners are less-than-helpful in supporting LISGIS's position that its products should be properly priced and charged on a cost-recovery basis. At present most LISGIS products are distributed free of charge – for the first one only. However, there is no

⁴⁹ Two in ICT, one in GIS and another in Data Processing.

transparent pricing policy *per se*, but rather, the evaluation team understands, a form of market pricing applied by senior management based on an assessment of what price an individual or organisation could bear. Clearly this is not a sustainable approach for a national statistics organisation to operate. LISGIS is hoping to have the draft Dissemination Policy endorsed and launched by mid-April, 2012. The reports on the fourteen themes from Census (2008) have been finished but there is no budget for their being disseminated. In addition there is need for continued awareness-raising and outreaching using media such as brochures, billboards and leaflets, plus regular updates of the LISGIS website.

The evidence is that the Customer Services Division is not currently functional as generally understood, and all basic equipment (i.e. printers, photocopiers, scanners and computers) is not working. The impression is that local printing costs are high, and in the counties even higher while offering a more limited service. The conclusion is that LISGIS needs to decide on whether to print in-house or to outsource it, which in turn will have an impact on pricing of LISGIS products.

(b) Aid Management Unit (Ministry of Finance)

Before 2009, NIMAC had been providing a range of support – technical and financial - to Government for the development of appropriate tools and techniques regarding the tracking of aid flows in Liberia through the LRDC Secretariat. UNDP mobilised an external assessment mission (funded by NIMAC) to determine the technical and coordination requirements for a secure, web-based, aid flows tracking system incorporating data collection, storage, analysis and reporting. In its report the mission recommended the adoption of the *Development Assistance Database* (DAD) software, believing it to be the most appropriate system for Liberia since it placed emphasis on local capacity building as part of the package. However, the LRDC Secretariat indicated a preference for the *Aid Management Platform* (AMP) created by Development Gateway Foundation (DGF), as it uses open-source code. Separately from NIMAC, UNDP was supporting the development of the Aid Policy for Liberia through the LRDC and MPEA, which continued up to 2011.

As part of the Contribution Agreement signed with the EC in November 2008 covering both LDLD and NIMAC, an amount of EUR 120,000 was earmarked for support to the data management aspects of aid flows tracking. In late 2008 / early 2009, the LRDC Secretariat moved from the Office of the President to MPEA whilst aid coordination activities including policy development fell under the AMU of MOF. It is understood that at that time it was quite confusing for development partners to know which entity had responsibility for what.

The contract for the AMP was signed in 2009 with DGF, with NIMAC paying the first US\$150,000. This was broken down into a product purchase price component (US\$ 125,000) plus a mandatory installation and training consultancy (US\$ 25,000). As UNDP was already funding from core resources (refer to Annex B.3) activities for the aid tracking system, it was agreed with the EC that its original contribution of EUR120,000 was restructured into (i) EUR 100,000 for support to establishing the CSIOs in the fifteen counties, which was critical at the time, and (ii) EUR 20,000 for AMP support.

Once purchased and installed, a problem arose. The AMU was unable to pay the annual fee (US\$7,800) in 2011 for hosting AMP on the LIBTELCO system. The AMU requested NIMAC to support making this payment. So as to see if could respond UNDP requested the AMU to obtain and submit a pro-forma invoice from LIBTELCO, before it could consider paying. For reasons unknown or unexplained to the evaluation team, there were delays in raising such an invoice by LIBTELCO, and as a result the application to NIMAC was allowed to drop. Hence, for a period in 2010 - 2011, the AMU was obliged to revert to simple spreadsheets to track aid flows, which nevertheless did not stop it from issuing an annual report in 2010⁵⁰.

⁵⁰ *Annual Donor Fiscal Outturn Report - Fiscal Year 2009 / 2010*; AMU MOF (October 2010)

To try and help resolve the situation and avoid a total loss of the project and the potential benefits to Liberia, DGF indicated to the AMU to take this outstanding annual fee from the next US\$110,000 it was owed in 2011, so that progress could be made and MOF could stay with the DGF programme. However, although the fee was paid over two months ago, again for reasons unknown DGF has not yet re-opened AMU access to reusing the AMP, something that is currently being followed up by the AMU. Total downtime to date is understood to be of the order of twelve months or so. In February 2012 a revised agreement was concluded and signed between MOF and DGF, which was expected to resolve all outstanding issues and get the AMP back on track. The target is to hold In-country training (one week) for AMU and focal points in ministries beginning on 19 March. However, with the arrival of the new MOF senior management team, there is a review being undertaken of all existing and proposed contracts, before payments can be made. The evaluation team was informed that the AMP contract was expected to be reviewed and approved very shortly.

The AMU has stated quite strongly that it needs to do monitoring as MPEA is not doing sufficient M&E or at least is not sharing its reports. This may be part of the difficulties out between MOF and MPEA regarding the Aid Policy. This was held up for a long time due to differences between MOF and MPEA on who “owned” the Policy. The President has decreed MOF and MPEA come together hence, there should be no further issues here – in theory at least. The evaluation team understands the need for compliance checking but is not convinced that yet another layer of M&E is needed. Surely the correct step is to improve MPEA’s monitoring and reporting in the first instance, to improve the quality and timing of reports shared with the AMU, and if necessary to invite the AMU on periodic field verification missions?

The evaluation team understands that the MOF has tried using the Budget Support Working Group to act as an interim donor coordination forum, but this was not optimal as the agenda concentrated on budget support matters. It was supposed to have met quarterly but it is understood that this did not happen. The conclusion is that Government needs to get the proposed Aid Management Committee up and running shortly as a Common Assistance Framework (CAF) will be needed to complement the PRS (II), with possible support for the EC and WB.

AMU management identified its needs to be for (i) more operational budget. UNDP has been supporting AMP only, with the AfDB paying for salaries and operations up to 30 June 2012, and (ii) three more vehicles so that AMU can go to meetings and to “monitor” / oversight of credits, etc. Training is required for new staff and also for learning best practices, plus a study tour to a similar post-conflict country where aid coordination and aid flows management are up and running. The AMU has Rwanda in mind, but leaves it to UNDP and development partners to see how and where such a study tour should be held. The evaluation team understands there is very little left in the NIMAC earmarked budget for ongoing support to the AMP, let alone budget support (even if permitted by the EC) for salaries and operating costs.

7.3 Best Practices

The term “best practices” by definition includes the aspect of comparison – *best practices compared to what?* As the CST approach was already ground-breaking when it was first introduced and indeed was the subject of a joint UNDP – DPKO study⁵¹, and the NIMAC project is very context-specific, the only programme/project of the three which would lend itself to inter-country comparison is the LDLD. However, given the short time available for the combined evaluation exercise, that particular exercise must be left to others. Nevertheless, the evaluation team has identified good practices under all three programmes and project that should be given due recognition. These are presented under their respective headings below.

⁵¹ “The example of the “County Support Teams” as an integrated mission approach at the local level in Liberia” – (good practice ideas in cross-UN support to post-conflict local governance) - (November 2007)

7.3.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

The evaluation team examined and revisited the ten areas of good practice mentioned in the UNDP – DPKO (2007) study, and endorsed seven of them, as updated, as still being relevant as best practices, as well as adding additional ones:

- a. UN actors are organised around a common objective namely, support to local governance;
- b. A strong integrated technical team (UNDP / UNMIL) coordinates from the centre;
- c. The programme has been jointly developed and led with national and local authorities;
- d. The CST structure is aligned to the objectives and plans of national government;
- e. There are programme funds directly attached to the coordination framework;
- f. UNMIL Civil Affairs staff have performed a cross-UN support function at the local level;
- g. Information is collected in a format that is owned by local authorities and feeds into the monitoring of the PRS;
- h. CST project staff are oriented and trained to effectively fulfil their functions including in approaches to capacity development;
- i. The transition and integration of the complete network of Field Monitors and M&E Assistants from NRC support to CST was commendable (new).

One original area of good practice: *"Mission monitoring is focused on country conditions, not exclusively mandate implementation"* may still be valid but it has not been possible to verify by the evaluation team in the time available. Another original area of good practice: *"Training for local authorities is designed and delivered jointly with national institutions"* is not clear to the evaluation team, and is discussed in the Section 7.2.1 (a) above.

7.3.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

The evaluation team has determined the areas of good practice to be as follows:

- a. The programme design was such that it encouraged the Government to actively contribute to and lead the Joint Programme;
- b. The CDD concepts and approach were appropriately adapted to the needs of Liberia;
- c. There were coherent inter-linkages across the JP design, from macro to micro, not always an easy thing to achieve in complex programmes;
- d. The consistent approach to backstopping the Government's decentralisation efforts at different levels contributed significantly to the progress to date;
- e. The JP strengthened leadership and ownership of the decentralisation process at the national and sub-national levels;
- f. The explicit support to the expansion of space for citizens' participation contributed to a participative formulation and awareness of the PRS, the CDA and the Decentralisation Policy;

- g. The JP contributed to greater adherence to public financial management (PFM) principles and requirements and to the growing use of proper procedures.

7.3.3 National Information Management Centre

The evaluation team has determined the areas of good practice to be as follows:

- a. The project filled a void by helping national actors to assume responsibility for collecting, managing and disseminating vital data and statistics;
- b. The project contributed to the sub-national collection of data and information that enhances the analysis of and the response to protection issues;
- c. The project successfully combined a balance between capacity building, providing equipment and offering logistical support for national and county staffs, that was context-sensitive and appropriate;
- d. The project supported a critical nationally-led transformation and wider usage of geo-spatial tools and techniques;
- e. The project contributed to the designated national agency (i.e. LISGIS) having a deeper sense of ownership of and responsibility for national statistics and raising the profile and importance of statistics throughout government at all levels.

7.4 Lessons Learned

7.4.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams

It is noted that the CST programme has been identifying a number of lessons learned in each CST Progress Report⁵². Some of these are quite technical and others are outside the direct experience of the evaluation team. Nevertheless, without negating those lessons identified by CST, it is possible for the evaluation team to list some lessons at this time:

Lesson Learned - CST.01: The CST is an example of successful innovation and responsiveness to emerging needs by the UN family – agencies and mission – with considerable potential for replication provided an appropriate transition modality, timeframe and sequencing can be found.

Lesson Learned - CST.02: Inadequate operational budgets directly affect the capability of county administration personnel to carry out their functions in the field, and should be recognised as a major risk in the programme design, with mitigating measures proposed from the outset.

Lesson Learned - CST.03: Inadequate operational budgets directly affect the capability of ministries and agencies at the centre to monitor and discipline their county-based staffs,

⁵² (i) CST Progress Report (2009)(page 15); (ii) CST Progress Report (2010)(page 16), (iii) CST Progress Report (2011) (page 12)

particularly in dealing with the issue of absenteeism. This has an adverse impact on morale of those county-based officials who are trying to get on with their work.

- Lesson Learned - CST.04:** The absence of an exit strategy, no matter how long the time horizon, clearly stated and considered in the formulation of a UN programme or project, inadvertently sends a signal to ministries, agencies and other beneficiaries that extensions and roll-overs can be expected. Sustainability must be built into the design from the outset with realistic contingency measures, subject to strict conditions, should unforeseen constraints occur.
- Lesson Learned - CST.05:** As a result of the role and formulation of the CDA being confusing, it is not used in a meaningful or consistent manner from county to county in determining prioritisation of available funding. The reason is that the PRS has overshadowed the CDAs, and the centre is allocating grants to PRS-designed priority areas.
- Lesson Learned - CST.06:** Field monitoring focussing on the PRS denigrates the CDA in the eyes of users and the public at large. If the PRS is to take precedence, then revised or future CDAs should be formulated within a PRS (II) framework, and include county-specific baselines and indicators.
- Lesson Learned - CST.07:** As a result of the PRS and CDA formulation exercises, some county administrations are now more inclined to consult citizens and civil society organisations as part of the decision-making process.
- Lesson Learned - CST.08:** Formulating expected results in a programme or project document without using RBM techniques, yields only partial information on progress towards the results. What is missed in reports is a scan of the horizon regarding constraints, inside or outside the control of the programme, preventing the achieving of the desired results.
- Lesson Learned - CST.09:** A lack of respect for equipment and vehicles donated by development partners can render them useless sometimes in matter of months. This requires a much more responsible ethos be instilled by ministry, agency and county administration leaders in their respective staffs.

7.4.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

- Lesson Learned - LDLD.01:** Inadequate operational budgets directly affect the capability of county administration personnel to carry out their functions in the field, and should be recognised as a major risk in the programme design, with mitigating measures proposed from the outset.
- Lesson Learned - LDLD.02:** Decentralisation creates the environment and space that allow the fledging home-grown processes and actions to inspire local ownership and local approaches to local problems.
- Lesson Learned - LDLD.03:** CSO engagement and oversight require real support and empowerment to advance their capacities to monitor, and communicate decentralisation concepts at the grass root levels.

- Lesson Learned - LDLD.04:** Although the UNCDF-funded LDF initiative has definitely contributed to successful piloting of local economic development, however, without clear guidelines and procedures for recovering the investment from the sales generated by the beneficiaries, replications will not be possible. Indeed, it may give the impression that the investment was intended for the first “lucky” beneficiaries only.
- Lesson Learned - LDLD.05:** The shortfall of the UNCDF funding commitment negatively impacted the LDLD resource base, constrained intervention and limited outreach under the programme.
- Lesson Learned - LDLD.06:** The Government’s contribution to the CDF presented an opportunity to pilot fiscal decentralisation and resources management at the county level.
- Lesson Learned - LDLD.07:** Achievements in respect of deconcentration will be limited unless resources are allocated to support decentralisation-related roles and implementation, activities of ministries and agencies.
- Lesson Learned - LDLD.08:** Attendance at capacity building events at the county and district levels needs to be enhanced through innovative measures since motivation to participate in training currently appears to be cash-driven (i.e. “sitting fees”)

7.4.3 National Information Management Centre

- Lesson Learned - N.1:** Inadequate operational budgets directly affect the capability of specialist agency personnel such as in LISGIS to carry out their functions, and should be recognised as a major risk in the project design, with mitigating measures proposed from the outset, subject to strict conditions.
- Lesson Learned - N.2:** A lack of respect for equipment donated by development partners can render it useless sometimes in matter of months. This requires a much more responsible ethos be instilled by the agency management in its staff.
- Lesson Learned - N.3:** Inadequate budgets – salaries and operational - directly affect the capability of specialist agency personnel such as in the Aid Management Unit to function properly and sustainably, and should be recognised as a major risk in the project design, with mitigating measures proposed from the outset, subject to strict conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Recommendations - General

(a) Policy and Strategy

Recommendation G.1: Government to host and UNDP to facilitate the holding of a workshop on Issues, Constraints and Challenges to harmonising and aligning the Decentralisation Policy and implementation strategy, with the Civil Service Reform and the Public Service Reform - refer to 7.1.1 (a)

Recommendation G.2: UNDP to ensure that all three programmes and project take into account the NCDS (2010) when preparing or updating training courses and materials, as well as AWP and any follow-on initiatives – refer to 7.1.1 (a)

(b) Definitions and Terminology

Recommendation G.3: UNDP to ensure that there is a proper understanding of programming and RBM terminology by those formulating programmes or projects and also AWP and progress reports – refer to 7.1.1 (b)

Recommendation G.4: To avoid confusion, stakeholders to take note of the difference between the two terms - local government and local administration - and to be more precise when using these terms in documents, presentations and discussions – refer to 7.1.1 (b)

(c) Programme Coherence

Recommendation G.5: UNDP to ensure that there should be no further separation of CST and LDLD programmes beyond the end of this year, that sub-national activities supported by NIMAC are included in a new unified programme with CST and LDLD, and that more attention is given to establishing baselines – refer to 7.1.1 (c)

Recommendation G.6: Government, in consultation with UNDP and development partners, to ascertain how best to support incomplete national level activities to strengthen national statistics and aid tracking - refer to 7.1.1 (c)

Recommendation G.7: UNDP to review and improve the draft AWP (2012) for CST and LDLD, bringing some but not necessarily all NIMAC-related elements in as well – refer to 7.1.1 (c)

Recommendation G.8: MPEA, in consultation with GC, LISGIS, MIA and UNDP to organise a Programme/Project Board meeting to review the revised draft AWP (2012) for CST/LDLD/NIMAC (selected activities) – refer to 7.1.1 (c)

(d) Monitoring and Reporting using a Results-Based Management approach

Recommendation G.9: Stakeholders to take note of the vagueness of the objectives giving rise to only partial responses regarding likelihood of expected results being reached – refer to 7.1.1 (d)

Recommendation G.10: UNDP to ensure that from now on, progress reports reflect an implicit RBM approach to reporting progress towards desired end results, with particular attention being paid to reporting what remains to be done and by whom so as to achieve that end result – refer to 7.1.1 (d)

(e) Resource Mobilisation

Recommendation G.11: UNDP to look at implementing recommendations of the UN resource mobilisation policy paper (2010) so as to ensure that funding is mobilised in a timely manner for national priorities - refer to 7.1.1 (e).

Recommendation G.12: UNDP to look at how it could advise and assist the Government in promoting better donor coordination, if not in general at least in this specific area - refer to 7.1.1 (e).

Recommendation G.13: UNDP to look closely at the linkage between ambitious designs and funding shortfalls, and for the coming initiative, to consider a more tightly phased design and roll-out programme that can be accurately costed and funding raised, phase by phase – refer to 7.1.1 (e)

(f) Sustainability

Recommendation G.14: The Government and development partners to take a detailed look at the challenges to sustaining the outputs and results of capacity building programmes, particularly in this area, and to formulate a multi-year comprehensive approach – refer to 7.1.1 (f)

(g) Exit Strategy

Recommendation G.15: The Government and UNDP to examine the two programmes (CST and LDLD) to assess what an exit strategy, component by component, might be or indeed should have been originally; this exercise will be needed as part of any formulation of a follow-on initiative - refer to 7.1.1 (g)

(h) Transition

Recommendation G.16: Given the complexity and the risks involved, UNMIL and UNDP to commence more detailed joint examination of all aspects of what an effective transition would involve – personnel, infrastructure, security, logistics, accommodation, giving due attention to how the handover would be sequenced within each county and overall - refer to 7.1.1 (h)

8.2 Recommendations – Programme- or Project-specific**8.2.1 Strengthening through County Support Teams****(1) Support to Capacity Building of Local Administration****(a) Training**

Recommendation CST.1: CST to continue to contextualise the training and training materials, in consultation with LDLD training – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (a)

Recommendation CST.2: CST to re-examine current training approach and see how follow-up and follow-on are built into that approach, again in consultation with LDLD. Training should be reinforced and applied if at all possible with an action-learning component, with oversight by responsible ministries / agencies – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (a)

Recommendation CST.3: UNDP to look at how the training programme provided under CST is being supported by a national training provider as a centre of reference to backstop and extend such training, and to address any weaknesses in this transition process as a priority. This would also have implications for the LDLD training programme as well – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (a)

Recommendation CST.4: MIA, in consultation with CST and LDLD, to examine how to extend the current or proposed training programme to the line ministries' lead officials in the counties – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (a)

(b) Processes

Recommendation CST.5: MIA, in consultation with MPEA, CST and LDLD, to examine how the CDA is being used in local level prioritisation and applications for grant funding from whatever source – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (b)

Recommendation CST.6: MIA and the counties to formulate and apply a communication strategy to manage expectations on the part of the communities regarding the CDA and available grant funding from whatever source – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (b)

Recommendation CST.7: MIA, CST and LDLD to examine why there is a gap in timelines and in contributions – government, citizens and development partners including the UN, and take action to rectify this accordingly – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (b)

Recommendation CST.8: MIA and MPEA, in consultation with CST, to examine why (i) indicators are not used in monitoring the CDA, (ii) district-level plans are not on paper, and (iii) action plans are not being implemented and monitored, and to take action accordingly – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (b)

Recommendation CST.9: MPEA and MIA, in consultation with CST, to address falling attendance at the county Pillar and CDSC meetings with the line ministries, and also to ensure that line ministry attendees are the most senior official in the county – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (b)

Recommendation CST.10: MPEA and MIA, in consultation with CST and LDLD, to address the concerns of some line ministries that planning capacity is at county level only, and there is no information exchange system outside the Pillar meetings in county – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (b)

Recommendation CST.11: MPEA and LISGIS, in consultation with CST, to address the concern that County Superintendents often lack knowledge of statistics and development planning – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (b)

Recommendation CST.12: MPEA, in consultation with CST, (i) to address the concerns of a number of CDOs and CSIOs that there was no feedback from MPEA, and (ii) organise an annual forum for inter-county comparisons, information exchange and networking, possibly hosted and back-stopped by MPEA in consultation with MIA and LISGIS – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (b)

Recommendation CST.13: MIA, in consultation with CST, to recognise the geographic isolation of certain county seats such as Buchanan, RobertSPORT and Voinjama from their respective county hinterlands, and to encourage and facilitate the county administrations in these and similar counties to rotate Pillar and CDSC meetings to other more accessible venues in the county – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (b)

Recommendation CST.14: UNDP/CST to brief development partners on how it is carrying out asset management and handling the transfer of programme assets to Government – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (b)

(c) Government Response and Institutions

Recommendation CST.15: MIA, in consultation with CST, LDLD and CSA, to ascertain how to deal with poor staff monitoring and disciplining by line ministries including acceptance of wasteful behaviour and poor work attitude, poor record-keeping, poor reporting, little or no operating budget particularly for fuel, and poor logistics – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (c)

Recommendation CST.16: MIA, in consultation with CST, to undertake a needs assessment for each county – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (c)

Recommendation CST.17: MIA, in consultation with LDLD and CST, to strengthen public administration systems including ministry accountability and core job specifications, which are part of the CSR and PSR – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (c)

(d) Civil Society

Recommendation CST.18: MIA, in consultation with CST, LDLD and other actors, to ascertain how to engage with and empower civil society organisations at the county, district and community levels so that civil society may play a much greater role in planning, prioritising and implementing equitable development – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (d)

(e) Gender Responsiveness

Recommendation CST.19: MIA, in consultation with CST and LDLD, to liaise with MGD on how best to coordinate and offer mutual support so that there is a more credible gender responsive approach adopted in each county – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (e)

(f) Economic Growth

Recommendation CST.20: MIA, MPEA and county administrations, in consultation with CST to be aware that major constraints cannot be ignored in the scoping and planning of country-level development, administration and governance initiatives – refer to 7.2.1 (1) (e)

(2) Support to the Establishment and Running of the County Information Management and Monitoring System

Recommendation CST.21: LISGIS, in consultation with CST, to review (i) payment delays experienced by Field Monitors, and (ii) VSATs broken after just three months in some instances, with neither the technical expertise in the counties to repair them, nor indeed the funds to pay for any such repair let alone the replacement of costly components - refer to 7.2.1 (2)

Recommendation CST.22: LISGIS, in consultation with CST, to address the issue of there being little or no feedback to the counties on protection data and statistics, from MGD and Ministry of Justice - refer to 7.2.1 (2)

(3) Support to County and District Infrastructure Rehabilitation/or Construction

Recommendation CST.23: MIA, in consultation with CST, to assess and address the needs for dependable power and water, as well as Internet connectivity in county and district administration buildings - refer to 7.2.1 (3)

Recommendation CST.24: MIA and Governance Commission, in consultation with CST and LDLD, to consult line ministries and agencies on the need or otherwise for a single public administration campus (between 25 – 50 acres) in each county seat - refer to 7.2.1 (3)

Recommendation CST.25: CST, in consultation with the respective county administrations, to review the operations and maintenance of the three model buildings, and to see what needs to be done to expedite the provision of an electrical generator in each case - refer to 7.2.1 (3)

Recommendation CST.26: CST (UNDP and UNOPS) to review stakeholder criticisms and to address them unless previously resolved - refer to 7.2.1 (3)

8.2.2 Liberian Decentralisation and Local Development

Recommendation LDLD 1: MPEA/MIA in conjunction with LISGIS and partners should commission a baseline study to establish a clear basis for gauging progress and shortfalls of the current and future programme - refer to 7.2.2 (I)(a)

Recommendation LDLD 2: MIA in collaboration with GC and partners to design a roadmap that guides the decentralisation, deconcentration etc. - refer to 7.2.2 (I)(a)

Recommendation LDLD 3: MIA and GC to select a model County Administration and Line Ministry- refer to 7.2.2 (I)(a)

Recommendation LDLD 4: MIA and GC, with support from UNDP and development partners, to strengthen their capacities to provide leadership for the decentralisation processes - refer to 7.2.2(I)(a)

Recommendation LDLD 5: MIA and GC in partnership LDLD to harness national ownership even in the remaining period of the current by identifying and hiring a qualified and knowledgeable Liberian national to head the PMU under the CTA, in addition to recruiting an M&E Officer exclusively for the continuous tracking of key results of the programme - refer to 7.2.2 (I)(a)

Recommendation LDLD 6: UNDP to exert itself more in ensuring the effectiveness of the LDLD project board (regular meeting, exercise of oversight of implementation) and in coordinating information about the programme amongst donor partners. - refer to 7.2.2 (I)(a)

Recommendation LDLD 7: UNDP/LDLD to verify (i) the amount of land cultivated and (ii) the actual amount of beneficiaries constituting the ownership under the CDF/LED communities' farm projects in the six pilot counties, in order to ascertain consistency with programme targets - refer to 7.2.2 (I)(b)

Recommendation LDLD 8: LDLD in consultation with communities, to consider a redesign of the CDF/LED initiatives that not only ensure that it is adequately resourced, and replicable but explores market options (farm to market/ farm with market) - refer to 7.2.2 (I)(b)

Recommendation LDLD 9: MIA, GC and Civil Service Agency, to accelerate reforms in pay and grade/salaries and incentives to engender staff retention in public service, essentially in local government - refer to 7.2.2 (I)(c + d)

Recommendation LDLD 10: MIA to liaise with UN-HABITAT, MOF, LIPA, MIA/GC in designing more contextualized training modules and remodelling the Budget, Procurement and other manuals so that they are more illustrative, instructive and easy to comprehend. - refer to 7.2.2 (II)(a)

Recommendation LDLD 11: MIA and GC to take the lead on designing a local government official introduction manual that outlines what and how to carry out key functions of various local government offices. - refer to 7.2.2 (II)(a)

Recommendation LDLD 12: UNDP to invest in the strategic strengthening of the capacity of the PMU in the areas of M&E, and programme design and management - refer to 7.2.2 (II)(a)

Recommendation LDLD 13: MIA and GC to develop a Communication Strategy for Decentralisation, incorporating local tradition communication mechanisms and emphasizing purposeful inter-agencies, partners and community engagements at both national and sub national levels. - refer to 7.2.2 (II)(b)

Recommendation LDLD 14: Government, in collaboration with partners to ensure the provision /accompaniment of basic support (operational budget, basic equipments & supplies) with decentralized functions to local administrations (CEB, District Commissioners, line ministries/ agencies) for effective service delivery and governance - refer to 7.2.2 (III)(a)

Recommendation LDLD 15: UNDP, GC and MIA to exhibit greater gender sensitivity in the recruitment of future PMU staffs and lay emphasis on and support gender budgeting - refer to 7.2.2 (III)(b)

Recommendation LDLD 16: UNDP, GC and MIA to demonstrate how they will engage civil society equally through future programme design and implementation-considering outreach, consultation, resource and technical assistance. 7.2.2 (IV)(b)

8.2.3 National Information Management Centre

(a) Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services

Recommendation N.1: LISGIS, with support from development partners, to make every effort to have the National Statistics And Geo-Information Act (2004) amended and improved - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(i) above.

Recommendation N.2: LISGIS, with support from development partners and in consultation with line ministries, to organise one or more training workshops to strengthen the skills of focal points in ministries - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(i) above.

Recommendation N.3: LISGIS, with support from development partners, to lobby Government for a more realistic operations budget, vital for the sustainability of the NSS - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(i) above.

Recommendation N.4: LISGIS to review its annual workplan and to stay focused on its core functions, limiting the non-core activities that it takes on to a minimum so as to avoid distraction - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(i) above.

Recommendation N.5: LISGIS, with support from Government and development partners, to secure funding so as to be able to undertake a Household Income Survey each year and other core surveys as scheduled - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(ii) above.

Recommendation N.6: LISGIS, with support from development partners and in consultation with line ministries, to receive training in key sector analysis and more technical analysis subjects, so that there is a shared benefit - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(iii) above.

Recommendation N.7: LISGIS, with support from development partners and in consultation with line ministries, to organise training for line ministries regarding the collection and validation of sector-specific data and information in the countries - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(iii) above.

Recommendation N.8: LISGIS, with support from development partners and in consultation with MIA and MPEA, to organise training for County Superintendents and Development Superintendents regarding development issues and the use of statistics for planning and monitoring in the countries - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(iii) above.

Recommendation N.9: LISGIS, with support from development partners, to organise training for CSIOs regarding the proper analysis of data and information at the county and district level, with future backstopping by LISGIS - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(iii) above.

Recommendation N.10: LISGIS, with support from development partners, to organise additional training for its GIS Division staff in CSIOs - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(iii) above.

Recommendation N.11: In the event of additional support being offered, UNDP to explore how best to overcome constraints to adopting an NEX approach in LISGIS - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(iv) above.

Recommendation N.12: LISGIS and its development partners, in consultation with MPEA and MOF as needed, to have a comprehensive discussion on what exactly are the major constraints to sustainability for LISGIS, and to determine national and international support accordingly including an exit strategy where international support is involved - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(iv) above.

Recommendation N.13: LISGIS to lobby the CSA and MOF for reclassification of statisticians and other scarce professions in LISGIS as specialist technical staff for the purpose of salary scales framework - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(iv) above.

Recommendation N.14: LISGIS, in collaboration with development partners, to carry out a survey and assessment of its current ICT equipment in all divisions, and determine on a priority basis which equipment (including software) should be repaired and which should be replaced. This survey should form the basis of a proper asset management approach - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(v) above.

Recommendation N.15: UNDP to review the situation whereby NIMAC staff transferred to LISGIS are deemed not eligible for training - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(v) above.

Recommendation N.16: LISGIS, with support from development partners, to receive advice and assistance on putting LISGIS on a sound cost-recovery footing regarding pricing and sale of its full range of products and advisory services - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(vi) above.

Recommendation N.17: LISGIS, in consultation with development partners, to determine how best to disseminate its products, data and information - refer to 7.2.3 (a).(vi) above.

(b) Aid Management Unit (Ministry of Finance)

Recommendation N.18: The AMU and the Ministry of Finance to have a comprehensive discussion with development partners on what exactly are the major constraints to sustainability for the AMU, and to determine national and international support accordingly including an exit strategy where international support is involved - refer to 7.2.3 (b) above.

9. LOOKING FORWARD AND THE NEXT STEPS

9.1 Introduction

From the Findings and Conclusions outlined in Section 7 above, the evaluation team has considered how best to proceed from here. Notwithstanding the achievements and results to date across the three programmes and project, there is a considerable amount to do if moving beyond mere local administration is to be successfully completed. In such matters setting a realistic timeframe and sequence of interventions coupled with an explicit strategy, are crucial. Under the Decentralisation Policy and the related implementation strategy matrix a ten-year timeframe is defined, and this is not unreasonable as an indicative horizon given the range and complexity of work to be coordinated and undertaken, provided a programmatic approach is adopted and is competently led, resourced and managed throughout.

One key message that was emphasised to the evaluation team was: “start with national priorities, policies and strategies.” This is in some ways an obvious statement to which all development partners subscribe. However, in the process of formulation and implementation, sometimes national policies and strategies are not given as much prominence as might be expected. The evaluation team has constantly asked itself – what is the purpose of the PRS, the CSR and the PSR, the decentralisation policy and capacity building strategy, amongst others? The answer the evaluation team came to was: *... to continuously improve the lives of Liberian citizens – women and men alike - in a sustainable manner, and to re-establish the State authority, capacity and competency at different levels to deliver security, justice, basic services and a sound regulatory environment for equity and growth, all within a framework of transparency for and accountability to the people.*

For development and governance to be fully responsive and representational, people and institutions together must be empowered at every level of Liberian society – national, county, district, city, town and village. This echoes the earlier comment that decentralisation and reconciliation are interlinked. Decentralised governance must entail a rights-based empowering of all levels of civil society so as to ensure that local people and communities – rural and urban - participate in and benefit from their own governance institutions and development potential and services. Decentralised institutions and local citizens’ and civil society governance mechanisms must work hand-in-hand. They must complement and reinforce each other so as to bring policy formulation, security, justice, service delivery, and resource allocation and management processes to embrace and respond to legitimate, demand-driven needs from communities and citizens. Any new programme must be End Result-driven, using an RBM approach, so as to avoid gaps and ambiguities.

9.2 Proposal

With this End Result focus very much in mind and with a programmatic theme of **“Liberia Rising: Looking Beyond Local Administration to Equitable Growth and Local Governance”**, there is now a real opportunity to build on what has been achieved. As the Decentralisation Policy is implemented in close consultation one would expect with the CSR and the PSR, there will be a need for existing and emerging local governance mechanisms to be brought into play so as to ensure that planning, prioritisation and resource allocation processes embrace and respond explicitly to the needs of communities and citizens.

The starting point would be identifying what remains to be done in the areas of: (i) implementing policies and strategies, (ii) capacity building including institutions, human resources, and infrastructure and support, (iii) enhancing security, and equally important, and (iv) strengthen civil society. Through the lens of closing existing gaps and constantly monitoring the landscape for emerging gaps, one can proceed to formulate in a coherent and programmatic way, a range of interventions that address the needs in a prioritised way over a short- and medium-

term horizon. A major benefit of having a programmatic approach is that once an output has been completed, (i) the backdrop and setting can be monitored to ensure the expected outcome has been achieved and if not, why not, and (ii) what new outputs need to be introduced to address emerging gaps. By being firmly based on an RBM approach including monitoring and evaluation, a more results-oriented perspective can be taken from the outset. Figure 9.1 below presents a fresh perspective on supporting the national priorities in this area from end-2012.

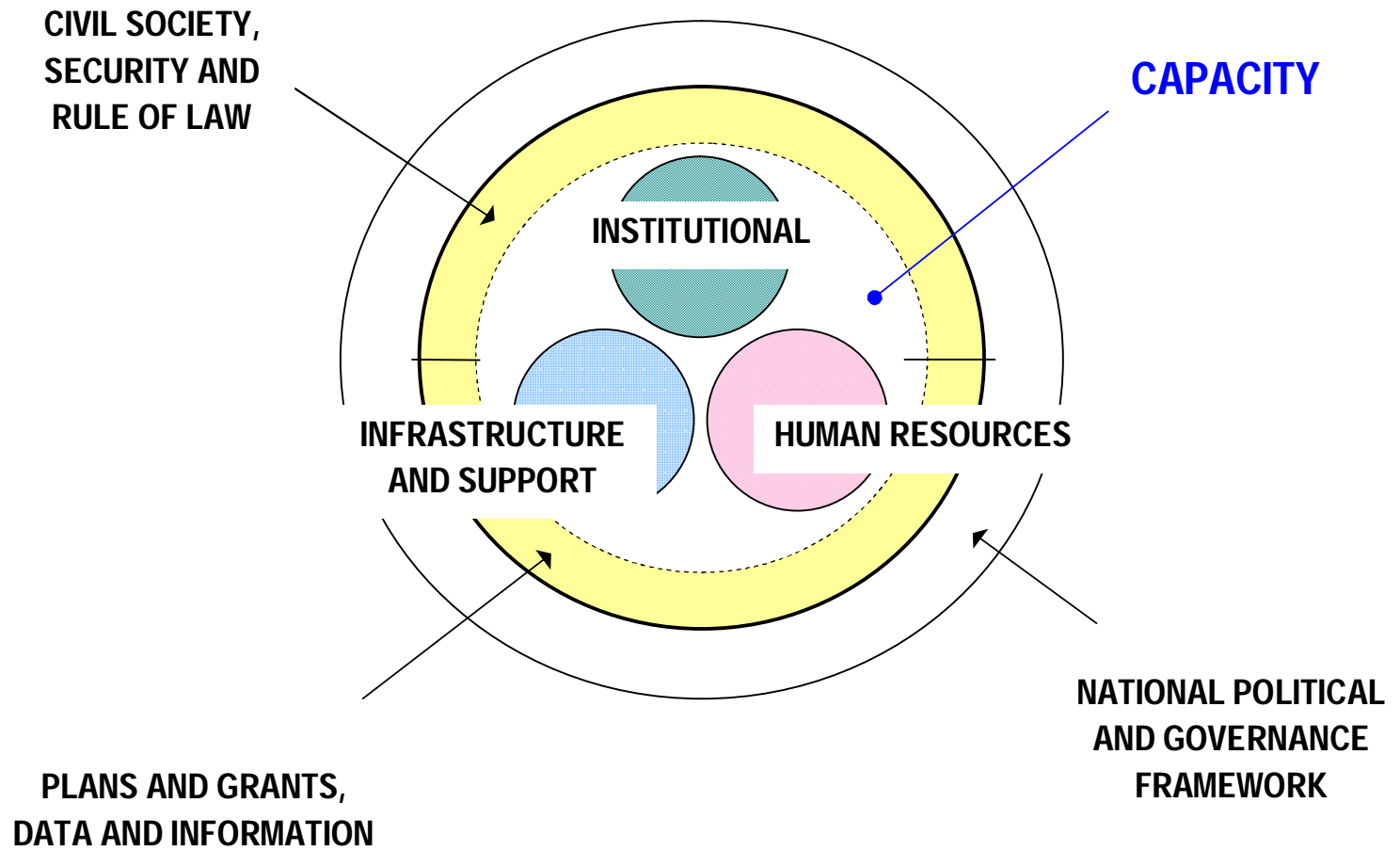
Previously, the three programmes and project had some overlap, complementarity and linkages. By adopting a programme approach the best initiatives of the three can be brought into one coherent whole. In this regard, and in light of the priorities and unmet needs regarding decentralisation, local service delivery and equitable growth, the following areas are identified for development partners' support as a single, coherent whole under Government leadership and ownership, over a medium-term to long-term timeframe:

- (i) The implementation of the national decentralisation policy at all levels;**
- (ii) The implementation of the Civil Service Reform within a broader Public Sector Reform strategy as needed for implementing the national decentralisation policy;**
- (iii) The capacity building of local administration with reference to the National Capacity Development Strategy (2010), for better security and rule of law, economic management and basic service delivery;**
- (iv) The capacity building of central and local level functions for statistics, data and information management, monitoring and evaluation of sub-national planning and implementation for equitable growth;**
- (v) The efficient and transparent allocation and utilisation of all decentralised or local development funds or grants from whatever source, in a manner consistent with PRS and CDA objectives and the Community Driven Development approach as appropriate;**
- (vi) The provision of mission-critical infrastructure and resources needed for the efficient running of the public administration at local level; and**
- (vii) The strengthening of civil society to participate in consultation, decision-making, monitoring and oversight of national and local planning and governance processes and basic service delivery.**

It is expected that the exact programme modality – joint programme with a pooled fund, multi-donor multimodal programme, sector-wide approach, and so on - will be guided by the PRS II and an MTEF, and will be the subject of further deliberation and discussion between Government and development partners, cognizant of an emerging transition strategy from UNMIL to Government or to the UNCT or UNDP. Formulation of the programmatic response would be expected to follow the accepted recommendations of the assessment report on joint programmes (2010). Further clarification will be required regarding the role, responsibility and authority of MIA and the GC in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the Decentralisation Policy and critical attention will be needed in particular (i) to assessing the genuine capacity of any potential national ministry or agency identified to lead such a complex programme, and (ii) to identifying exit strategies, component by component.

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FIGURE 9.1



9.3 Next Steps

The evaluation team is aware that there are two parallel and complementary dialogues going on at present – (i) a transition from UNMIL to UNDP or the UNCT, and (ii) the implementation of a decentralised administration and local governance mechanism. Time is not on the side of interlocutors to these discussions; both are pressing and impact on one another. In terms of relative priority, a successful conclusion to the transition analysis and discussion is critical for identifying what the UN family can realistically hope to contribute on the ground from January 2013 onwards to a new, coherent, holistic programme led by Government, as outlined in Section 9.2 above.

As this Combined Evaluation Report is expected to inform these two key dialogues, it is suggested that the next steps should be as follows:

- (i) Stakeholders to review this report, and to hold a review meeting – co-hosted by Government and UNDP – to agree or otherwise to (a) the recommendations – general and programme/project specific, and (b) outline programme proposal: ***“Liberia Rising: Looking Beyond Local Administration to Equitable Growth and Local Governance”***;

Timeframe: by early-April, 2012 or as agreed

- (ii) UNMIL and UNDP, including UNCT representatives as and when appropriate, to continue their current dialogue on viable principles and scope including sequence and timing of how any transition would be expected to work if a holistic programme such as that proposed above or similar were to be adopted by Government and development partners, and so as to have provisional human and logistical resources and infrastructure in place to commence support to implementation in January 2013;

Timeframe: by end-April, 2012 or as agreed between UNMIL and UNDP

- (iii) Government, UNDP, UNMIL and development partners to agree (i) the terms of reference, timing, composition and resourcing of a formulation mission regarding a new, holistic programme, (ii) how to support LISGIS for national level activities outside the new programme, and (iii) how to support the Aid Management Unit at Ministry of Finance outside the new programme;

Timeframe: by end-April, 2012 or as agreed

- (iv) Government to host focused review discussions with UNDP plus development partners together regarding the realistic operational gaps for (i) the Ministry of Internal Affairs, (ii) the Governance Commission, (iii) LISGIS, and (iv) the Aid Management Unit, and to determine the estimated cost of supporting these institutions from January 2013 for periods to be agreed, within a framework of exit strategies;

Timeframe: by mid-May, 2012 or as agreed

- (v) Government, UNDP, UNMIL and development partners to mobilise a formulation mission regarding a new, holistic programme and with its proposal completed, submitted, reviewed and endorsed;

Timeframe: by end-July, 2012 or as agreed

- (vi) UNMIL and UNDP, including UNCT representatives as and when appropriate, to complete their dialogue on the detailed scope including sequence and timing of how the transition will work if a holistic programme were to be adopted by Government and development partners, and subject to budgetary and contractual considerations so as to have or transfer human and logistical resources and infrastructure in place to commence support to implementation in January 2013;

Timeframe: by end-August, 2012 or as agreed between UNMIL and UNDP

- (vii) Government, UNDP, UNMIL and development partners to agree the scope, timeframe, budget and resourcing of the new programme document and funding mechanism as finally agreed and signed;

Timeframe: by mid-September, 2012 or as agreed

- (viii) Government and UNDP to take such steps as necessary to staff the new programme management unit in time for a January 2013 commencement;

Timeframe: by end-October, 2012 or as agreed

- (ix) UNMIL and UNDP, including UNCT representatives as and when appropriate, to complete their respective preparations for implementing the transition now that a holistic programme has been adopted by Government and development partners, and subject to budgetary and contractual considerations, to have or transfer human and logistical resources and infrastructure in place to commence support to implementation in January 2013;

Timeframe: by mid-November, 2012 or as agreed

- (x) Government, in consultation and collaboration with UNDP, UNMIL and development partners to formally launch the new programme;

Timeframe: by early-January, 2013 or as agreed

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THE ANNEXES

Annexes (A): Assignment-related Information:

- A.1 Terms of Reference
- A.2 Documents Reviewed or Inspected
- A.3 Persons Met
- A.4 Schedule

Annexes (B): Information relating to the Evaluation

- B.1 Terms of Reference for Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee
- B.2 (a) CST – Budget vs. Expenditures (2008 – 2012)
- B.2 (b) CST – Sources of Funding and Projected Needs
- B.3 (a) LDLD - LDLD Commitments and Disbursements
- B.3 (b) LDLD – LDLD Financial Details
- B.4 NIMAC – Budget vs. Expenditures (2007 – 2012) including Projected Needs

A.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE**Draft Terms of Reference (TOR)**

**Joint Evaluation of the
United Nations County Support Team (CST) Joint Programme
and
Liberia Decentralisation and Local Development (LDLD) Programme**

Location of consultancy : Monrovia, Liberia with field missions

Languages Required : English

Start Date : January 2012

Evaluation Team and 1 Lead Consultant (International) 20 working days

Expected Duration of Assignment 2 National consultants (20 working days)

Background**1.1 The Country Context**

Some of the causes of the Liberian conflict relate to large portions of society being excluded and marginalized from institutions of political governance and access to key economic assets, urban based policies and concentration of economic and political power in Monrovia. The fourteen years of civil war resulted in the further deterioration of the local government systems that were in place prior to the war. The few county administration buildings that existed prior to the war were damaged or destroyed. As local government officials returned to the counties to push forward recovery and development efforts at the end of conflict, they were faced with vast challenges from poor infrastructure to limited capacity for service delivery in support of national development efforts. Most of the local government officials had limited knowledge and capacity to undertake their duties and had little experience with both service delivery planning and execution, or information gathering and analysis - as these critical development functions were previously managed from Monrovia. The institutional vacuum and capacity to coordinate reconstruction and development interventions were glaring. Capacity at national level was also weak; thus limiting the state authority to respond to priority service delivery needs across all key sectors at county.

The key challenges of sub national and local governments were identified as the highly centralized political and administrative system; lack of clarity of roles and functions of sub national levels of government; exclusion of local governments from national planning and

budgeting processes; the inability to access locally generated fiscal resources, inadequate logistics and physical facilities against a backdrop of an archaic management system, whose human resource capacities are weak. More specifically, in terms of centre-local relationships, the following challenges were noted: no clear lines of authority and accountability with the different layers of local government; lack of a clear framework for the planning of fiscal and economic affairs at the local government level, especially the limited capacity and lack of procedures for citizen participation in local governance. The central challenge is therefore to build capacity at both central and local levels, to put in place a system and policies that promote national decentralization and local development. This is a holistic challenge requiring a comprehensive approach to system and institutional building.

The national government responded to these inequities by committing to political, administrative and fiscal decentralization and promoting peoples' participation in decentralized recovery and development thereby emphasizing the role of the counties, districts and sub-district structures. This is the background on which the CST and later LDLD programmes were formulated.

1.2 County Support Team (CST) Joint Programme & Liberia Decentralization and Local Development (LDLD)

The CST and LDLD are one of the key programmes of the Democratic Governance Unit of the UNDP Liberia. Both programmes work very closely together and formulate a Joint Annual Work Plan (AWP) in support of national capacity development and decentralization efforts of the Government of Liberia.

1.2.1 County Support Team (CST) Joint Programme

In support of the government recovery and decentralization efforts, the United Nations in Liberia developed an innovative and integrated mechanism to enhance capacity-building of local administrative leadership at the county level. In 2006, the UN in Liberia established County support Teams (CSTs) in each county lead by a UN facilitator (appointed either from UNMIL or a UN agency), aimed at; a) ensuring a coherent and consolidated UN approach to addressing county challenges, b) supporting local government, in particular the county superintendent's office, the highest authority in the county, and c) building the capacity of local government institutions to gradually take over responsibility for security, reconstruction and development.

To assist with this process, a two year UN project "Strengthening Capacity of local Administration", began in September 2006. Its objective was to build the capacity of local administration in assessing planning, coordinating mobilizing resources, and delivering essential service to support the consolidation of state authority and economic recovery. The project focused on three areas: 1) restoring the functionality of county administration offices and transportation, 2) Developing capacity of county officials and 3) strengthening data and information management in the counties.

This initial project provided support to local authorities under “hard” and “soft” components enabling them to take the first steps toward the establishment and consolidation of county-level administration. The ‘hard’ component included the construction and equipping of county administrative buildings with furniture, solar panels and generator as well as the provision of vehicles and basic IT equipment to all counties. The CST project worked closely with the USAID and the EU to coordinate assistance, leading to a more effective use of donor resources.

It is worth noting that initially established as a project in 2006, the UN-CST has migrated to a UN Joint Programme, with UNDP acting as the Managing Agent (MA). This Joint Programme was signed on 19th March 2009 by participants UN Agencies and Government including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA) and Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services (LISGIS). The collaborating UN-agencies are United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UNHABITAT), United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

1.2.2 Liberia Decentralization and Local Development (LDLD)

The LDLD is a national programme of innovations for supporting local government and its management, formulated jointly by the Government of Liberia, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) with other partners. It features the setting up of a capital investment and local development fund to support Liberia’s efforts in reversing historic tendencies within its centralized system of administration. This national program aims to strengthen the policy and strategy development for decentralization, system and institutional development for its implementation and promoting local sector-specific investments ensuring the effective management of Liberia’s innovations in restoring local government.

Establishing a national decentralization policy will require national consensus building that results in the adoption of the legal and regulatory framework to enhance the functioning of sub national governments. Introducing effective local public management expenditure systems that enable Counties and Districts to improve their roles in delivering basic services and in the coordination and support for local economic development. The program will pilot a local investment package linked to the participatory planning processes, which will form the basis of a reinvigorated developmental local government system. Thus, the LDLD intends to go beyond the scope of supporting basic needs and improve and strengthen capacities for rural and urban development.

The national programme will cover 15 Counties, to support the shaping of policies and systems that underpin decentralization and local development. The program will pilot a local development program, initially based in 3 counties, and shall install a County and District

financing facility, intended to demonstrate, through learning by doing, the full cycle of public expenditure management. The three counties will generate lessons that shall structure policies of the national program. This national program is estimated at \$50 million, of which \$ 5 million has been committed by UNCDF and UNDP, with partial support from the government's annual allocations to the County, with parallel funding estimated at \$15 million over the 5-year duration.

The expected results include: the full adoption of policies to strengthen fiscal decentralization, administrative and governance systems in Liberia, installation of adequate organizational capacities and systems to promote pro-poor infrastructure and service delivery, local economic development and sustainable resources' management.

2.0 Purpose of the Evaluation

The main purpose is to conduct a joint evaluation of both the CST and LDLD programme in Liberia, to inform and guide decision making and programming processes such as the Liberian Poverty Reduction Strategy II and the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

Specific objectives are:

- ✓ To assess the general performance of the programmes in terms of their objectives, intended targets, outputs, outcomes and lessons learned.
- ✓ To assess the continued relevance of the programmes from a national point of view or priorities
- ✓ To assess the efficiency and quality of programmes` design and implementation, effectiveness, potential impact and sustainability.
- ✓ To identify best practices/opportunities for possible future programme implementation.
- ✓ To determine the challenges and draw on lessons learnt for future programme implementation
- ✓ Review and evaluate the extent to which project impacts have reached the intended beneficiaries.
- ✓ Describe and assess efforts of stakeholders in support of the implementation of the project;
- ✓ Review of funding mechanisms, and resource mobilisation efforts, achievements and opportunities.
- ✓ To make recommendations to improve programme performance and provide guidance for programme restructuring and/or re-alignment (if necessary)
- ✓ Map-out priorities and opportunities within the context of the on-going decentralization efforts to inform transition or formulation of a Joint Programme on Decentralization;

The expected outcome of this mid-term review will serve as a strategic update of the programme performance to date that will help stakeholders in the following directions:

- ✓ Determine the extent to which the project is achieving its desired objectives
- ✓ Provide stakeholders with an external, objective view on the programmes status, their relevance, how efficiently and effectively they are being managed and implemented, and whether the programmes are likely to achieve its developmental and structural objectives
- ✓ whether programme partners and donors are effectively positioned to support the programmes.
- ✓ Help project management and stakeholders to draw lessons and best practices from project design, and implementation to guide and inform further programming process and decision making.

Findings from this evaluation will be submitted to the Government of Liberia, EU Delegation, SIDA, UNDP and UNCDF to inform and guide them in their decision making process.

Scope of the Evaluation

The main components to be evaluated include project delivery, implementation and project outcomes. Each component will be evaluated by using criteria such as effectiveness, efficiency, results achieved, sustainability of results and timeliness;

Desk study of programme documents, progress reports and other related policy documents and frameworks such as the decentralization policy, decentralization implementation framework, fiscal decentralization, Mid-Term CPAP Review report, UNDAF Review Report; Joint programmes Review Report PRS, County Development Agendas (CDAs) the EU and Swedish Strategy for Development Co-operation in Liberia.

Methodology and Approach

The Evaluation will be done through a combination of processes including a desk study, selected site visits and interviews -involving all stakeholders: Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA), Ministry of Finance, Governance Commission (GC); Selected Line Ministries, County Superintendents, Development Superintendents and District Commissioners, Selected community structures, EU, SIDA, WB, IMF, Joint partner Agencies (UNCDF, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOPS, NRC, LIPA, LISGIS, UNMIL and UNHABITAT), related programmes such as the UNDP National Information Management Centre (NIMAC), Long Term Technical Assistance (LTTA).

The methodology for the evaluation is envisaged to cover the following areas:

- Desk study/ review of all relevant Project documents;
- Meetings and consultations with key stakeholders- Governments, UN-agencies, Donors, , and implementing partners at national and local level;

- Discussions with the Senior Management and programme staff of UNDP/UNCDF;
- Interviews
- Field visits to select key project sites;

The methodology should look at the intervention at all levels. The data required at these levels for the evaluation should be indicated. The evaluators will determine the methodology for the evaluation, using best practice evaluation planning and methodologies, which will include, among other things, key informant interviews, focus group discussions with clients, questionnaires; the evaluation should include all key stakeholders

Outputs

- An Inception Report, outlining the key scope of the work and intended work plan of the consultancy,. The inception report will be discussed and agreed with the Consultancy Management Team; (2 days)
- A presentation of preliminary findings, in line with the agreed scope of work, will be presented verbally half-way through the consultancy; (7 days)
- A draft Report will be presented and discussed with the Consultancy Management Team and key stakeholders before the departure of the consultants.(3 days)
- A Final Report with specific recommendations, including a proposed action plan for the way forward will be submitted within two weeks of the Consultant's departure by the Team Leader.(5 working days)

The Evaluation will be conducted by a team of three international consultants (including one Lead Consultant) supported by one national consultant. The following are the skills, experience and education required:

Required Skills and Experience

- Master's Degree in Public Administration, Political Science, Development Studies, International Relations, or other relevant fields;
- At least 10 years of progressively experience in programme formulation, management and evaluation, including relevant field experience, especially in post-conflict settings, and in conflict sensitive programming.
- Specific expertise in conducting programme evaluations/reviews

Excellent oral and written English essential

External Consultant/Lead Consultant.

- *Profile*
- International consultant with strong international comparative experience in results-based evaluation preferably in the field of decentralization and local development including: fiscal decentralization; decentralized infrastructure and service delivery; local government capacity building for public expenditure management and operationalization of decentralized systems of planning and budgeting; policy, legal and regulatory reform related to decentralization;
- Experience in leading evaluations of decentralization and local development programmes, including experience using a range of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methodologies to assess programme results at individual/household, institutional, sector and policy level.
- Sound knowledge and awareness of issues related to gender and social inclusion.
- Thorough understanding of key elements of results-based programme management.
- Demonstrated capacity for strategic thinking, and excellent analytical and writing skills.
- Strong task management and team leading competencies.
- Country/regional experience relative to the programme will be an added advantage.

The Lead Consultant will have the following additional responsibilities

- Leading the evaluation team in planning, conducting and reporting on the evaluation.
- Deciding on division of labor within the evaluation team
- Leading presentation of the draft evaluation findings and recommendations in-country
- Conducting the debriefing for UNDP, UNCDF HQ/regional staff and EU Delegation
- Leading the drafting and finalization of the evaluation report

Profile specifications for Local Consultant

- Local decentralization specialist, with experience and good understanding of decentralization history, process, and issues in Liberia
- Development specialist with specialized knowledge of economic empowerment, infrastructure and service delivery, design and construction of small-scale infrastructure projects, assessing technical quality and cost-effectiveness of economic interventions, infrastructure and services, appropriateness and quality of procurement processes, provisions for recurrent costs, operations and maintenance, community participation in procurement, delivery, operations and maintenance of infrastructure and services delivered.
- Socio-economist, with specialized knowledge of PRA and evaluation methodologies, to lead evaluation of programme results at the individual/household/community level.

- Specialist on gender, social inclusion, participation, to assess programme performance with respect to participation and inclusiveness of the various stages in the planning and infrastructure and service delivery process, level of satisfaction with the process and results, and outcome and impact of the programme, disaggregated by gender, socio-economic, ethnic status etc..

Timing

- The evaluation is expected to last for about 20 days (2.5 weeks), commencing in January 2012.

TERMS OF REFERENCE - PROJECT EVALUATION: NATIONAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT CENTRE (NIMAC) PROJECT

Project Evaluation Period: 1st July 2006 – 30th June, 2012

Project Title: National Information Management Center (NIMAC) Project

Project Owners: Government of Liberia and UNDP

Project Beneficiary(s): Liberia National Statistical System & LISGIS

Management Arrangement: UNDP Direct Execution (DEX)

Background

The foundation for building effective policies and targeted development assistance is reliable qualitative and quantitative information and statistics. Accurate and up-to-date relevant data on the entire plethora of socio-economic and demographic indicators is critical to planning and monitoring of national, sectoral and local development strategies. For official purposes, such information products are preferably generated and/or disseminated by a mandated national institution/agency. Before July 2006 in Liberia, most development policy and sectoral initiatives were developed in a data vacuum, with largely outdated and incoherent data sets available to users. The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS) was created by a Legislative Act in July 2004 as the national statistics office (NSO) with mandate to coordinate and carry out the collation/compilation as well as dissemination of most official statistics on Liberia. This was done with the express intent of expanding and redirecting the remit of what had formally been the Bureau of Statistics at the MPEA. LISGIS was created as a semi-autonomous agency that could have the potential to be self-sustaining if only ministries and other entities channeled information management services particularly dissemination of all official statistics through it. In essence, the capacitated LISGIS would ensure the coordinated compilation of accurate, relevant statistics on key economic, administrative, geographical and social aspects of Liberia whilst managing it in such a way as to render it meaningful and accessible for the formulation of national, sectoral and local development policies and strategies. However, before July 2006, it was still too young and lacked the requisite capacities (technically, administratively and logistically) to fulfil this mandate. The situation in the Liberia statistical system had been one challenged by not only the absence of data but also the lack of reliable access mechanisms to get to data and information that do exist. Clearly there was an urgent need for capacity building support to be fulfilled by partners to ensure availability of relevant data to support effective planning for recovery and development.

NIMAC - Information management support for humanitarian/emergency, recovery and development

In September 2003 after the signing of the CPA⁵³, the UN's Humanitarian Coordinator in Liberia requested OCHA⁵⁴ to deploy a Humanitarian Information Center (HIC) to provide information management products and services in support to informing the coordination of relief services to needy populations. This response was crucial in strengthening coordination support for the complex humanitarian emergency existing at that time. During the period leading up to June 2006, HIC-Liberia, as a result of the critical role it was playing in assisting the humanitarian community, had acquired key data/information management resources and products including logistical materials, data management equipment and tools, databases, map products and most importantly a core staff with competencies in various technical areas (database and web development/management, ICT, GIS, data analysis, etc.).

In July 2006, OCHA having completed its withdrawal from Liberia, all material and human assets from the former HIC⁵⁵ were transitioned to UNDP as custodian, providing the foundation for the establishment of the National Information Management Center project (NIMAC). The project was established as a joint initiative of the Government of Liberia and UNDP to focus on the provision of technical support to and capacity building of LISGIS and other sectoral entities tasked with compilation of data and statistics to respond to national, sectoral and local developments plans and strategies. The Government welcomed these material investments and resources remaining in country as a unit.

Since inception, the project has been engaged in the delivery of technical assistance and capacity building support in a number of key areas, including the setting up of strategic databases in LISGIS, the Ministries of Education, Labour, Public Works, Commerce and the Bureau of Immigration, to name a few. These activities were undertaken in support to ensuring increased availability of relevant data for the preparation and of the PRS⁵⁶, CDA⁵⁷s and other sectoral strategies. There is now for instance a fully functioning Education Management Information System (EMIS) in the Ministry of Education as well as LiberiaInfo⁵⁸ at LISGIS.

Over the years, the NIMAC Project has partnered/collaborated with other UN initiatives to build/strengthen information management capacity as well as promote statistical development in Government. These include the UN's joint programme on County Support Teams (CST), GoL/UNDP Liberia Decentralization and Local Development (LDLD) project, the UNHCR/NRC Protection Monitoring project, to name a few.

National Capacity - Need for a coordinated and harmonized strategy on statistical development

Despite the sizeable number of statistical surveys conducted by LISGIS and other Government entities during the last 10 years, it is worth noting that significant information and capacity gaps still exist. Also, the situation where many agencies and actors determined, produced and disseminated statistics at will has tended to undermine the scope, quality and sometimes the integrity of existing information as well

⁵³ CPA – Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in Accra – (August 2003)

⁵⁴ OCHA – Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

⁵⁵ During its time in operation, the HIC built considerable human and material capacity in information generation and management and became a trusted partner to the humanitarian community and government.

⁵⁶ PRSP – Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (July 2008 – Dec 2011)

⁵⁷ CDAs – County Development Agendas

⁵⁸ LiberiaInfo – A database housing statistics on key development indicators including MDGs. It is a customized version of DevInfo developed by UNDG as a standard tool for managing and dissemination of data on development indicators.

as the overall national statistical development process. Hence an urgent need was recognized for the formulation and roll-out of a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) that will guide the system to meet the urgent demand for relevant, accurate data and statistics for planning and monitoring development indicators for not only the emerging PRS and CDAs but also tracking of progress on the MDGs. The strategy was formulated and launched by Government as a 5-year strategy in September 2008 providing the country with a roadmap for strengthening statistical capacity across the entire national statistical system (NSS) including responding to the emerging decentralization agenda and the setting up of a robust M&E system coordinated at the County level. It provides a vision for where the NSS should be in 5 years with recommended priority interventions and benchmarks for getting there.

Since its inception NIMAC has been working closely with LISGIS on several projects both under its former guise as an OCHA HIC and its current manifestation. Initially a joint programme of work was drafted and a series of projects were successfully implemented as noted previously. In July of 2008, the project initiated a 3-year transition plan for a sustainable transfer of all its functions, assets and resources to Government. Also in the last quarter of 2008, NIMAC received a grant of € 1,102,800 from the EC as contribution agreement with UNDP to support capacity building for information management both at the national and local levels. With this support, the partnership with LISGIS has since been focused on implementing the transition strategy and support to rolling out the NSDS.

PROJECT EVALUATION

1. *Evaluation Objectives*

The overall objective of this external evaluation is to assess the project implementation and results by reviewing progress towards the outcome, assess the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of how the NIMAC project has moved towards its objectives and outcome, identify strengths and weaknesses in the project design and implementation and bring out lessons learnt on implementation of projects of this type.

Specific Objectives of the evaluation are to;

- a) Assess levels of progress made towards achieving the desired results, including contributing factors and impediments
- b) Assess national capacities developed through NIMAC intervention
- c) Assess extent of the UNDP/EC contribution to the achievement of the outcome
- d) Assess viability and effectiveness of NSDS and other partnership strategies in relation to the achievement of the results/outcomes
- e) Identify institutional strengths and weakness and areas for improvement for capacity building and information services delivery
- f) Explore and recommend options available to enhance the project effectiveness, efficiency and viability in the long term
- g) Identify and assess lessons learnt and best practices in relation to management and implementation of activities to achieve the related outcome
- h) Identify institutional strengths and weakness for capacity building and information services delivery

- i) Explore lessons learnt and recommend options to enhance execution of such strategies in future that would ensure project effectiveness, efficiency and viability. (Include additional measures that could have improved/enhanced the chances of achieving the project outcome otherwise.)

(Some suggested evaluation questions);

- Is the framework relevant and valid to information management/exchange in Liberia?
- Was the strategy used the most relevant and appropriate to meet the identified needs?
- Has the strategy been periodically reviewed or modified in order to maintain its relevance to changing circumstances?
- Has the operational context changed since its design and if so, has the project adapted effectively?
- Are there gaps in the framework and what are they?
- How do we develop the supporting mechanisms to support the framework (e.g. standards, tools, SOPs etc)?
- What additional measures are needed to improve the chances of achieving the outcome ?

2. Scope

The Project evaluation will incorporate the following categories of analysis:

- a) Outcome status: Whether or not the outcome has been achieved and, if not, whether there has been progress made towards its achievement
- b) Underlying factors: An analysis of the underlying factors beyond UNDP's control that has influenced the outcome
- c) UNDP/EC contribution: Whether or not UNDP and EC's outputs and other interventions can be credibly linked to achievement of the outcome, including the outputs, programmes, projects and soft and hard assistance that contributed to the outcome
- d) Partnership strategy: Whether NIMAC's partnership strategy with other initiatives have been appropriate and effective

3. Products expected from the evaluation:

The evaluation is expected to generate findings, recommendations, lessons learned, rating on performance and an "action item" list.

4. Methodology

The methodology of the evaluation will include;

- Desk review of existing documents and materials such as supporting documents, evaluations, assessments and project reports
- Consultative discussions and interviews with partners and stakeholders
- Visits to sampled project field sites
- Briefing and debriefing sessions with UNDP and the Government, as well as with other donors and partners

- Suggested data collection methods are; individual and group interviews, results of individual project components, analysis of project papers and documents and personal observation

5. *Reporting Requirements*

A comprehensive analytical report presented in English, with outline as follows:

- Executive Summary
- Project Background and Context
- Project Objectives and Design
- Project Implementation, Efficiency and Management
- Project Results and Effectiveness, including effects, development change, sustainability of results and cost-effectiveness
- Linkages/Partnerships with other initiatives (LDLD, CST, UNHCR/NRC, etc.)
- Findings and Recommendations
- Lessons Learned
- Annexes: ToRs, field visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc

6. *Background Documentation*

The following documents will be provided to the consultants;

- UNDP Liberia / OCHA HIC transition process Concept Note
- The Development of a UNDP/Government of Liberia Information Management Centre : Proposal to BCPR
- Nimac exit/transition strategy (Jan 2008 – Jun 2009)
- NIMAC's proposal to the EC's County Development Programme (2008-2012) grant agreement
- NIMAC Progress, Donor and Substantive Reports
- Liberia National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS)
- List of Agencies/Organizations that partnered with NIMAC for the period Jul 2006 – Dec 2011
- UNDP Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results

7. *General Competencies*

- Technical knowledge and experience in UNDP's thematic areas
- Knowledge of national situation and context
- Results-based management expertise
- Capacity building and information services delivery expertise
- Familiarity with policymaking processes (design, adoption, implementation)

8. *Specific Skills and Qualifications*

- Masters degree or Higher in Information Management, Development Studies, Public Policy or related studies.

- Minimum of ten years of extensive relevant experience in developing strategies and projects in information management,
- Practical experience in managing and co-ordinating multi-disciplinary operations in similar contexts
- Experience in evaluation of capacity building and information service provision projects, preferably with UNDP or other United Nations agencies and/or major partners/donors.

**** Two Consultants will be contracted to conduct the evaluation;**

- A Team Leader – (International)
- Associate Researcher – (National Consultant)

A.2 DOCUMENTS READ / INSPECTED**1. General**

Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) (2008)

National Capacity Development Strategy

National Civil Service Reform Strategy

Liberia Education Administrative Regulations

Policies for Reform: Liberia Education Administrative and Management Policies

New Education Reform Act of 2011

MIA Strategic Plan 2012-2016

National Decentralization Policy, Jan. 2011

Proposal to amend the Constitution

Draft National Decentralization Policy Implementation Strategy Framework

Liberia Market Price Monitor, Bulletin 20; Oct. 2011

Governance Commission Decentralization Bulletin, Volume 1-No. 2, Dec. 20,2011

LISGIS Statistical Bulletin, Volume 3-No. 1, Dec. 2011

Aid Management Unit – Annual Donor Fiscal Outturn Report FY 2009 – 10

UNDP / DPKO Study on Local Governance support in Liberia (November 2007)

UN Review of Joint Programmes (P Rawkins, consultant) (October 2010)

2. CST-Related

Civil Affairs County based issue Report-Dec. 2011

United nations County Support Team Joint Program Project Document, 2009-2011

Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee Technical Team Meeting, Nov. 23,2011

Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee (Information management & M&E) Technical Team Meeting, July 14,2009

UN CST Programme Structure

Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee 28th Meeting, Aug. 15 2011

Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee 27th Meeting, Nov.2, 2010

Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee 26th Meeting, Aug. 4, 2010
Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee 25th Meeting, April 8, 2010
Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee 24th Meeting, Dec. 8, 2009
Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee 23rd Meeting, Sept. 23, 2009
Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee 22nd Meeting, July 23, 2009
Minutes of the Joint Steering Committee 21st Meeting, June 4, 2009
CBR/CST/LDL Joint Way Forward Towards Decentralization (Draft)
LDLD/CST Joint Programme Annual Work Plan 2010
LDLD/CST Joint Programme Annual Work Plan 2011
UNCST Joint Programme Consolidated Annual Progress Report, Jan.-Dec. 2011
UNCST Joint Programme Annual Progress Report, Jan.-Dec. 2010
UNCST Joint Programme Annual Progress Report, Jan.-Dec. 2009
UNCST Joint Programme Final Progress Report, March 2011
UNCST Joint Programme Final Narrative Report, 2007-2008
UN-HABITAT Training Manuals
Report on Best Practices and Lessons Learned (2008- 2011) Workshop (07 – 08 March 2011)
Bong County Development Agenda (2008 – 2012)

3. LDLD-Related

Liberia Decentralization and Local Development Project Document

Letters of Agreement

- MIA and UNDP
- EC and UNDP

Reports 2008-2011

Annual Progress Report-2008

November 2008 - May 2010 Progress Reports

CST/LDL 2009 Annual Report

CST/LDL May 2010- May 2011 Progress Report

1st Quarter (June 2010-June 2011) Progress Report

2nd Quarter and 3rd Quarters 2010 Progress Reports

05/11/2010, EC External Monitoring Report

Report on the Study of The Roles of Traditional Chiefs in a

Decentralized Governance in Liberia, 2010

Field Visits Reports 2010

Week End Pictorials

News Letters 2010/2011

Public Procurement and Concessions Regulations/Act of 2005

Public Procurement and Concession Manual for Local Government

Budgeting Manual for Local Government, Volume I, May 1, 2010

LDLD Local Development fund Guidelines (River Gee, River Cess)

Accounting and Financial management Manual for Local Government (Draft) Volume II, Jan. 2010

4. NIMAC-Related

National Strategy for the Development of Statistics-NSDS, July 2008

GOL M&E Framework for PRS and CDA Implementation

Mid -Term Review Report on the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics, Jan. 2011

Women and Men in Liberia baseline Statistics on Gender(Disaggregated Sex facts Sheet), 2011

LDLD/NIMAC EU/UNDP Inter Agency Communication-Ref . 2nd Interim Payment, 02,20,2012

LDLD/NIMAC EU/UNDP Inter Agency Communication-Ref . 2nd Interim Payment, 12,13,2011

LDLD/NIMAC EU/UNDP Inter Agency Communication-Ref . Addendum No. 1 Contribution Agreement, 11,10,2011

Addendum to the Contribution Agreement

LDLD/NIMAC EU/UNDP Inter Agency Communication-Ref . Request For Extension, 10,31,2011

LDLD/NIMAC EU/UNDP Inter Agency Communication-Ref . Comments on the Interim Reports, Extension Request and Suspension of Request For payment, 10,31,2011

ECOMAN/AWP-Component : 3/Management Arrangement

2010 Project Board Meeting Presentation

ECOMAN/AWP, Jan.-Dec. 2012

ECOMAN/AWP, Jan.-Dec. 2011

ECOMAN/AWP, Jan.-Dec. 2010

NIMAC Interim Report May 16-Dec. 31, 2011

LDLD/NIMAC Progress Report May 16-May 15, 2011

NIMAC Draft Progress Report Nov. 20,2009-May 15, 2010

NIMAC Draft Progress Report Nov. 20, 2008-20, Nov. 2009

UNDP/NIMAC Project Achievement and Next Steps: July,1,2006-31, Oct. 2007

Joint UN Strategy on Strengthening Information and Data Management Capacity at National and County levels, 2008

Information management Offices (IMOs)Project Background and Transition Strategy

TOR for County Statistics and Information Officers-CSIO

County Statistics and Information Officers-CSIO Monthly Report Template

A Brief on UNDP Support to AID Coordination in Liberia, by Mr. Abdulai Jalloh UNDP

Information Management and the CST Concept

Strengthening Information and Data Management at National and County levels-UN Liberia Summary of Draft Project Document-22 Feb. 2008

Information Management Best Practice Training- Zwedru Report, April 23, 2007

NIMAC Activity Area for Capacity Building

NIMAC Project Brief, 2008

NIMAC September 2007, Update

NIMAC Assets Turn Over, Jordan Ryan, July 5, 2008

April 20th, 2008 Contribution Agreement -EC/UN

UNDP Addendum: Revision of NMAC Project: Annex II

UNDP NIMA Project Exit Strategy (1,Jan. 2008-30,June 2009)

UNDP BCPR Proposal for the Development of a UNDP/GOL Information Management Center

A.3 PERSONS MET**A. Government of Liberia and Institutions**Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Mr. Alhaji Sherif Deputy Director – Human Resources

Mr. Horatius King Internal Auditor

Ministry of Education

Hon. Henrique Wilson Deputy Minister

Ms. Anndora Gbormie Planning Officer – Decentralisation/Deconcentration Programme

Ministry of Finance

Mr Samuel Korvili Director – County Financial Management Unit

Mr. Vafaly Massaquoi Deputy Director – Region I

Mr. Patrick Mulbah Deputy Director – Region II

Mr. Maxwell Tody Deputy Director – Region II

Mr. Samuel Joe Director - Aid Coordination Unit

Ms. Princetta Varmah Deputy Director - Aid Coordination Unit

Ministry of Health

Hon. Yah Zolia Deputy Minister – Planning and Research

Mr. Benedict Harris Director – Policy and Health Financing

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Hon. Harrison Karnwea Snr. Minister of Internal Affairs (outgoing)

Hon. Blamo Nelson Minister of Internal Affairs (incoming)

Hon. Soko Sackor Deputy Minister - Administration

Hon Peter Karnei Deputy Minister – Decentralisation

Mr. John Dennis Manager, Monitoring & Evaluation

Mr. Myers Cooper National Programme Officer - Decentralisation

Mr. Charles Jlateh Director for Public Affairs

Mr. Iousene Sayon Manager, Training & capacity Development

Mr. Alexander Zinah Manager - ICT

Mr. Stephen Kayea Director – Human Resources

Mr. Lindon Gibson Assistant Manger – Human Resources

Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs

Mr. Lee Mason Assistant Minister

Civil Service Agency

Mr. George Wilson Management Services Specialist

Governance Commission

Hon. Yarsuo Weh-Dorliae Commissioner - Decentralisation

Mr. Matthew Kollie Programme Analyst - Decentralisation

LISGIS

Hon. Edward Liberty Director- General

Mr. Francis Wreh Deputy Directory-General – Statistics and Development Policy

Mr. Johnson Kei Deputy Directory-General – Information Coordination and Dissemination

Ms. Dabah Varpilah Deputy Directory-General – Administration and Finance

Mr. Dorbor Fassama Director - County Statistics & Information Offices (CSIO)

Mr. Augustine Fayiah Coordinator - CSIO

Mr. Joseph Farkollie Regional Coordinator (III) – Bong / Nimba / Lofa

Mr. Raymond Zaimah Regional Coordinator (V) – Maryland / River Gee / Grand Kru

Mr. Yusuff Sarnoh Principal Researcher – Statistical Dissemination

Mr. Robert Toweh National Coordinator – NSDS Coordination

Mr. Joseph Kamara Director – ICT Division

Mr. Lamine Kamara IT Assistant

Mr. Thomas Davis Director - GIS Division

Mr. Michael Monger GIS Technician

Mr. Joseph Nyang Director – Data Processing

Mr. Lewis Marwolo Database Manager

Ms. Rebecca Teaiyem Director – Customer Service

Liberia Institution of Public Administration

Prof. Harold Monger Director General

B. UN Agencies and Mission**(i) UNDP**

Mr. Moustapha Soumaré	Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General – (Recovery & Governance), UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative
Mr. Dominic Sam	Country Director
Mr. Fernando Abaga	Deputy Resident Representative (Programmes)
Mr. Fitsum Abraha	Head of Strategy and Policy Unit
Ms. Shipra Bose	Senior Gender Advisor
Mr. Stanley Kamara	Assistant Resident Representative (SPU)
Mr. Teakon Williams	Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist
Ms. Yvonne Wolo	Monitoring & Evaluation Programme Associate
Ms. Nessie Golakai	Assistant Resident Representative (Governance)
Mr. Napoleon Abdulai	Justice and Security Programme Manager
Mr. Abibu Tamu	Programme Manager – CST programme
Mr. KNS Nair	Chief Technical Advisor – LDLD programme
Mr. Robert Dorliae	Monitoring & Reporting Associate – LDLD programme
Mr. Abdulai Jalloh	Programme Specialist – Development Information Management
Mr. Wellington Jah	Research Associate - Development Information Management

(ii) UNHABITAT

Ms. Guglielma de Passano	Chief Technical Advisor - Liberia
Mr. Alfred Gipli	Training Associate

(iii) UNHCR

Mr. Robert Tibagwa	Deputy Resident Representative
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(iv) UNICEF

Mr. Fazlul Haque	Deputy Resident Representative (Programmes)
Ms. Zeinab Al-Azzawi	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer

(v) UNOPS

Mr. Lakis Papastavrou	Head of Country Office & Chief Technical Advisor
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(vi) UN Resident Coordinator's Office

Ms. Smaro Skoulikidis	Head, Resident Coordinator's Office
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UN Joint Programmes

Ms. Emily Stanger Programme Manager – GEWEE

(vii) UN Mission in Liberia

Mr. Francis Kai-Kai Chief – Civil Affairs Section

Mr. Adriano Cassandra Civil Affairs Officer

Mr. Bornfree Adile Civil Affairs Officer

Ms. Catarina Fabiansson Head of Field Support Team

Ms. Olga De Biaggio Gender Officer UNMIL

(viii) UNMIL Civil Affairs – Field Offices

Mr. Ivan Kotov Head of Field Office - Margibi County

Ms. Abinbola Aina Civil Affairs Officer – Margibi County

Ms. Maria Trovota Civil Affairs Expert – Margibi County

Mr. Rolin Sila Civil Affairs Expert – Sinoe County

Mr. Roosevelt Morris Civil Affairs Administrative Assistant – Sinoe County

Ms. Babongile Soko-Karbo Civil Affairs Officer – Grand Bassa County

Mr. Gibril Turay Head of Field Office - Grand Cape Mount County

Ms. Anne Ogbigbo Human Rights Officer – Grand Cape Mount County

Ms. Tabitha Mbugua Head of Trainers – Montserrado County

Mr. Aloysius Taylor National Trainer

C. Donors and Related AgenciesEuropean Union

Ms. Francesca Varlese Programme Manager – Governance

Ms. Anna Harvala Political Attaché – Political Section

Mr. Juvénal Turatsinze LTTA - Local Economic Development Specialist

Mr. William Tod LTTA – Organisational Development / Capacity Building Specialist

Sweden / SIDA

Mr. Robert Backlund Programme Officer - Democratic Governance & Human Rights

World Bank

Ms. Jariya Hoffman Senior Economist – Poverty Reduction and Economic Management

D. Other OrganisationsLiberia Institute of Public Administration

Prof. Harold Monger Director-General

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

Ms. Astrid Sletten Country Director

E Met During Field Visits**Sinoe County (13 - 14 February, 2012)**Meetings with County Administration

Hon. Milton Teajah County Superintendent
 Mr. Simpson Snoh County Development Officer
 Mr. Nicholas Watson Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
 Mr. Isaac Duah County Statistics & Information Officer
 Mr. Mack Massallay County Field Monitor
 Ms. Nettie Doepoe County Gender Coordinator

Meetings with Line Ministries

Mr. Godwin Necollinh County Agriculture Coordinator (MOAg)
 Mr. Chapman Adam County Education Officer (MOE)
 Dr. Wilmot Frank County Health Officer (MOHSW)
 Mr. Richard Bessman Senior County Commerce Inspector

Meetings with Geetroh District administration and beneficiaries

Hon. Roland Polloh Geetroh District Commissioner
 Mr. George Dorjue Cassava farm PMT – Chairman
 Mr. Sundaye Nimene Cassava farm PMT – Secretary
 Ms. Florance Williams Cassava farm PMT – Treasurer
 Mr. Jerome Gbahee Cassava farm PMT – Member

Mr. Jacob Tye	Cassava farm PMT – Member
Mr. Philip Karthen	Senior Elder

Grand Bassa County (14 + 15 February, 2012)

Meetings with County Administration

Mr. Charles Cole	Acting County Superintendent
Mr. Barclay Togba	Development Superintendent
Mr. Isaac Duah	Director – CSIO
Mr. Mark Massalley	County Field Monitor
Ms. Nettie Doepoe	County Gender Coordinator
Mr. Abel Nyombio	Wee District Superintendent

Meetings with Line Ministries

Mr. Adam Chapman	County Education Officer (MOE)
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Meeting with Civil Society Organisations

Mr. Abraham Kollie	Local CSO Forum Chairperson
Mr. Richard B. Davis	NADDAL (agriculture)
Mr. Sam Joe	NADDAL (agriculture)
Mr. Jerry Blojay	NADDAL (agriculture)
Mr. Washington Gawhedeh	Timber Union
Mr. Augustus Artis	NADDAL (agriculture)
Mr. John Williams	Bassa Teachers' Association
Mr. Morris B. Karley	USIRWUL (trade unions)
Mr. Mark S. Sherman	BUCCOBA (Child protection and GBV)

Meetings with District Administration (Desoe Town) and beneficiaries

Mr. Sensible Counsellor	Chair PMT/Pineapple
Mr. John Kiamue	Member
Mr. Emmanuel James	Member
Ms. Alie Desoe	Member
Ms. Emily Berry	Member

Mr. Augustine Kiamue	Member
Mr. Federick Williams	Member
Mr. Solomon Laway	Member
Ms. Nelleh Desoe	Member
Mr. James Laway	Member

Mr. Morris Karr	Contractor – Agro-processing hall in Desoe Town
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Margibi County (16 February, 2012)

Meetings with County Administration

Mr. Levi Pia	County Superintendent a.i
Mr. John Buway	Development Superintendent
Mathew Bayougar	District Commissioner (Mambahn Kabah District)

Meetings with Line Ministries

Mr. Varboh Dukuly	Snr. County Inspector, MCI
Mr. Clinton A. Sayleh	Monitoring Officer MGD
Mr. Willie Cooper	County Agriculture Coordinator - Margibi County
Mr. Clifford Ellis	District Agricultural Officer (District No. 3)
Mr. Emmanuel Freeman	District Agricultural Officer (District No. 5)
Mr. Joseph Kohene	Director - County Health Department
Mr. Raymond Cascell	Administrator, C.H. Rennie Hospital
Ms. Roseline Clark	Focal Person, IEC/BCC
Ms. Kafia Duno	Social Welfare Officer

Meeting with Civil Society Organisations

Ms. Esther Clark	Rural Women Organisation
Ms. Amara. Dukuly	MIYUD/Islamic Youth
Ms. Hawa Sheriff	WIPNET
Ms. Satta Dunor	Muslim Women
Ms. Fatu Sibah	Muslim Women
Ms. Etta B. Tolbert	MARWON

Ms. Tumu Sackie	MARWON
Ms. Lorpu Wuokolo	MARWON
Ms. Nuwo Sumowah	MARWON
Ms. Jemimaw Palmeg	AWI
Mr. Steven Mulbah	Civil Society Movement
Rev. Johnson Sumo	UCOW-Inc.-Liberia
Mr. Sampson Sumowor	Liberian Marketing Association
Mrs. Esther Clark	National Rural Women Programme
Mr. Prince S. Bundo	Tailors Union
Mr. Mustapha Sesay	Margibi Student Union
Mr. Stanley Cooper Jr.	Liberian Youth Network
Mr. Owandar M. Dunor	National Civil Society Organisation
Mr. Aaron Fallah	Citizens' Action Committee

County Education Board

Mr. Emmanuel Johnson	Chairperson
Mr. Marwolo Kpadeh	Co-Chair
Mr. William Gizi	Secretary and County Education Office
Ms. Victoria Gulley	Chaplin
Ms. Hawa Siafa	Member
Mr. Henric Speare	Member

Grand Cape Mount County (17 February, 2012)

Meetings with County Administration

Mr. Eric Pinney	County Inspector
Mr. Mohammed Ali	County Development Officer
Mr. Sylvester Lormie	CSIO
Mr. Kaison Kiadii	Garwada District Commissioner

Meetings with Line Ministries and Boards

Ms. Fatu Williams	Child Protection Officer
Mr. James Ville	Social Welfare Officer

Mr. Mohammed. Kemokai District Education Officer
Mr. Alfred Mbangwa Member – County Education Board

Meeting with Civil Society Organisations

Ms. Victoria Nuefville Child Fund Liberia
Mr. Edwin M. Gray BRAC
Mr. Momo Kamara LOIC
Ms. Jenneh S. Kemokai CPU/CWC
Mr. Abraham Cool CWE
Ms. Bindu Fanhbulleh SWAD
Mr. Bill Cordor MIA/PBO
Ms. Siaffa Fahnbullen Commissioner's Clerk
Mr. Marcus Krangar SOSIFSD
Ms. Armah Kromah COAH

F. Contacted but Not Met

A number of UN agencies, development partners and implementing partners were contacted with a view to meeting the evaluation team. However, it was not possible for them to meet the team in the timeframe available.

A.4 SCHEDULE

Date	Activity	Location
02 February	Arrival of international consultant	Brussels - Monrovia
03	Meetings with UNDP, EC, UN-HABITAT, UNMIL	Monrovia
04	Reviewing documents	Monrovia
06	Meetings with MIA, LISGIS, LTТА, CST + LDLD	Monrovia
07	Meetings with LIPA, NRC, GC, MPEA, CST + LDLD	Monrovia
08	Meetings with MOF, UNHCR, UNOPS, SIDA, LDLD + NIMAC	Monrovia
09	Meetings with CSA, UNMIL, UNDP	Monrovia
10	Meetings with MIA, MOE, UNDP + RCO	Monrovia
11	Reviewing documents	Monrovia
12	<i>(travel from Monrovia to Greenville)</i>	Monrovia - Greenville
13	Meetings in Sinoe County	Greenville
14	Meetings in Sinoe and Grand Bassa Counties	Compound No.3 / Buchanan
15	Meetings in Grand Bassa County	Buchanan / Desoe Town
16	Meetings in Margibi County	Kakata
17	Meetings in Grand Cape Mount County	Robertsport
20	Meetings with MOH and MCI; analysis of information	Monrovia
21 - 23	Meetings with UNDP and UNICEF; analysis of information	Monrovia
24 - 29 February	Preparing draft CER (w-i-p)	Monrovia
01 March	Preparing draft CER (w-i-p)	Monrovia
02	Stakeholders Briefing; submitting work-in-progress draft CER	Monrovia
05	Meetings with LISGIS and World Bank	Monrovia
06	Meeting with MOF (Aid Management Unit); analysis of info.	Monrovia
07 - 11	Analysis of information and completing draft CER	Monrovia

Date	Activity	Location
12	Editing and submitting the CER first draft for comment	Monrovia
13 - 16	Review and incorporation of stakeholders' initial comments	Monrovia
17	Debriefing of DSRSRG; finalising CER	Monrovia
18	Submission of CER; departure of international consultant	Monrovia; Monrovia-(Brussels)



Annex B.1: Terms of Reference for the Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee

MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS



THE INTER-AGENCY COMMITTEE (IAC) FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF DECENTRALIZATION POLICY

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

The draft National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance provides guidelines for a genuine decentralization of political, administrative and fiscal powers to local governments within the context of the Unitary System of the Republic of Liberia to promote a decentralized approach to development and service delivery. Its implementation is an enormous task which is likely to take several years following an incremental and phased approach. Therefore, planning and coordination of implementation is a major task and shall play a major role in shaping the outcome of the decentralization policy formulated by Government of Liberia. In order to implement decentralization policy effectively and efficiently in a coordinated and consultative manner, there is a need to establish a platform at national level to exchange information, discuss progress, and address major challenges arising from the implementation and for strategic planning. The main functions of the Task Force are as follows:

1. To develop a framework for implementation of decentralization policy following an incremental and phased approach detailing the immediate and medium-term tasks with well-defined milestones for political, administrative and fiscal decentralization recognizing their inter-dependence and challenges.
2. To develop a strategic 10-year plan and a detailed 3-year plan (Phase One) with well defined deliverables and performance indicators to lay the foundation for successful implementation of the decentralization policy.
3. To estimate the resources needed to develop basic infrastructure and facilities as well as and human skills at local level to implement Phase One of the decentralization programme.

4. To work closely with line ministries and other government agencies to provide technical and strategic guidance and clarifications to support and coordinate their efforts for sectoral decentralization consistent with the national decentralization policy and review their progress.
5. To organize technical sessions and seminars for line ministries and other governmental agencies as part of their capacity building for the smooth implementation of sectoral decentralization
6. To support the formulation of a national capacity development plan for the implementation of decentralization, especially on human resources management and their redeployment consistent with administrative decentralization as part of the ongoing efforts to formulate a 10 Year National Capacity Development Plan by MPEA/Civil Service Agency
7. To closely collaborate with the Civil Services and Public Sector Reforms as they relate to decentralization.

The IGC will have the following composition;

Ministry of Internal Affairs (Chair)

Governance Commission

Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs

Ministry of Finance

Ministry of Agriculture

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Public Works

The Committee will meet twice a month. The LDLD programme will provide technical support and will also help to organize the secretariat within the Division of Research and Development Planning of MIA.

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Annex B.2 (a): CST Budget vs. Expenditure Overview

Budget Item*	2009		2010		2011		2012	
	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget (US\$)	(Expenditure)
1. Developing Capacity of County Officials	600,000.00	400,000.00	300,000.00	380,000.00	100,000.00	0	100,000.00	tbd
2. Strengthening Data and Information Management at County Level	1,000,000.00	1,000,000.00	600,000.00	600,000.00	550,000.00	300,000.00	250,000.00	tbd
3. Restoring Functionality of County Admin Offices and Transportation	690,000.00	490,000.00	600,000.00	600,000.00	700,000.00	125,000.00	575,000.00	tbd
4. Support to County Level Coordination	50,000.00	50,000.00	35,000.00	20,000.00	15,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	tbd
5. Programme Administration and Management	450,000.00	450,000.00	539,500.00	539,500.00	450,000.00	450,000.00	398,365.00	tbd
6. Evaluation	0	0	0	0	50,000.00	0	50,000.00	
Total	2,790,000.00	2,390,000.00	2,074,500.00	2,139,500.00	1,865,000.00	885,000.00	1,383,365.00	tbd

Note: * = the order of the Budget Items follows that set out in the original Programme Document (19 March 2009)

tbd = To be determined

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Annex B.2 (b): CST Yearly Funding by Donors

Year	Annual Budget (US\$)	Funds Available (US\$)	Funding Gap (US\$)	Funding Mobilized (US\$)	Donor (s)
2009	3,590,000.00	400,000.00 200,00.00 100,000.00 90,000.00	2,800,000.00	2,800,000.00	UNDP UNHCR UNICEF GoL SIDA
2010	1,989,500.00	1,200,000.00 (b/f of 2009)	789,500.00	600,000.00 119,500.00 45,000.00 25,000.00	SIDA UNDP UNICEF UNHCR
2011	1,865,000.00	100,000.00 100,000.00 70,000.00	1,595,000	1,595,000	UNDP GoL UNHCR SIDA
2012	1,383,365.00*	980,000.00 (b/f of 2011)	403,365.00	250,000.00 153,365.00	UNDP UNDP (BCPR)
Total					

*The above 2012 budget as detailed in the Annual Work Plan (AWP) include funding for County Information Management and Monitoring (CIMM), which is implemented by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA) only up to June 2012.

This component as well as the capacity building requires additional funding from July to December 2013. The following are the funding gap for the two components

- **CIMM**

US\$ 24, 300 (salaries and other related benefits for M&E Assistants and Field Monitors) per month @6 months
145,800

3 Training and other related events @ 20,000 per event is US\$ 60,000.00

Total funding gap for CIMM is **US\$ 205,800.00**

- **Capacity Building Component**

3 Regional TOTs in Local Economic Development (LED) @ 20,000 = 60,000.00

3 Regional TOTs in Local Financial Management @ 20,000 60,000.00

3 Regional TOTs in Local Elected Leadership series @ 20,000 60,000.00

Total funding gap for Capacity Building component is **180,000.00**

- **Administrative and other related costs 50,000.00**

Total Funding Gap US\$ 435,000.00

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ANNEX B. 3 (a): LDLD Commitments and Disbursements

Total committed funds and funds disbursed as of 31 January 2012 as per the signed agreement

In US\$

<i>sl</i>	Donor	Committed	Allocated	Balance	
	European Commission	3,666,000.00	2,390,071.00	1,275,929.00	
	UNCDF	2,500,000.00	1,303,297.90	1,196,702.10	
	UNDP	2,500,000.00	1,499,956.00	1,000,044.00	
	Total	8,666,000.00	5,193,324.90	3,472,675.10	
	GOL	15,000,000.00	10,500,000.00	4,500,000.00	

ANNEX B. 3 (b): LDF Financial Details

LDF Six Pilot Counties Summary Financial Details as of 31 January 2012

In US\$

<i>sl</i>	County	Total Budget	Amount Disbursed		Total Expenditure	Balance
			1st	2nd		
1	Bomi	100,000.00	50,000.00	40,000.00	53,801.23	36,198.77
2	Gbarpolu	100,000.00	50,000.00	40,000.00	48,003.60	41,996.40
3	Bassa	100,000.00	50,000.00	40,000.00	40,707.19	49,292.81
4	Sinoe	100,000.00	50,000.00	40,000.00	47,460.15	42,539.85
5	River Cess	100,000.00	50,000.00		46,953.63	3,046.37
6	River Gee	100,000.00	50,000.00	40,000.00	51,860.53	38,139.47
	Total	600,000.00	300,000.00	240,000.00	288,786.33	251,213.67

ANNEX B.4: NIMAC Financial Outlay – Budget vs. Expenditure
National Information Management Center (NIMAC) Project
 Financial Outlay (Budget & Expenditure) - 1 July 2006 - 31 December 2012

In US Dollars

Budget Item	Jul '06 - Dec '07		Jan '08 - Nov 08'		Nov '08 - 15 May '11		16 May '11 - 30 Jun '12		Jul '12 - Dec '12
	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure*	Budget
I.1 - Human Resources	973,200.00	522,800.00	276,800.00	228,000.00	498,500.00	498,474.98	132,445.96	45,605.96**	118,314.95
II.2 Equipment and supplies	927,669.00	476,900.00	240,000.00	59,000.00	299,585.00	252,148.34	23,400.00	20,613.06	160,000.00
II.3 - Other costs, services	323,279.00	200,300.00	83,200.00	38,000.00	416,000.00	432,952.51	94,218.20	62,037.95	46,685.05
Total	2,224,148.00	1,200,000.00	600,000.00	325,000.00	1,214,085.00	1,183,575.84	250,064.16	128,256.97	325,000.00
Funding Sources	(UNDP) BCPR \$ 1,200,000		(UNDP) TRAC II \$ 325,000		EC Grant - Euro 1,102,800.00 (@ USD 1.30= Euro 1.00)				Unfunded

Data sourced from Nimac Project files - 24 February 2012 (Contact: abdulai.jalloh@undp.org)

Budget Item	Jul '06 - Dec '07		Jan '08 - Nov 08'		Nov '08 - 15 May '11		16 May '11 - 30 Jun '12		Jul '12 - Dec '12
	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure	Budget	Expenditure*	Budget
I.1 - Human Resources					383,461.54	383,442.29	101,881.50	35,081.50**	91,011.50
II.2 Equipment and supplies					230,450.00	193,960.27	18,000.00	15,856.20	123,076.92
II.3 - Other costs, services					320,000.00	333,040.39	72,475.54	47,721.50	35,911.58
Total					933,911.54	910,442.95	192,357.04	98,659.20	250,000.00
Funding Sources	(UNDP) BCPR \$ 1,200,000		(UNDP) TRAC II \$ 325,000		EC Grant - Euro 1,102,800.00				Unfunded

Data sourced from Nimac Project files - 24 February 2012 (Contact: abdulai.jalloh@undp.org)

* Please note that expenditures reported for the period 16 May 2011 - 30 Jun 2012 are only up to 31 Dec 2011. Expenditures for Jan to Jun 2012 are on-going and hence are not included in the table.

**The budgeted amount for "Human Resources" does not include UNDP's 6 months cost sharing payments towards the salary of the international technical Coordinator of the Project. The expenditure amount showing covers 1 month salary for the international Technical Coordinator and 7 months for the 5 national technical support staff seated in LISGIS.

