



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021-2027

Multiannual Indicative Programme Liberia 2021-2027

1. EU international cooperation in Liberia

1.1 Basis for programming

After more than two decades of civil unrest (1979-1989) and armed conflict (1989-2003), and a virulent Ebola virus disease outbreak (2014-2016), with very damaging humanitarian, social and economic consequences, Liberia is now slowly trying to get itself on solid footing. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2333 (2016), the Government of Liberia submitted its Peacebuilding Plan in 2017, integrating the work of the UN Peacebuilding Commission and marking Liberia's transition from the UN Peacekeeping operation. UNMIL left the country in March 2018.

Even if the country has overcome the state of immediate post-conflict fragility, it still presents a political and socioeconomic vulnerability, which cannot be underestimated. Liberia is faced with the persistent weakness of its economy, and serious structural challenges in terms of institutional capacity and political and economic governance. These challenges are rather systemic in Liberia, and rooted in the history and governance structure of the country. They continue to impact negatively on the large majority of Liberians. Liberia still presents very high levels of poverty and social exclusion, limited basic services and infrastructure, and low human development indicators, particularly on health, education and nutrition.

Against this backdrop, the Government's development strategy (2019-2023), the "Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development" (PAPD), is structured around four pillars: Power to the People, the Economy and Jobs, Sustaining the Peace, and Governance and Transparency. It is aligned with the African Union Agenda 2063 and matches high-level national targets with the sustainable development goals (SDGs) indicators. However, the implementation of the development agenda remains hampered by insufficient capacity and financial resources and a narrow fiscal space. There is a dire need to expand the economic base to provide decent jobs and income to the people and increase domestic revenue to fund the development agenda as well as improve basic services and infrastructure. Furthermore, since 2018, Liberia has suffered a deep economic crisis, going from low economic growth (1.2% in 2018) to recession (-2.5% in 2019 and -3% in 2020).

While Liberia was already faced with a poor resource base for its Government finances, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought the PAPD's goals even further out of reach. The prolonged lockdown in March-July 2020 highlighted the vulnerability of the population, negatively impacted the level of trust in the governance processes, and hampered the respect of human rights (there were indications of an increase in cases of gender-based violence). In this COVID context, the Government intends to re-engage with local and international stakeholders on the implementation and review of priorities and budget of the PAPD. Nonetheless, the four PAPD pillars remain relevant for the country, hence for the EU programming.

The Multiannual Indicative Programme (MIP) is based on the PAPD and should allow the Government to restart the implementation of part of the PAPD, while addressing EU strategic interests and priorities, in particular with regard to the Green Deal as well as the Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs. This will be paired with support to governance processes, promoting democracy, social cohesion and peace and security as well as economic governance, focussing on business and investment climate and financial management. Women's and youth rights, inclusion and participation will be mainstreamed throughout.

The selected Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) ("Safe and Sustainable Food Systems" and "Forestry and Biodiversity") merge the aspirations of the Liberian Government on development and political impact with those of the EU as a global actor. In line with the Jobs and Growth Compact for Liberia, enhanced EU investments in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors and the boost that investments in selected value chains can give to the Liberian economy and job creation, particularly for Liberia's young population, cannot be underestimated. In the Green Deal's spirit of inclusiveness, particular attention will furthermore

be given to economic empowerment of groups in the Liberian society that tend to have less influence, ensuring that decent jobs and benefits generated by the interventions include women and youth, but also minorities and persons with disabilities.

The MIP and the TEIs are aligned to relevant EU policies, other programmes and instruments:

- **The Farm to Fork strategy underpinning the European Green Deal and aiming to accelerate transition to sustainable food systems.** This implies neutral or positive environmental impact, mitigation of climate change and adaptation to its impacts, reversed loss of biodiversity, and access to sufficient, safe, nutritious, sustainable food. Priority areas 1 and 2 and the two TEIs contribute to those objectives.
- **EU trade agreements and fair trade policies.** Through its trade development component, the MIP will support Liberia (which has duty and quota free access to EU market) to access those commercial opportunities.
- **The European Fund for Sustainable Development+ (EFSD+).** TEIs will prepare the ground for a potential use of the EFSD+ in boosting investment, promoting inclusive growth, job creation and sustainable development.
- **The Gender Action Plan III and the Spotlight Initiative,** which aims at gender equality, women's rights, inclusion and participation as well as eliminating all forms of violence and harmful practices against women and girls.

1.2 Status of joint programming

While the EU Delegation and the EU Member States (MS) represented – France, Germany, Sweden and Ireland (FR, DE, SE, IE) – recognise the importance of joint approaches, EU actors concluded in an early stage that a full-fledged joint programme was not feasible. In recent times, coordination among EU actors has increased in the development area. There is consensus on the challenges that the country faces, including on those relevant to the two TEIs selected. Equally, EU actors share the assessment on the critical need for in-depth reforms and the recognition that without real transformation, the EU as a whole will not be able to deliver on the development agenda. In Liberia a joint response is already practiced in a number of areas, such as facilitating economic growth and youth and women's inclusion (technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and various women's rights-oriented programmes), as well as support to democratic governance (e.g. elections and public financial management (PFM) reform). Through the TEIs, coordinated efforts will be intensified under this programming cycle and the MS are invited to probe the possibility of joint programming at the MIP mid-term review.

1.3 Priority areas of the EU cooperation with Liberia

The development challenges of Liberia run deep and touch every aspect of the social and economic fabric of the country. For the current MIP, which addresses both the Liberian needs as well as the EU's strategic and global interests and taking into account the vast needs of the country and the limited number of actors and funds, the following areas have been identified as the best possible compromise between short-term challenges and long-term perspectives.

Priority Area 1 – Enhancing and preserving natural resources for sustainable growth

Indicative sectors (310) Agriculture, forestry and fisheries (food and nutrition security, food safety, resources' management)
(410) Environment protection (governance, biodiversity, ecosystem services)

Priority Area 2 – Promoting decent jobs and inclusive growth

Indicative sectors (113) Technical and vocational education and training (TVET)

(321) SME development (processing of food and industrial crops, business environment, innovation)

(210) Transport and storage (road infrastructure, storage facilities)

Priority Area 3 – Improving financial and democratic governance

Indicative sectors (151) Economic governance (PFM, business and investment climate)

(151) Democratic participation (inclusive and transparent democracy, elections)

(151) Women’s rights (gender equality, ending violence against women and girls)

Both TEIs, while adopting a systems-based approach, will contain elements of all three priority areas (developed around (DAC) sectors), yet not all indicative sectors will be equally important in both TEIs.

1.4 Justification and context

The selection of the three priority areas was firstly prompted by the PAPD and by extension the corresponding SDGs. The selection of indicators emanated from the national development strategy and the priorities set throughout the EU agenda, in particular with regard to the Green Deal as well as decent job creation and economic growth, vital for a country with a population of almost 2/3 under the age of 25. An additional argument to focus on the European Green Deal is that Liberia needs considerable support to reach its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) targets set out under the Paris Agreement. The two first priority areas feed into the Liberian targets for the NDC and are in line with the Green Deal, specifically the objective on preserving and restoring ecosystems and biodiversity, intensifying food systems sustainably, as well as mobilising micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) for a clean and circular economy. Emission reductions in the energy sector are key to reaching Liberia’s climate mitigation targets, and are closely linked to the climate adaptation measures that focus on restoring, preserving and sustainably managing all existing natural resources, be that for agricultural, fisheries or forestry exploitation. The MIP will follow the 11th EDF investment in education (TVET) and contribute to the human development in Liberia. Furthermore, due to EU and MS investment in this sector, the EU continues to be centrally positioned in relevant regular political dialogue. Together with the Global Partnership for Education the TVET programme positions the EU in the core of the the Local Education Group, which supports the Government on the re-alignment process of the education sector to the 2011 Education Act, the Pillar One (Power to the People) of the PAPD, the Getting to Best Education Sector Plan and the SDG 4, as well as stimulate strong government-led donor coordination.

The MIP interventions are fairly aligned with the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) for Sub-Saharan Africa, in particular regarding the proposed RIP’s priority areas (1) education and skills; (2) governance and rule of law; (3) green and climate transition; and (5) sustainable growth and decent jobs.

For this MIP to be successful, key reforms are necessary, both in the economy as well as in the overall governance structures of the country. A deep dialogue is needed on the constraints holding back development, and the ways to unlock the potential of the country, which could create formal employment opportunities for its young population. Finally, the proposed MIP also builds on the multilateral responses to global challenges and reanimation of global governance, at the core of the Joint Communication on *Strengthening the EU’s contribution to rules-based multilateralism*. The multilateral response will include synergies with regional and multilateral organisations, and in particular with the ONE United Nations initiative.

Priority Area 1 – Enhancing and preserving natural resources for sustainable growth (SDGs 2/5/12/13/14/15)

Investing in Liberia firstly means investing in Liberians in line with the pro-poor agenda. This requires nourishing both body and mind, in line with SDG 2, zero hunger, as well as EU priorities of food security,

nutrition and human development as a basis for socio-economic growth. Along the lines of *leaving no-one behind*, the role of women and youth as agents for change will be applied across sectors ensuring their participation, rights and inclusion.

While the actual data on moderate to severe food insecurity are disputed and figures vary between around 500,000 to over a million, the COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the vulnerability of the population in this respect, since the Government deemed around half of the population at risk of being food insecure during the lock down period. Figures on chronic malnutrition are still high, with stunting affecting nearly one third of children under five. Reinforcing the food security and nutrition status of the population will not only bring benefits during pandemics as seen in 2020, but will also enhance the cognitive abilities of deprived children when they receive a varied and balanced diet. It must be noted that 73% of Liberia's food is imported, showing the country's dependency, and hence the need to produce locally for import substitution. Studies and interventions have also shown Liberia's potential for cash crop production, not only in the traditional sectors of rubber and palm oil, but in particular for cocoa and coffee – for which European markets should be very attractive outlets. In the promotion of cash crops, specific care will be taken to avoiding deforestation as well as to the role women and youth can play in these economic activities to their own economic empowerment (see priority area 2).

The deforestation rate in Liberia currently hovers around 2% per year, amongst the highest in the world¹. Intensification (rather than expansion) of agriculture is thus needed to drive Liberian agriculture in a sustainable way. Land use planning cognisant of Liberia's natural capital (e.g. ecosystem service delivery by primary forests and mangroves among others), mechanisation combined with considered use of inputs (seeds, fertilisers) as well as climate, circular and ecosystem-smart management choices (according to agroecological principles, e.g. green manure and/or waste) are essential to improve rural livelihoods. Introducing widespread mechanisation and green technologies in agriculture is likely to appeal to youth. Solutions to integrate (urban) organic waste recycling and landfill leachates into production systems could reinforce the connection between urban and rural dwellers. Intensification interventions could ease the transition from predominantly subsistence farming towards small - to medium-size commercial farming, while supporting the production of marketable and exportable goods (see priority area 2). Strengthening the connections between agriculture, forestry and fisheries and proactively linking actors in sustainable food production, vibrant food processing, trade and related food services (such as extension, marketing, transport and other logistics) so that access to safe and nutritious food can be secured for all, is also at the core of the EU's Farm to Fork Strategy with its food systems approach, well-articulated in the TEI on safe and sustainable food systems.

Investments in and for people only make sense if the environment on which their future economic and social wellbeing relies, is preserved. The implementation of internationally signed agreements in the forestry, fisheries and agriculture sectors, like the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT), the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative – including forestry and agriculture – and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and its Implementing Agreements as well as the Agreement on Port State measures to prevent and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, could further unlock the potential of these sectors. Voluntary or mandatory transparency and certification on child-labour-free and deforestation-free cocoa and coffee can also raise Liberia above the standard in global markets, also since the varieties/species grown in Liberia are highly valued.

Additional attention for reducing child labour may be provided. Liberia will also be encouraged to ratify the child labour convention No. 138 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) about the minimum age for access to work.

Further, only if due attention is paid to the changing climate, as reflected in the Liberian climate targets and proposed adaptation and mitigation measures developed within the (revised²) NDC, will investments

¹ Lessons from other countries in West Africa on how deforestation was driven by cash crops have been taken into consideration. Currently agriculture is still responsible of more than 60% of the deforestation in West Africa.

² The revised Liberia NDC was submitted to the UNFCCC in August 2021.

into the targeted sectors be sustainable, be it with regard to agricultural production, the exploitation of the inland and still rich coastal waters or the protection of the still expansive area of the Upper Guinean Forest. Since emissions from deforestation account for more than 90% of Liberia's carbon emissions, Liberia will lose a valuable source of long-term revenue from the capture of atmospheric carbon if the rate of deforestation is not reversed, also jeopardising the ambitions of the climate change agenda. Production patterns must be made sustainable and not be detrimental to the environment, in keeping with SDGs 12, responsible consumption and production, 13, climate action, 14, life below water, and 15, life on land, as well as with the EU Green Deal.

Finally, Liberia hosts the last viable remnants of West African forests with unique biodiversity: enhanced governance and support to protected areas and ecological corridors, with remarkable potential as a still undiscovered eco-tourism destination, constitutes a perfect fit with SDG 15, life on land. In addition, EU interventions need to capitalise on the good cooperation that already exists between Liberia and its neighbours on conservation of the forest ecosystems and biodiversity corridors, which surely should be continued as a multi-country approach under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI).

Under the 11th EDF programme, a large part of EU support to agriculture, fisheries and forestry was channelled through civil society organisations (CSOs). Positive experiences of partnerships with CSOs have been demonstrated in a number of areas, particularly in relation to biodiversity conservation and the fight against illicit trade of wildlife. CSOs also play an important role in the governance of the forestry sector, as provided for by the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA), as well as in the advocacy around secure land tenure. There is a need to step up implementation of adopted policies and legal frameworks, which relies on the Government. Hence, incentives to that effect should be envisaged within the MIP. CSOs have played a prominent role in the formulation of new policies, strategies and laws, as well as the monitoring of their implementation, but cannot replace authorities. Nevertheless, CSO interventions could still prove essential in piloting new and consolidating existing approaches, also in the field of food security. Continued cooperation with CSOs on land rights, targeting the empowerment of women to secure their rights and seeking their constructive input in policy dialogue and development, should also be encouraged. The EU should advocate for the inclusion of CSOs and women participation in policy dialogues as well as in specific segments of the TEIs.

Priority Area 2 – Promoting decent jobs and inclusive growth (SDGs 4/5/7/8/9/)

The skill sets and capacities of many Liberians are not responsive to the actual needs to develop the country's economy. This applies to value chain actors at all levels, to actors in Government and Agencies, producers in agriculture, fisheries and forestry, but also to those actors in any sector with value addition opportunities and thus of potential interest to investors. Several interventions under the 11th EDF started to address these shortages for the first time in a structural way and geographically wide area. This work certainly has to continue and is to be consolidated to make TVET a genuine component of the national education system. In line with SDG 4, quality education, the EU involvement in education could even be expanded to higher levels of education, to create a professional cadre in Liberia in the fields of agriculture, fisheries, food safety, forestry, climate change, and environment. For this, other potential instruments at the EU's disposal should be used, including the possibility of twinning between European universities and similar institutions in Liberia, as well as the promotion of the ERASMUS+ and other thematic and regional programmes to ensure that niche specialities are targeted.

Unemployment is a great challenge in Liberia. A more developed small-scale manufacturing sector such as food and industrial crop processing (rubber, palm oil) and forestry operations could offer significant job opportunities. The size of the informal sector mirrors the lack of employment in the formal sector. An (oversized) public administration and a few large mining, palm oil and rubber concessions are the only large-scale employers in the country. The second pillar of the PAPD, which focuses on job creation, does indeed identify the right target, but participation of the private sector in this endeavour needs to be facilitated. MSMEs, which account for the majority of private sector business and economic activity, are the primary source of net job creation and are the driving force of innovation and sustainability in the

private sector. Fortunately, there are large-scale opportunities to create meaningful jobs and generate economic growth, in line with SDG 8, decent work and economic growth, and the Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs. Agriculture, which generates the income of about 70% of Liberians, is currently labour-intensive and thus likely to lose jobs when the sector is sustainably intensified (see priority area 1). Nevertheless, agriculture, fisheries and forestry offer great potential for job creation, particularly in service provision and value addition in these sectors. Focussing on quality and high-value species/varieties of certain cash crops like cocoa and coffee, targeting a potentially high-profit niche, and processing of staple crops (rice, cassava), fishery products and wood, will provide viable avenues for decent job creation and value addition. The creation of meaningful formal employment should be targeted towards women and youth. The important role that women already play in the marketing of agricultural produce should be used to empower them further, contributing to the attainment of SDG 5, gender equality.

Large-scale reforms in banking, private sector development and investment climate are needed to unlock all the potential of these sectors in terms of sustainable economic growth and job creation, including women economic empowerment to increase their participation and leadership in social and economic life, in line with the Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs as well as the EU GAP III. As stated, private sector and MSMEs development plays a central role in boosting economic growth and job creation. Studies funded by the EU Trade and Private Sector Development Facility have clearly identified the bottlenecks for a thriving private sector in Liberia, as well as the limitations to fully tap into the possibilities under the EIP. Liberia ranks only 175th of 190 countries in the World Bank (WB) 'Ease of Doing Business' index. Senior Government officials have stated the importance of business and investment climate reforms, and some positive actions have been taken. While at political level there is a need to translate words into tangible and strong actions to break the gridlocks, additional actions, including the facilitation of a dialogue between Government and private sector, can be foreseen to help the business community (see priority area 3).

Several of Liberia's challenges are common to the region. Building on existing regional networks and enhancing Liberia's participation in regional mechanisms would contribute to unlocking the country's potential in several key areas, notably in sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures and fish and cassava quality control for export to international markets. The Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement has created a good basis for continued political dialogue on the fisheries sector with Liberia, thereby opening up a sphere for export of fisheries products to the European market in the long term in addition to the agricultural export potential. Care needs to be exercised that such efforts to export agricultural products to boost the economic growth and create decent jobs for Liberians at home does not disrupt the delivery of nutritious food to the local market.

Once the necessary reforms and changes – focussing on the Government as a market regulator rather than an actor – have been implemented, the goods produced need to reach local, regional and international (European) markets through resilient infrastructures, as per SDG 9, industry, innovation and infrastructure. There is a valid reason why the Government is stressing the need for more and better roads. Liberia has a very bad road network. The tarmac road network is very limited and partly in a very bad state, while a large portion of the country is not accessible at all during the long raining season (May to November). Processing, storage and service hubs for food, where necessary (warehouses, cold stores) powered by sustainable energy applications, should be established or revamped, in conjunction with an improved road network. This all with the private sector as the main job creator in mind. Investments in the road network and other logistics will only bear fruits if the previously mentioned governance reforms have been successfully executed, to ensure proper road management but also to avoid detrimental side effects of its extension. In the case of forestry, the lack of roads possibly explains why large swathes of rainforest are still in good conservation status; connecting a larger part of the Liberian territory to markets would exacerbate deforestation if not accompanied by a firm policy on sustainable forest management.

Priority Area 3 – Improving financial and democratic governance (SDG 5/10/16/17)

Political, institutional and economic governance in Liberia is fragile and often shows gaps and capacity constraints. Support to institutional and policy reforms will be at the heart of efforts to strengthening democratic participation, business environment, investment climate and private sector development. Such reforms – involving interaction between the government, the private sector and civil society – will require structured and inclusive dialogue to facilitate coordination and encourage effective monitoring of the reform processes.

The MIP envisages support to the election cycle (including electoral reform to strengthen the election process and build trust among all political actors, increase women public representation, as well as support to the implementation of the recommendations of the 2017 Electoral Observation Mission (EOM) and 2021 Electoral Follow-up Mission (EFM).

In addition, and in line with the Gender Action Plan (GAP) III, the Women, Peace and Security agenda as well as the EU's ambition to be a principled global actor, the MIP is focusing on a vibrant civil society engagement and the fight against sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) beyond the ongoing Spotlight and other civil society programmes.

This priority area is consistent with SDG 16, peace, justice and strong institutions, SDG 5, gender equality, and 10, reduced inequalities, as well as the EU strategic interest on governance, peace and security. Since this priority area calls on the Government to be an enabler of priority areas 1 and 2 and resource its development priorities sustainably through sound financial and economic management, it is also consistent with SDG 17 on partnerships.

Preventing conflict and consolidating peace and stability in a fragile country like Liberia and therefore also in the region, is clearly a key interest and objective of the EU and its MS.

Opportunities to support directly Liberia's peacebuilding efforts, including efforts to address root causes of conflict, e.g. on transitional justice and post-conflict reconciliation, will be seized under the possibilities offered by the NDICI and other instruments, and based on the evolution of the country situation. Potentially destabilising developments emanating from Liberia's neighbours will be carefully monitored. Synergies will be sought with the Human Rights and Democracy Plan (previously EIDHR) as well as the possibility to tap into resources of the thematic programmes for civil society as well as for Peace, Stability and Conflict Prevention.

1.5 Duration of the MIP and option for synchronisation

The overall duration of the MIP will be seven years (2021-2027) and will include one mid-term review in 2024. Presidential and Legislative elections will take place in late 2023, and it is practice in Liberia that the new Government will develop its national plan in its first year in office (2024). A review of the implementation of the PAPD, together with an assessment of successful implementation of the first phase of the MIP, including the implementation of the two TEIs, should inform and guide the second phase.

2. EU support per Priority Area and Team Europe Initiative proposals³

2.1 Priority Area 1 – Enhancing and preserving natural resources for sustainable growth

2.1.1 Specific objectives

- 1.1) Ensure sustainable agri-food systems to increase access to affordable and nutritious food⁴
- 1.2) Ensure the effective governance of terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems and biodiversity hot spots

2.1.2 Expected results

Specific objective 1.1:

R1.1.a) Strengthened agriculture and fisheries sector governance as well as food-system multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms

R1.1.b) Increased access of poor, vulnerable and family farmers to improved farming and marine resources

R1.1.c) Improved consumers' access to safe and nutritious food (e.g. diversified foods, micronutrient rich food and food safety)

Liberia is still an economy based on agriculture, but it still relies largely on food imports including for its main staple, rice. In addition, part of the population (in particular women of reproductive age and children under 5) is food insecure and suffer from chronic malnutrition, particularly during the lean season, and may resort to unsustainable coping strategies (e.g. selling assets). It is key that the productivity and diversification are increased, so that the population in both rural and urban areas can get access to safe, varied and nutritious food, with focus on staple crops integrated with protein-rich crops, horticulture and fish. This requires an improvement of the performance of all components of the value chains, with a focus on climate-resilient crops.

Considering that the traditional shifting cultivation practices are strongly linked to deforestation, it is also important that this increase in production and productivity takes place through sustainable intensification practices (e.g. agro-ecological and climate-smart farming, smallholder mechanisation, rotation, agro-forestry), supported through extension services. Given that agriculture in Liberia is still very labour-intensive, intensification would also help the country use its resources more efficiently. Liberia would need to substitute food imports with domestic produce, as a way to improve food sovereignty, self-sufficiency and security, and also save precious foreign currency and reduce emissions from long-haul transport. The current abundance of fish in Liberian coastal waters and the possibility of inland aquaculture need to be further explored in a sustainable manner, based on science and valuable lessons from ongoing projects, such as the DESIRA initiative, where under an agroecological and climate smart approach, integrated fish-rice farming systems contribute to diversification of farm production and to enhanced household income in female-headed households, hence contributing to rural woman empowerment. Furthermore, the potential of cash crops to produce food for the Liberian and regional markets, and also in terms of economic growth, should not be forgotten. Cash crops can create additional income streams for subsistence farmers, allowing them to get better connected to the formal economy. They can also allow for more opportunities of value addition and job creation, in particular for women and youth (see priority

³ Please note that data in Liberia are notoriously absent and/or unreliable. Therefore quantitative indicators as starting points for measuring results will be difficult to establish. The MIP foresees as one of the first actions to establish reliable baseline data for the priority areas. Furthermore, most interventions will have to check at the start of the intervention if the assumptions and baselines are still valid.

⁴ Based on the co-existence of non-food crop alongside with food crop systems (4F CROPS policy - Future Crops for Food, Feed, Fiber and Fuel).

area 2). Finally, a reliable and functioning food and nutrition security information system, as well as territorial planning that balances diverse demands on the land and water resources, are essential.

Given that Liberia holds one of the main ship registries in the world, special attention to effective monitor, control and surveillance of Liberian-flagged fishing-related vessels operating around the world is also of paramount importance to ensure the sustainable development of the fisheries sector and to prevent IUU fishing.

Specific objective 1.2:

R1.2.a) Strengthened forestry and environment sector governance

R1.2.b) Enhanced conservation and restoration of terrestrial, inland, freshwater and marine ecosystems and their services, strengthening the actions against climate change

R1.2.c) Increased governance and law enforcement against illegal wildlife trafficking

The deforestation in Liberia is fed by two main practices. Firstly, the chainsaw milling: uncontrolled chainsaw logging, involving random and uncontrolled cutting of trees in many parts of the country, extracting bigger quantities of timber than the formal export markets, seriously compromising the forest's natural regeneration. Secondly, the logging activity, which, despite the efforts deployed under the FLEGT programme through the VPA, is still poorly scrutinised. This is the case in particular of the Community Forests Management Agreements featuring an abrupt increase of area under exploitation. Together with bad logging practices, new roads allow people to encroach upon areas of dense forest and embark on slash-and-burn agriculture right after logging operations, preventing the forest from natural regeneration. Additional pressure to the forest comes from the charcoal production (95% of the population is dependent on woody biomass). Despite the high resilience of rainforests, the pressure from all these factors is exceeding the forest's natural capacity to regenerate. The implementation of the VPA-FLEGT agreement will only be successful through a sustainable management of all areas of forest under exploitation. For chainsaw millers, alternative livelihoods need to be sought, in a similar way to a demobilisation programme. Reforestation and forest plantations could be this alternative. It would also allow for women in remote areas to get connected to income sources so far eluding them. If successful, reforestation would also help in conservation efforts and the possible exploration of new economic opportunities such as eco-tourism and agroforestry, which would underscore the economic and climatic value of preserving the forest. In the case of plantation forests, reforestation can bring about new value chains for timber products while at the same time alleviate the pressure on the native Upper Guinean rainforests.

For decades, Liberia's wildlife has been depleted by the bush meat and pet trade, which makes no distinction between protected and non-protected species. With a legal framework hardly known by citizens and by law enforcement agents or by the judiciary, this trade has put protected species at the risk of extinction. Contrary to temperate forests, tropical forests cannot survive without its associated wildlife, so curbing illegal extraction of wildlife is ensuring future of these forests and their function as carbon sinks and hence contribution to the fight against climate change. Actions against illegal wildlife trade must continue to avoid further erosion of biodiversity values underpinning law enforcement and governance.

In parallel sustainable exploitation of marine resources and improved protection of coastal and inland waters is necessary to improve revenues from fishery and aquaculture. Fisheries sector is experiencing the same problems associated to weak governance as the rest of natural resources. However, progress has been done in the development of the new fisheries framework. Through implementation of Liberia's fisheries framework as well as of international agreements, the country has signed up to important challenges in the fisheries sector. The Protocol of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement with the EU expired in December 2020 and further developments are linked to the ongoing work in the development of the new fisheries framework and the control of Liberia's external fishing fleet. Despite the challenges, the health of the fish stocks might allow Liberia to increase its income from fisheries, for example, with the inclusion of new fishing categories in a future fisheries protocol, based on sustainable

value chain development from artisanal production. If done in a sustainable manner, they will promote not only livelihoods for artisanal fishermen but maintain the major source of protein for coastal populations.

2.1.3 Indicators⁵

| Main Indicators | Baseline/Year | Target/Year |
|--|---|--|
| R1.1.a) Number of platforms for multi-stakeholder dialogue and sector coordination | At least one (cocoa) | Tbd |
| R1.1.b) Number of smallholders reached with EU supported interventions aimed to increase their sustainable production, access to markets and/or security of land, by age and sex | 0 (2021) | Tbd |
| R1.1.c) Prevalence (%) of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, by county and sex | 18% (2018) | Tbd |
| Prevalence (%) of stunting among children under 5 years of age, by county and sex | 30% (2019) | |
| R1.2.a) Progress towards fully functional forestry and environment governing entities (strengthened capacities of FDA and EPA on strategic planning, budgeting, financial resource tracking, analytical work, etc.), per entity | VPA uncompleted (2021) | VPA completed by end of 2022 |
| R1.2.b) Loss of humid primary forest (ha) | 23.4 kha (2019) | Tbd |
| R1.2.c) Number of court proceedings against cases of illegal wildlife and timber trade | 100 court cases opened related to IWT (2020-2021) | Tbd (Data from current EU financed IWT intervention) |

2.1.4 Possible use of blending and guarantees for investment under EFSD+

At this stage and most likely during the first phase of the MIP, concrete opportunities for EFSD+ supported operations are difficult to be identified and no pipeline can be anticipated. Nevertheless, all possibilities within EFSD+ modalities could be very attractive for Liberia, certainly in the field of agriculture, forestry, and the green economy.

While the potential in Liberia is large, the climate for such investment could be improved. The MIP therefore envisages a support activity to, on the one hand, help the Government reform the public-private dialogue, banking and investment sector, and, on the other hand, support the development of viable initiatives – to be identified – and undertake the necessary studies to bring these initiatives to maturity for funding.

The Debt Sustainability Analysis continues to assess Liberia at moderate risk of external debt distress and high risk of overall public debt distress, with very limited space to accommodate shocks. The downward revision to economic growth and higher near-term borrowing needs have reduced the ability to borrow in the medium term. Persistent debt vulnerabilities require a prudent debt-management policy, a credible strategy for domestic revenue mobilization and fiscal consolidation, and structural reforms to promote growth and economic diversification.

⁵ Due to weak and porous statistical and other information systems, many baselines and targets that are presently unavailable will be informed during the formulation of the programmes.

The use of EFSD+ in the field of agriculture, forestry and fisheries development and resources management is rather limited. Even in relation to sustainable intensification, smallholders rather than big commercial exploitations are targeted. Possibilities may exist in the area of support to local banks in facilitating smallholders' access to credit and financial services. Currently the European Investment Bank is looking into areas of rice production and clean oceans.

Subject to its confirmation through the implementation phase, it is expected that an indicative amount of EUR 3 million may be used between 2021 and 2024 to provision EFSD+ guarantee operations under priority areas 1 and 2.

2.2 Priority Area 2 – Promoting decent jobs and inclusive growth

2.2.1 Specific objectives

- 2.1) Enable youth to respond to economic growth opportunities that increase employability and entrepreneurship potential
- 2.2) Increase decent jobs, formal employment and value addition through private sector development in the value chains of agriculture, fisheries and forestry
- 2.3) Enhance linkages to local, national, regional and international markets

2.2.2 Expected results

Specific objective 2.1:

R2.1.a) Increased access to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education

R2.1.b) Strengthened capacities for employability in agriculture, fisheries and forestry businesses, focusing on youth and women

Over the last 40 years, Liberia has been lacking a system of skills education at secondary level. Many ad hoc initiatives have been implemented, but always in private schools, and not looking at the skills set needed in Liberia in general or at specific geographical locations. There has also been the lack of inter-ministerial coordination, as well as a lack of coordination with other TVET providers, non-governmental organisations and the private sector, which is a challenge to the effective governance of the sector, and leads to inefficiencies. Under the 11th EDF, the EU, in conjunction with SE and with UNIDO as implementing partner, started to set up a scheme of secondary education curricula for the higher grades, to cater for those students to whom skills education is more appropriate, and create a cadre of skilled workers addressing the requirements on the job market. So far, 10 schools (9 EU, 1 SE) in 7 counties have been targeted, but for an equitable geographic distribution of education possibilities, the remaining 8 counties should be serviced as well. This would lead to a robust technical base to support the effective governance, planning, management, oversight and delivery of TVET, an increased availability of curricula and teaching materials (e.g. tools, workshops), as well as an increased pool of qualified teachers in the field of TVET and students trained in areas that are attractive to them (e.g. machinery, technology) and in line with the economic and climate needs of the country, thus offering a direct solution for youth unemployment. This would create a potential pool of skilled young people in all counties relevant to sectors linked to but also beyond those of the two TEIs.

In addition to the secondary level, Liberia is unfortunately short of a professional cadre. Liberian professionals with a solid set of capacities have often received their training abroad and been largely included into the development community, leaving the formal authorities with limited capacity to deal with technical and complex matters like sustainable agriculture, fisheries, forestry, nutrition, climate change adaptation and mitigation, or circular, green and blue economy. This is clearly hampering potential success in the implementation of the two TEIs. Although this challenge would require a medium-to long-

term approach at tertiary level, innovative solutions need to be sought, through twinning, use of ERASMUS+ opportunities, very positively received by potential candidates in the country (including an enhanced outreach) and other linkages with European research institutions to kick-start the process. In the new MIP 2021-2027, linking of ERASMUS higher education activities with VET institutes for productive sectors of the economy to increase quality and relevance of teaching will be of interest to youthful Liberian TVET teachers and students seeking opportunities for higher education.

Specific objective 2.2:

- R2.2.a) Decent and green jobs created in food and forestry businesses, focusing on youth and women
- R2.2.b) Increased value addition in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors
- R2.2.c) Improved MSMEs' access to finance and innovative business solutions

With a rapidly growing population, there is an urgent need to create decent jobs outside of the already too large Government sector. Added to this, major agricultural operators in the rubber and palm oil sector are scaling back. It is clear that even with a 10 year horizon, the bulk of these new jobs will need to come from the natural resources-related sectors. So far, almost all jobs in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors are at primary level. Additionally, they do not attract young people any longer due to lack of direct financial benefits from farming activities (agriculture and aquaculture). Many of them are artisanal and hardly go beyond the production of the resource. Liberia can only walk the economic path of development and provide for its young population if value can be added locally.

As indicated, the private sector and MSME development hold the largest potential for generating jobs and growth. Supporting local entrepreneurship, innovation and new business solutions, with particular support to improved access for female entrepreneurs, can be an entry point to attract investment to the private sector. Opportunities for investment in Liberia are mainly in mining, agriculture, forestry, and financial services. The ease of doing business index as per "Doing Business 2020" report ranked Liberia as 175th out of 190 economies. The main obstacles for the Foreign Direct Investment are the weak legal and regulatory framework, inadequate infrastructure, limited workforce skills, underdeveloped financial sector, and malpractices in both the private and public sectors.

Corporate social responsibility will be promoted, as will preparations for the upcoming EU due diligence legislation, be it for EU enterprises active in Liberia, local enterprises or enterprises from third countries active in Liberia interacting with international supply chains linked to the EU market.

Foreign and domestic private entities may own and establish business enterprises in many sectors, but only Liberian citizens can own land. That is why the enactment of the Land Rights Act can be an important step in improving the business environment and encouraging foreign investment (see priority area 1). Moreover, as a majority of land, with few exceptions, are owned by men, it will also be opportune to empower women and communities to secure increased access and ownership of land.

In addition, the sectors of agriculture, forestry and fisheries would benefit from additional service providers (e.g. access to credit and financial services, extension, storage, facilitation of access to output markets, marketing, etc.), another opportunity for job creation. Support for social entrepreneurship, and for setting up and increasing the effectiveness of cooperatives and smallholder associations will be foreseen. It will also provide an entry point to empower women both economically and socially by enhancing women's access to formal employments, to financial services and to entrepreneurship opportunities.

The MIP should focus on MSMEs development like setting up information centres to explore opportunities for value addition, as well as supporting systems that provide access to market information. It should also focus on creating financial services to finance the value chain opportunities and allow integration of the informal work into the formal sectors, adding value to locally available resources (including waste). In addition, the MIP should set up the systems that would allow Liberia to tap into the European, often high-

value niche markets and, given the nature of the opportunities to access European markets, should focus also on SPS related systems. In the forest sector, only one basic sawmill exists in the country. Expansion of the first transformation of logs but also of the production of high-value wood products should be a clear priority. The whole market of eco-tourism is virtually unexploited, and Liberia’s rich biodiversity, including some unique species, should make eco-tourism an attractive possibility for high-paying visitors and the accompanying high-value tourism industry. This should also be an incentive to preserve Liberia’s unique forests and would show that natural resources could be more valuable than just simply exploitation. It will also allow to create jobs attractive for youth in their communities and reduce the influx of unskilled labour to the market in the capital.

Specific objective 2.3:

R2.3.a) Improved road and shipment transport and increased trade volumes and value

If EU interventions are successful in the transformation of the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors, outlets will need to be created towards local, regional and even international markets. The road network in Liberia is largely substandard and the first priority of the current Government. As mentioned above (1.4), the lack of roads has contributed to the protection of the Liberia rainforest. Therefore, support to the extension of the road network should only be done after a clear sustainable forestry management policy has been put in place. The programming would aim in the second phase to contribute to a sustainable policy on road maintenance, climate-proofing infrastructure and expansion, through various forms of blending and public-private partnerships. The priorities for investment in the transport sector need to be seen in the regional context. In addition to the road network, EU interventions should enable the creation of storage hubs for agricultural produce, where necessary (cold stores) powered by sustainable energy applications.

The possibility, in the second phase of the programming, for the EU to support the Government in its key political priority, road transport, should be an incentive for the Government to undertake meaningful reforms in the key priority sectors indicated above. The EU support should also facilitate that (cold) storage provisions increase throughout the country, which should be linked to the expected higher yields in targeted agricultural commodities. However, this can only be sustained if it is done with private sector involvement.

2.2.3 Indicators⁶

| Main Indicators | Baseline/Year | Target/Year |
|--|---------------|-------------|
| R2.1.a) Number of people who have benefitted from institution or workplace based VET/skills development, by age, sex, and people with disabilities | Tbd | Tbd |
| R2.1.b) Number of students enrolled in education with EU support: c) tertiary education – in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, by age and sex Percentage of labour skilled in agriculture/fisheries among personnel employed in relevant food (safety, technology, packaging, etc.) businesses, by age and sex Percentage of labour skilled in forestry among personnel employed in relevant businesses, by age and sex | Tbd | Tbd |

⁶ Due to weak and porous statistical and other information systems, many baselines and targets that are presently unavailable will be informed during the formulation of the programmes.

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| R2.2.a) Number of women farmers and agro-business incubators in sustainable agriculture value-chain | Tbd | Double the number of women farmers and agro-business incubators in agriculture value chain by 2023 |
| R2.2.b) Manufacturing sector contribution (%) by relevant sub-sectors to real GDP | 6.6% | 12% by 2023 |
| R2.2.c) Proportion (%) of adults with access to mobile money services, by sex | 35.7% (or 2.8 million mobile wallets) (2018) | Tbd |
| Proportion of small-scale industries with a loan or line of credit, by age and sex | Tbd | |
| Number of beneficiaries with access to financial services with EU support: a) firms, b) individuals, by age and sex | 0 (2021) | |
| R2.3.a) Number of government policies developed or revised in road sector through EU support | Tbd | Tbd |
| Number of storage hubs for agricultural produce | | |

2.2.4 Possible use of blending and guarantees for investment under EFSD+

Opportunities for the use of EFSD+ mechanisms are potentially even greater than under the first priority area. There are also bigger chances to involve the (European) private sector – notably related to circular and green economy - and create decent and long-term jobs. Possibilities to support local banks in facilitating smallholders’ access to credit and financial services may also exist. However, in both cases an effort needs to be made by the Government to ensure that the current limitations for private sector operators to invest in Liberia are removed. The responsibility lies with the Liberian authorities to create the necessary environment, to which the EU and other partners can only contribute through policy dialogue or technical expertise – where it is required to back up the political intentions. If successful, there should be the possibility to develop a pipeline of projects to be funded, in particular under the equity part of the EFSD+.

Subject to its confirmation through the implementation phase, it is expected that an indicative amount of EUR 3 million may be used between 2021 and 2024 to provision EFSD+ guarantee operations under priority areas 1 and 2.

2.3 Priority Area 3 – Improving financial and democratic governance

2.3.1 Specific objectives

- 3.1) Improve the economic stability and financial management in the country
- 3.2) Promote a more inclusive and transparent democracy
- 3.3) Ensure a violence-free equal playing field for women and girls

2.3.2 Expected results

All expected results below should be launched in the first phase of this MIP. Support for the management of the economy is expected to be required throughout the period, while other actions may be more time bound, depending on their results in the first phase.

Specific objective 3.1:

R3.1.a) Predictable and sustainable macro-economic management

R3.1.b) Improved business environment and investment climate

There is certainly potential for a thriving economy in Liberia in the medium to long term. However, the current macro-economic situation, even having improved in certain parts, is still far from being able to create a stable platform for economic growth and job creation. The weaknesses across Liberia's PFM system are related to an outdated regulatory framework, problems with budget credibility, weaknesses in revenue mobilisation, weak and isolated systems and processes, poor financial reporting and disregard for external scrutiny among others. Enhancing transparency and accountability, gender-responsive budgeting and mobilizing domestic revenue continue to be critical. PFM systems need strengthening, the cooperation between the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank and the Liberia Revenue Authority must be enhanced, and the economic and private sector policy by the Government must be made more predictable. Liberia needs to attract investment, also in the context of the two TEIs and this MIP will result in predictable macroeconomic management (initially largely ensured through the current programme with the International Monetary Fund), clear fiscal policy towards the private sector, and inclusive dialogue with all economic stakeholders as well as with civil society.

Boosting private sector investment requires peace, security and stability and an enabling investment climate and business environment, including macroeconomic stability and open financial systems. It encompasses also adequate actions to address critical governance issues, rule of law, as well as malpractices and illicit financial flows. Necessary institutional and policy reforms, seizing opportunities for manufacturing and processing, unlocking the huge potential of the green and blue economy and supporting transition to a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy, need to be agreed with the Government and other international actors. Such reforms should contribute to accelerate overall economic growth and allow the Government to channel its own revenue into the investments identified in the PAPD.

Specific objective 3.2:

R3.2.a) Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels of democracy

R3.2.b) Increase elected female representative in the legislature

R3.2.c) Increased voice and accountability

Since the end of the civil war in 2003, Liberia has gone through three peaceful Presidential elections, including a peaceful transition of power. The 2020 mid-term Senatorial elections, the first national elections after UNMIL's departure, were held peacefully and orderly. This has to be recognised as a major achievement. Nevertheless, recently there have been significant election-related tensions and increased episodes of violence, especially against women, during by-elections in 2019 and Mid-term Senatorial Elections in 2020. There is a decrease in the level of confidence in the process among citizens. The 2020 elections clearly showed that further efforts are needed to strengthen Liberia's electoral system. An EU EOM was deployed for the 2017 general and Presidential elections. An EFM visited the country in May 2021 and underlined the limited progress on key recommendations, while indicating affirmative action for women participation in elections of primary relevance.

A main challenge remains the cost of a proper electoral system, which requires too much of the scarce Government resources, considering that even by-elections are unexpected drains on public resources. In such scenario, the MIP will support the election cycle, duly considering the EOM recommendations, the priorities brought forward by the EFM mission and the lessons learned from the 2020 elections, addressing them in the framework of a coordinated approach among partners, ensuring a better capacitated National Electoral Commission with attention for strengthening of the digitalisation process. Liberia advocates, with

support from ECOWAS, for the adoption of a (costly) biometric voters’ registration process. The intervention will therefore focus on creating an enabling environment for women’s political participation, promotion of women leadership and empowering the work of women’s organisations and other CSOs in line with the EU GAP III and Women, Peace and Security agenda. Other election issues like ‘fake news’ and national observation and civic education might be supported through the support measures in the MIP.

Specific objective 3.3:

R3.3.a) All forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres substantially reduced

R3.3.b) All harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation substantially reduced

Unfortunately SGBV is highly prevalent in Liberia and the official figures are just the tip of the iceberg. Rape cases are often dealt with in the traditional setting. Impunity remains high, of criminal cases in general but of SGBV cases in particular. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is widely practiced in the majority of the counties (in so-called Sande/bush schools). The challenges are related to social norms, traditional practices, poverty, poor education and weak state of preventive and response mechanisms, including poor justice systems. The Spotlight Initiative programme is addressing these issues and had brought them more into the open, but the problem is deeply rooted. Sustained efforts in the long term, going beyond the 4-year Spotlight Initiative, will therefore be needed to make headway in this fight. A continuation of EU support to address the issue of the high prevalence of SGBV and FGM as well as child marriage and teenage pregnancies is therefore foreseen. The MIP should ensure that women, girls and boys are more confident that their ordeal will be dealt with by the formal authorities, by strengthening efforts by the Government and criminal actor bodies to investigate and prosecute SGBV cases and to increase access to justice. There should be a more coordinated response mechanism by all those involved (police, social services, courts etc.) to increase access to justice and fight the high level of impunity of SGBV cases. While this should result in an increased number of SGBV cases being reported (a sign of increased confidence of women and girls in the formal system), ultimately of course the numbers should come down. Furthermore, continued support needs to be provided in addressing harmful practises and promoting gender-equitable social norms in communities, particularly amongst traditional leaders and practitioners, to ultimately change the perception and behaviours around FGM and provide legal protection. The creation of alternative livelihoods for FGM practitioners is particularly important. A continuation of an alternative livelihood programme for FGM practitioners may be envisaged. Integrating and empowering civil society and women’s organisations in these efforts will enable all voices to be heard.

2.3.3 Indicators⁷

| Main Indicators | Baseline/Year | Target/Year |
|--|--|---|
| R3.1.a) Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) scores | 33 PEFA components meeting good governance criterion in 2020 | Good governance is to assign a score of B or higher to more than half of the 94 PEFA components, i.e. 47 components |
| R3.1.b) Liberia’s Global Competitiveness Index | 40.5 (2018) | Tbd |

⁷ Due to weak and porous statistical and other information systems, many baselines and targets that are presently unavailable will be informed during the formulation of the programmes.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| R3.2.a) SCORE Index rating for civic trust and coexistence, by county and sex (%) | 52% (2016) | 70% (2027) |
| Number of grassroots civil society organisations benefitting from (or reached by) EU support | 0 (2021) | Tbd |
| Number of government policies developed or revised with civil society participation through EU support | 0 (2021) | Tbd |
| R3.2.b) Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments | Lower Chamber: 8 women/73 seats or 11%, Upper Chamber: 1 woman/30 seats or 3.3%; (2021) | Tbd |
| Voter Turnout of the Presidential Elections | 75% (2017) | |
| R3.2.c) Worldwide Governance indicator - Component Voice and Accountability | Percentile rank 44.33 | Tbd |
| R3.3.a) SCORE Index rating for violent tendencies, by county and sex (%) | 19% (2016) | 5% 2(027) |
| Incidence of SGBV, by county and sex (%) | Tbd | Incidence of SGBV reduced by 50% by 2030 |
| Number of individuals benefitting from EU-funded programmes to counter sexual and gender-based violence | 0 (2021) | Tbd |
| R3.3.b) Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18 | 8.8% before age 15, 35.9% before age 18 (2013) | Tbd |
| Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age | 44.4% (2013) | |

2.3.4 Possible use of blending and guarantees for investment under EFSD+

ESFD+ will not be applicable for this priority area in neither phase of the programming.

2.4 Proposal of country Team Europe Initiatives

2.4.1 TEI – Safe and Sustainable Food Systems (SSFS)

Liberia aims to become a middle-income country by 2030 through inclusive and sustainable growth, while pursuing the attainment of the SDGs. Such ambitious goals require a structural transformation of the economy, in which the development of safe and sustainable food systems can play a strategic, transformational role. In this context, the promotion of selected value chains, using appropriate technologies and integrating the local communities, can contribute to the development of such food systems. The government has a key role to play in creating a favourable business environment, through appropriate regulations, efficient fiscal and budgetary policies, as well as an aligned public investment policy, while supporting artisanal, small- and medium-scale initiatives.

At the same time, the country is facing significant challenges in terms of scarce financial resources, weak global and sector governance, weak implementation of policies, as well as insufficient capacities in the public sector. The whole agri-food system is characterised by missing links across the production, marketing and consumption chains, and is affected by both the lack of access of farmers to fundamental inputs and services, as well as poor infrastructure. A food systems approach would provide a long-term

strategic framework, allowing to address the above-mentioned challenges, and facilitating that the Government plays a leading role in the agricultural transformation process, based on a structured dialogue with relevant stakeholders.

Based on these premises, the proposed TEI on SSFS intends to support the country's efforts to deliver on the strategic goals related to its central policies and investment plans in the agri-food sector.

The interrelated impacts to which the TEI will contribute are: improvement of consumption and trade of safe, nutritious and quality food; creation of meaningful decent jobs for youth and women; and sustained green and blue growth, in line with priorities 1 and 2, as well as indirectly with priority area 3.

This will be achieved through two pathways: agricultural sustainable intensification and commercialisation; and diversification of the rural economy coupled with agro-industrialisation. The main areas of intervention will be the development of selected value chains, framed by an environmental-friendly development policy, with an emphasis on improved nutrition, food safety and quality and mainstreaming gender equality. Agricultural sustainable intensification and increase of elements related to circular economy will ease the current unsustainable pressure on natural resources, with strong synergy with the TEI on Forestry and Biodiversity.

The main components of the intervention, aimed at contributing to creating an enabling environment in this sector, will be: sector governance (including public finance management), market regulation (including financial markets), access to infrastructures and information through an aligned public investment policy; private sector engagement and investment; as well as public and private sector partnerships and community capacity development.

This TEI builds on ongoing and prospective investments in the agri-food sector supported by the EU (on sector governance, public-private partnerships, nutrition, rice, cassava, cocoa, vegetables, fisheries and aquaculture, TVET, research and extension) and EU member states, like DE (TVET, rural roads, renewable energy, possibly nutrition), FR (TVET, private sector development, access to rural finance, fisheries and aquaculture), IE (nutrition, gender) and SE (gender, civil society, agri-business development, vegetable and cocoa value chains, feeder roads), as well as, potentially, the EIB (rice value chain).

The TEI on SSFS will be implemented through an adequate combination of different financial sources (public and private) and aid modalities. The possible use of budget support to kick-start the initiative should be considered. Possible blending and guarantees to promote investments are unlikely at the start, but should become a viable option once reforms are implemented. The opportunities to link this TEI with developments in the region should be explored, in particular with regard to value chain creation, market opportunities, and integration of parts of the Sustainable Blue Economy objectives in the marine fisheries sector specifically.

2.4.2 TEI – Forestry and Biodiversity

Despite chronic poverty levels – Liberia is among the world's least developed countries and ranked 176th out of 189, aggravated by the current dire economic situation – economic contraction and high inflation, Liberia aims at becoming a middle-income country by 2030. The current Government development plan (PAPD) sets targets to progress in that direction, and the forestry sector – the country hosts more than 40% of the remaining forest in West Africa – features amongst the main economic sectors. The forestry sector currently contributes roughly to 10% of the country's GDP and the Government expects that this contribution will increase.

The country is richly endowed with abundant natural resources – non-renewable and renewable, which include forests over 43% of its territory (tropical rainforest and mangrove ecosystems), fresh and marine water bodies, diamonds, gold and iron ore. However, the path towards progress is hampered not only by economic constraints, but also by poor governance, more patent in the extractive and natural resources sector. Forest governance, forest management and biodiversity conservation are facing serious challenges, due to lack of capacity at all levels along with lack of political will, seriously affecting livelihoods of forest-

adjacent and -dwelling communities. Short-termism in natural resource conservation and management policy and practice, the complete absence of law enforcement, unemployment as well as poverty and demographic pressure are exerting considerable adverse impact on the country's forests and their biodiversity, endangering the sustainability of critical ecosystems. Poor governance attracts opportunistic private sector operators, lacking long-term strategies and contributing to the rampant deforestation. The rate of primary forest deforestation seems to be accelerating, to 2% per annum.

The absence of value addition impacts negatively on the economy. Presently the majority of the country's raw materials (e.g. round wood logs, but also minerals and agricultural products) is exported without any significant processing to add value to the product in-country, which implies that also processing industry-related jobs are exported.

The TEI on Forestry and Biodiversity aims at contributing to the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources in Liberia, to the benefit of its citizens and future generations, through sustained job creation and income generation. Fully in line with the EU Green Deal, it builds on EU's strengths as a global leader on climate and environmental measures, and positions the EU at the forefront of a sustainable path. The TEI is articulated along two different streams: the transformation of the whole Liberia forestry sector and of its practices from unsustainable into sustainable, and ensuring the effective management and conservation of critical terrestrial, coastal, and marine ecosystems as well as high-conservation-value landscapes. Due to its unique position within West Africa, Liberia may be one of the most suitable candidates for a Forest Partnership approach, addressing sustainable use, protection and restoration in an integrated way. Liberia should also play a pivotal role in the development of a regional sustainable forestry, conservation and biodiversity approach.

The transformation of the forestry sector will be based on the current ongoing interventions in support of the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade programme. The TEI will encompass reforms of the legal framework and management practices, to incorporate updated sustainable principles of tropical forestry. Promotion of value chains, restructuring of informal exploitation sectors, like chain sawyers, as well as reforestation of degraded lands will be the main components, together with the enhancement of the education sector and skills training. The role of the civil society will be strongly supported, as well as the role of communities and especially women in the governance of their forests. The management of Liberia's biodiversity will benefit from more effective structures at local and network levels, fully incorporating the forest and coastal/fisheries communities into the process, supporting investments in eco-tourism and research facilities to support biodiversity conservation and protected areas management, building on existing programmes.

The TEI will build and create synergies with MS, in particular FR (biodiversity protection) and SE (green development, biodiversity protection and climate action, education, support to the civil society and overall governance), as well as linkages to interventions in neighbouring countries.

The EU Delegation will elaborate the institutional setup (institutional and final beneficiaries, implementing partners, targeted communities and sectors) of both TEIs in close consultation with the MS and international organisations to maximise coordination and synergies between programmes during the operational phase.

The EU overall estimated contribution to the TEI on Safe and Sustainable Food Systems is EUR 41 million. The EU overall estimated contribution to the TEI on Forestry and Biodiversity is EUR 55 million. The EU overall estimated contribution to the TEIs represents 50% of the MIP indicative total (2021-2024).

The EU's indicative contribution to these TEIs (EUR 96 million) is subject to the confirmation of the Team Europe partners' indicative meaningful contribution as early as possible. In the absence thereof, the EU's indicative contribution may be redirected in accordance with the priority areas of the MIP and their allocations. The obligation of the Union and the Member States to coordinate their development policies following initiatives by the Commission to this effect, as per article 210 of the Treaty of the Functioning of the EU, always applies.

3. Support measures

3.1 Measures in favour of civil society

While in general civil society has a large degree of freedom in Liberia, that space is not free of threats. The EU will be vigilant to ensure that the CSOs space is preserved and that CSOs can fully participate in policy dialogue, advocacy and call for proposals. The general capacity of Liberian CSOs to implement and especially administer donor funds is limited. Under the 11th EDF a first attempt to build the capacity of the local civil society has been made, but so far only reaching a limited number of organisations. Continued support is needed also to make local organisations viable partners as lead or co-applicants for grants. Special attention will be devoted to youth and women organisations.

3.2 Cooperation facility

The Cooperation Facility is critical for the further development and implementation of the MIP and the two TEIs in Liberia. While some actions can be included among the specific actions to be undertaken under the different priority areas, the Cooperation Facility (CF) will have to deal with the provisions related to the preparation of new programmes, either as studies or as consultations that will need to take place with the various stakeholders. There should also be a provision to assure that the EU can be part of consolidated efforts to support national dialogues in areas relevant to EU values and priorities, including international labour and environmental standards. The CF should also allow for ensuring a more coordinated approach of the EU support to the Government and the development community at large.

The CF will also finance outreach, strategic communication and public diplomacy actions with regard to the activities and policy discussions under the new NDICI set up.

Finally, provisions will have to be made to ensure that projects and programmes financed under the new MIP can be reviewed at mid-term and in final evaluations, so that valuable lessons can be used for future implementation.

4. Financial overview

Although the duration of this MIP is seven years, the indicative allocations for Liberia and for each of the priority areas and support measures laid down in the table below are provided for the 2021-2024 period only. The indicative allocations for 2025-2027, as well as the possible modification of other substantial elements of this MIP, will be subject to a decision by the EU. This decision should be preceded by a review of the implementation of this MIP, which should include a dialogue with the authorities and other stakeholders of Liberia.

| Priority areas | Amount (MEUR) | Total (%) |
|--|---------------|-------------|
| Priority area 1: Enhancing and preserving natural resources for sustainable growth | 46 | 24% |
| Priority area 2: Promoting decent jobs and inclusive growth | 85 | 45% |
| Priority area 3: Improving financial and democratic governance | 48 | 25% |
| Support measures | 12 | 6% |
| Total for the initial MIP period (2021-2024)* | 191 | 100% |

* Subject to its confirmation through the implementation phase, it is expected that out of the total of EUR 191 million, an indicative amount of EUR 3 million may be used between 2021 and 2024 to provision EFSD+ guarantee operations.

Attachments

1. Intervention framework
2. Donor matrix showing the current indicative allocations per sector

Multiannual Indicative Programme Liberia 2021-2027

ANNEX 1 Intervention Framework

| Priority area 1: Enhancing and preserving natural resources for sustainable growth | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| Specific objective 1: Ensure sustainable agri-food systems to increase access to affordable and nutritious food | | | |
| Expected results | Indicators | Baseline & targets | Means of verification |
| a) Strengthened agriculture and fisheries sector governance as well as food-system multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms | a1) (TEI SSFs) Progress towards fully functional food systems governing entities (strengthened capacities of MoA, CARI, LACRA and NaFAA on strategic planning, gender responsive budgeting, financial resource tracking, analytical work, etc.), per entity a2) (TEI SSFs) Number of platforms for multi-stakeholder dialogue and sector coordination | a1) tbd; tbd a2) at least one (cocoa); tbd | a1) M&E system of EU-funded interventions a2) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| b) Increased access of poor and vulnerable farmers to land, improved farming inputs, technologies, extension and advisory services, and increased access for small-scale family fishers to marine resources | b1) (PAPD 2.2.5.1/cf. SDGs 2.3.1 ⁸ , 2.4.1 ⁹) Proportion (%) of farming households having access to agriculture extension services, by sex b2) (SDG 14.b.1) Degree of application of a legal/regulatory/policy/institutional framework which recognises and protects access rights for (i) small-scale fisheries and (ii) smallholder farming b3) (EURF for MIPs 1) Number of smallholders reached with EU supported interventions aimed to increase their sustainable production, access to markets and/or security of land, by age and sex | b1) tbd; 75% by 2023 b2) tbd; tbd b3) 0; tbd | b1) Liberia Comprehensive Food Security & Nutrition Survey (CFSNS) b2) M&E system of EU-funded interventions b3) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| c) Improved consumers' access to safe and nutritious food (e.g. diversified foods, micronutrient rich | c1) (SDG 2.1.2/EURF 1.2/cf. PAPD 2.2.4.1 ¹⁰) Prevalence (%) of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, by county ¹¹ and sex | c1) 18% (2018 ¹³); tbd ¹⁴ | c1) Liberia Comprehensive Food Security & Nutrition Survey (CFSNS) |

⁸ (SDG 2.3.1) Volume of production per labour unit by classes of farming/pastoral/forestry enterprise size.

⁹ (SDG 2.4.1) Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture.

¹⁰ (PAPD 2.2.4.1) Percentage decrease of population in food insecure regions.

¹¹ Based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES).

¹³ Source: [Government of Liberia: Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey \(CFSNS\), 2018.](#)

¹⁴ Cf. PAPD 2.2.4: Reduce number of food insecure regions by 50% by 2023.

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| foods, food safety) | c2) (SDG 2.2.1/EURF 1.3/PAPD1.2.3.1) Prevalence (%) of stunting ¹² among children under 5 years of age, by county and sex c3) (EURF for MIPs 27) Number of women of reproductive age, adolescent girls and children under 5 reached by nutrition-related interventions supported by the EU | c2) 30% (2019 ¹⁵); tbd c3) 0; tbd | c2) Liberia Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) c3) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| Specific objective 2: Ensure the effective governance of terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems and biodiversity hot spots | | | |
| Expected results | Indicators | Baseline & targets | Means of verification |
| a) Strengthened forestry and environment sector governance | a1) (TEI F&B) Progress towards fully functional forestry and environment governing entities (strengthened capacities of FDA and EPA on strategic planning, budgeting, financial resource tracking, analytical work, etc.), per entity a2) (SDG 15.2.1) Progress towards sustainable forest management: proportion of forest area under a long-term sustainable management plan (%), i.e. under single cutting cycle of 40 years, ensuring sustainability (versus current cutting cycles of 15 & 25 years, depending on areas) a3) (EURF for MIPs 2) Agricultural and pastoral ecosystems where sustainable management practices have been introduced with EU support (km ²) a4) (EURF for MIPs 8) Marine areas under b) sustainable management with EU support (km ²) | a1) VPA uncompleted; VPA completed by end of 2022 a2) 0; tbd a3) 0; tbd a4) 0; tbd (2023) | a1) M&E system of EU-funded interventions a2) M&E system of EU-funded interventions a3) M&E system of EU-funded interventions a4) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| b) Enhanced conservation and restoration of terrestrial, inland, freshwater and marine ecosystems and their services, strengthening the actions against climate change | b1) Loss of humid primary forest ¹⁶ (ha) b2) (SDG 14.5.1/EURF 1.24) Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine and terrestrial areas | b1) Primary forest loss: 25 kha (2017), 27.9 kha (2018), 23.4 kha (2019); tbd b2) 0.101% (2016), 0.103% (2018); tbd ¹⁷ | b1) Global Forest Watch b2) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| c) Increased governance and law enforcement against illegal wildlife | c1) Number of live animals (wildlife species) illegally sold as pets | c1) 334 confiscations (2020-2021); tbd | c1) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |

¹² Height for age <-2 standard deviation from the median of the World Health Organization (WHO) Child Growth Standards.

¹⁵ Source: [Liberia Demographic and Health Survey \(DHS\), 2019-20, Key indicators.](#)

¹⁶ Data from <https://www.globalforestwatch.org>.

¹⁷ With reference to (SDG 14.5) by 2020, conserve at least 10% of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on available scientific information.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| trafficking | c2) Number of court proceedings against cases of illegal wildlife and timber trade | c2) 100 court cases opened related to IWT (2020-2021); tbd | c2) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| Priority area 2: Promoting decent jobs and inclusive growth | | | |
| Specific objective 1: Enable youth to respond to economic growth opportunities that increase employability and entrepreneurship potential | | | |
| Expected results | Indicators | Baseline & targets | Means of verification |
| a) Increased access to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education | a1) (EURF for MIPs 15/cf. PAPD 1.1.7.1 ¹⁸ /cf. SDG 4.3.1 ¹⁹) Number of people who have benefitted from institution or workplace based VET/skills development, by age, sex, and people with disabilities a2) (cf. SDGs 4.4.1 ²⁰ , 8.6.1 ²¹ /cf. EURF for MIPs 30) Number of students enrolled in education with EU support: c) tertiary education – in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, by age and sex | a1) 0; tbd a2) 0; tbd | a1) potentially Liberia Annual School Census report M&E system of EU-funded interventions a2) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| b) Strengthened capacities for employability in agriculture, fisheries and forestry businesses, focusing on youth and women | b1) (TEI SSFs) Percentage of labour skilled in agriculture/fisheries among personnel employed in relevant food (safety, technology, packaging, etc.) businesses, by age and sex b2) (TEI F&B) Percentage of labour skilled in forestry among personnel employed in relevant businesses, by age and sex | b1) tbd; tbd b2) tbd; tbd | b1) M&E system of EU-funded interventions b2) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| Specific objective 2: Increase decent jobs, formal employment and value addition through private sector development in the value chains of agriculture, fisheries and forestry | | | |
| Expected results | Indicators | Baseline & targets | Means of verification |
| a) Decent jobs created in food and forestry businesses, focusing on youth and women | a1) (PAPD 1.4.1.1/cf. SDGs 8.5.1, 8.b.1 ²²) Number of youth (15-35) who benefitted from youth empowerment schemes, who found employment in relevant sectors, by age, sex, county and people with disabilities | a1) 3,612 (2018) ²⁵ ; (PAPD 1.4.1) 20,000, half of which women to benefit from labour - and income-generating programmes | a1) Liberia Ministry of Youth & Sports Annual Report a2) potentially Liberia agriculture baseline |

¹⁸ Source: Annual School Census (EMIS) report; note: 4,000 youth enrolled in TVET as of July 2019 (MoYS annual report) – cf. PAPD 1.4.2 formulates a target of 12,000 youth enrolled in productive public works and life skills training by 2023, half of which women (revised 2020).

¹⁹ (SDG 4.3.1) Participation rate of youth and adults in formal and non-formal education and training in the previous 12 months, by sex.

²⁰ (SDG 4.4.1) Proportion of youth and adults with information and communications technology (ICT) skills, by type of skill.

²¹ (SDG 8.6.1) Proportion of youth (aged 15-24 years) not in education, employment or training.

²² (SDG 8.b.1) Existence of a developed and operationalized national strategy for youth employment, as a distinct strategy or as part of a national employment strategy.

²⁵ Source: Ministry of Youth & Sports (MoYS) Annual Report.

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | <p>a2) (PAPD 2.2.3.1/cf. SDGs 5.a.1²³, 5.a.2²⁴) Number of women farmers and agro-business incubators in agriculture value-chain</p> <p>a3) (EURF for MIPs 14) Number of jobs supported/sustained by the EU, disaggregated for green jobs</p> | <p>and opportunities by 2023 (revised 2020)</p> <p>a2) tbd²⁶; (PAPD 2.2.3) double the number of women farmers, agro-business incubators and in agriculture value chain by 2023</p> <p>a3) 0²⁷; tbd</p> | <p>survey/Comprehensive Food Security & Nutrition Survey M&E system of EU-funded interventions</p> <p>a3) M&E system of EU-funded interventions</p> |
| b) Increased value addition in agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors | <p>b1) (SDG 8.1.1²⁸/EURF 1.13)²⁹ Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita</p> <p>b2) (PAPD2.4.4.1/ cf. SDGs 9.2.1³⁰, 10.b.1) Manufacturing sector contribution (%) by relevant sub-sectors to real GDP</p> | <p>b1) 0% (2015), 1.2% (2017); tbd³¹</p> <p>b2) 6.6%³²; (PAPD2.4.4) 12% by 2023</p> | <p>b1) potentially Liberia Central Bank statistics; for forestry, Libertrace</p> <p>b2) National Annual Accounts Survey (NAAS)</p> |
| Specific objective 3: Enhance linkages to local, national, regional and international markets | | | |
| Expected results | Indicators | Baseline & targets | Means of verification |
| a) Improved road and shipment transport and increased trade volumes and value | <p>a1) (PAPD 3.5.1, 3.3.1.3, 3.6.2.1 and 3.6.2.3) Number of government policies developed or revised in road sector through EU support</p> <p>a2) (PAPD 3.4.1.3, 3.4.1.6 and 3.6.2.3) Number of storage hubs for</p> | <p>a1) tbd; tbd</p> <p>a2) tbd; tbd</p> | a1) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |

²³ (SDG 5.a.1) (a) Proportion of total agricultural population with ownership or secure rights over agricultural land, by sex; and (b) share of women among owners or rights-bearers of agricultural land, by type of tenure.

²⁴ (SDG 5.a.2) Proportion of countries where the legal framework (including customary law) guarantees women's equal rights to land ownership and/or control.

²⁶ Potential source: Agriculture baseline survey/Comprehensive food security survey.

²⁷ Baseline for disaggregated data on Green jobs to be conducted. As of 20/05/2021, the EU supported the /sustained 299 jobs in circular economy (employments within the CBEs of the waste sector) of which 82 are women (=27%) (Source: Baseline Study carried out through the CTR393690).

²⁸ Liberia does not report on (SDG 8.2.1) Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person related to (SDG 8.2) Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors.

²⁹ Linked to (PAPD 2.1.10.1) Liberia inflation rate, (PAPD 2.1.11.1) International reserves for imports, (PAPD 2.1.12.1) Number of currencies used on the market, (PAPD 2.1.13.1) Foreign exchange depreciation rate (year-on-year) – some with targets.

³⁰ (SDG 9.2.1) Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP and per capita.

³¹ Data to be retrieved from Libertrace exports on logs and transformed products.

³² Source: National Annual Accounts Survey (NAAS).

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | agricultural produce | | a2) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| Priority area 3: Improving financial and democratic governance | | | |
| Specific objective 1: Improve the economic stability and financial management in the country | | | |
| Expected results | Indicators | Baseline & targets | Means of verification |
| a) Predictable and sustainable macro-economic management | a1) (cf. SDG 17) Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) scores ³³ | a1) 33 PEFA components meeting good governance criterion in 2020; good governance is to assign a score of B or higher to more than half of the 94 PEFA components, i.e. 47 components | a1) PEFA assessments |
| b) Improved business environment and investment climate | b1) Liberia's Global Competitiveness Index | b1) 40.5(2018), ; tbd | b1) World Economic Forum |
| Specific objective 2: Promote a more inclusive and transparent democracy | | | |
| Expected results | Indicators | Baseline & targets | Means of verification |
| a) Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels | a1) (PAPD 3.1.2.1/ ³⁴) SCORE Index rating for civic trust and coexistence, by county and sex (%) a2) (EU RF + GAP) Number of grassroots civil society organisations benefitting from (or reached by) EU support a3) (EU RF) Number of government policies developed or revised with civil society organisation participation through EU support | a1) 52% (2016) ³⁵ ; (PAPD 3.1.2) 70% by 2027 a2) 0; tbd a3) 0; tbd | a1) Liberia Score for Peace a2) M&E system of EU-funded interventions a3) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| b) Increase elected female representative in the legislature | b1) (EURF1.8/cf. SDG 5.5.1) Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments b2) Voter Turnout of the Presidential Elections | b1) Lower Chamber: 8 women/73 seats or 11%, Upper Chamber: 1 | b1) Inter-Parliamentary Union b2) Liberian National Elections Commission Report |

³³ [PEFA](#) is a methodology for assessing public financial management performance. It identifies 94 characteristics (dimensions) across 31 key components of public financial management (indicators) in 7 broad areas of activity (pillars): I. credibility of the budget, II. comprehensiveness and transparency, III. policy-based budgeting, IV. predictability and control in budget execution, V. accounting, recording and reporting, VI. external scrutiny and audit, VII. donor practices.

³⁴ (SDG 16.7.2) Proportion of population who believe decision-making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group.

³⁵ Source: [Score 2016](#).

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| | | woman/30seats or 3.3%, rank 161/193 (2021) ³⁶ ; tbd | |
| | | b2) 75% (2017); tbd | |
| c) Increased voice and accountability | c1) Worldwide Governance Indicator ³⁷ – Voice and Accountability | c1) percentile rank 44.33; tbd | c1) The World Bank |
| Specific objective 3: Ensure a violence-free equal playing field for women and girls | | | |
| Expected results | Indicators | Baseline & targets | Means of verification |
| a) All forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres substantially reduced | a1) (PAPD 3.1.3.1/cf. SDG 16.1.3 ³⁸) SCORE Index rating for violent tendencies, by county and sex (%) a2) (PAPD 1.3.6.1/cf. SDG 5.2.1 ³⁹ and SDG 16.2.3 ⁴⁰ /GAP ⁴¹) Incidence of SGBV, by county and sex (%) a3) (EURF) Number of individuals benefitting from EU-funded programmes to counter sexual and gender-based violence | a1) 19% (2016); 5% a2) tbd ⁴² ; (PAPD 1.3.6) Incidence of SGBV reduced by 50% by 2030 through the provision of appropriate support services & access to justice systems a3) 0; tbd | a1) Liberia Score for Peace a2) Liberia Ministry of Gender and Social Protection Annual Report a3) M&E system of EU-funded interventions |
| b) (SDG 5.3) All harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation substantially reduced | b1) (SDG 5.3.1 ⁴³ /GAP) Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18 b2) (SDG 5.3.2/GAP) Proportion of girls and women aged 15-49 years who have undergone female genital mutilation/cutting, by age | b1) 8.8% before age 15, 35.9% before age 18 (2013), 24.9% (2020); tbd b2) 44.4% (2013), 31.8% (2020); tbd | b1) Our World in Data b2) Our World in Data |

N.B.: Due to weak and porous statistical and other information systems, many baselines and targets that are presently unavailable will be informed during the formulation of the programmes.

³⁶ Source: [Inter-Parliamentary Union – Percentage of women in national parliament.](#)

³⁷ Source: [World Governance Indicators, WGI.](#)

³⁸ (SDG 16.1.3) Proportion of population subjected to (a) physical violence, (b) psychological violence and (c) sexual violence in the previous 12 months.

³⁹ (SDG 5.2.1) Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner, in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age.

⁴⁰ (SDG 16.2.3) Proportion of young women and men aged 18–29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18.

⁴¹ Gender Action Plan (GAP) III.

⁴² Source: Ministry of Gender and Social Protection (MoGSP) Annual Report.

⁴³ Alternative/Proxy: (SDG 3.7.2/EURF 1.6) Adolescent birth rate per 1,000 adolescents aged 15-19 years.

Annex 2 Summary of Relevant Projects and Programmes of Development Partners⁴⁴

TEI Forest Biodiversity

| Funding Agency | Year | Budget | Implementing Partner | Description of Intervention |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| European Union | 2020-2024 | EUR 20 million (11 th EDF) | In Liberia: BirdLife, Society for the Conservation of Nature in Liberia (SCNL), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) | Support Programme for the Conservation of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa (PAPFoR): The overall programme goal is to protect and to optimise cross-border cooperation and coordination of protected area management for rainforest ecosystems in West Africa (Guinea Conakry, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria). In Liberia and Sierra Leone, the PAPFoR will support effective forest management across the Gola Landscape, in protected areas and community forests. Key aspects of the programme include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of land use plans to support conservation efforts, including the development of a transboundary database and provision of Geographic Information System (GIS) training. - Support participatory landscape-wide land use planning process and support local communities to develop land use plans. - Support the management of five protected areas within the landscape, through development of management and co-management plans (PAs include the Gola Rainforest National Park, Kambui Forest Reserve, Tiwai Wildlife Sanctuary, Gola Forest National Park, and Foya Proposed Protected Area). - Training of community eco-guards and support the Governments of Liberia and Sierra Leone to carry out joint patrols, in addition to putting in place a landscape-wide biomonitoring programme. - Supporting sustainable community-based management of forest resources outside the protected areas while improving community livelihoods. To achieve this, the project will support two community-based ecotourism ventures and pilot a sustainable logging model in Liberia. |
| DFID/FCDO (UK) | 2019-2022 | GBP 5.25 million | Palladium | Multi-stakeholder Forest Governance and Accountability Project (MFGAP): MFGAP aims to improve forest governance in Liberia by enhancing the level of accountability and oversight of Liberia's EU Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) process. To this end MFGAP works with the legislature to guarantee oversight, engages civil society and communities to raise awareness and ensure effective representation in the deliberation process, leverages independent media to raise awareness and communicate transparently, and promotes innovative strategies to incentivise compliance by the private sector. |
| Germany BMZ/ European Union | 2015-2024 (ext.) | EUR 4.1 million + EUR 2.9 million | GIZ | Cross-Border Project: Strengthening ecological connectivity in the Taï Grebo Sapo forest complex between Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia: The overall objective of the project is to enable cross-border cooperation between Government institutions and local actors in Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia, to connect the forest ecosystems in the Taï Grebo Sapo border region (from the western border of Taï National Park in Côte d'Ivoire across the adjacent Grebo Forest to Sapo National Park in Liberia). The project aims to strengthen local expertise and capacity for the joint management of natural resources and biodiversity, to improve the connectivity between the region's ecosystems and protected areas, and enable dialogue between local and national actors and the participation of women in decision-making processes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informing local people in the Taï Grebo corridor region about land use planning decisions and ensuring that they are involved. - Incorporating collaborative decisions in regional land use development plans which can be used in the medium term to direct the sustainable management of the area. - Developing the skills and capacity of all the actors involved so that they can participate competently in the planning and implementation of national and cross-border measures. - Supporting the efforts of the Liberian Forestry Development Authority (FDA) to establish national park status for the Grebo Krahn Forest. - Preparation and implementation of a road map for the declaration and management of the Grebo Forest as the Grebo Krahn National Park (Liberia), and its incorporation into the network of protected forest areas. |

⁴⁴ A complete projects/sector/donor matrix is available at: <https://www.liberiaprojects.org/activities>

| Funding Agency | Year | Budget | Implementing Partner | Description of Intervention |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|--|--|
| | | | | Implementing partners include the Cote d'Ivoire Parks Authority (OIPR), the Department for Ecology and Nature Conservation (DEPN) in Ministry of Environment (Cote d'Ivoire), Liberia Forest Development Authority (FDA), the Foundation for National Parks and Reserves (FPRCI), and the international NGO Wild Chimpanzee Foundation (WCF). |
| KfW Development Bank | 2017-2020 (extended with additional budget till 2024) | EUR 6 million | Liberia Forestry Development Authority | <p><u>Protection of Biodiversity in the Tai Sapo corridor (component Grebo Sapo Park Liberia)</u></p> <p>The aim of the project is to contribute to the preservation of the protected areas in the Liberian part of the Tai Grebo Sapo rainforest complex and to improve the conditions for the preservation of its unique biodiversity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support to local communities around Protected Areas and within corridor areas through investments in social infrastructure. - Supported to FDA by investments in infrastructure, equipment and personnel to ensure the preservation of the protected areas in cooperation with the neighbouring population. - Support to the establishment and gazetting of protected areas that permanently connect the Grebo Forest with the Sapo National Park as an ecological corridor, and establish monitoring mechanisms of protected areas along the national border with Côte d'Ivoire. |
| Germany BMZ | 2016-2022 | ± EUR 25 million | GIZ | <p><u>Capacity development in the transport sector in Liberia:</u></p> <p>The objective of the programme is to strengthen road network management while promoting employment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of National Road Fund, and technical assistance for implementing road maintenance using funds from the fuel levy. - Adoption of the National Transport Master Plan (2012), the Axle Load Control Law (2015) and the establishment of the National Road Fund. - Training and consultancy in contract processing for building authority employees and building contractors. - Supporting the Ministry of Public Works in decentralizing services and in establishing a bridge maintenance system. - Consultancy of the government and other interest groups on public measures to promote road safety. - Consultancy in implementing an overload control system for trucks. - Support of the institutional development of the Association of Liberian Construction Contractors (ALCC). - Training for construction companies to become more competitive in public tender procedures while creating more jobs, especially for youth. - Vocational training of road construction and maintenance craftsmen. <p>Implementing partners include the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of Transport, the National Police, the Booker Washington Institute state vocational school and the Association for Liberian Construction Contractors.</p> |
| USAID | 2015-2020 | US\$ 23 million | Communities with CFMB ACDI/VOCA | <p><u>Forest Incomes For Environmental Sustainability (FIFES) Project:</u></p> <p>The objective of the project is to combat deforestation and biodiversity loss while developing rural, forest-based enterprises that provide sustainable economic opportunities for farmers and forest-dependent communities. FIFES implements biodiversity conservation in 11 community forests (CF) in Grand Bassa and Nimba counties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create well developed rural, forest-based enterprises, which provide sustainable economic opportunities for farmers and forest-dependent communities, while combatting deforestation and biodiversity loss; and - Enhance the capacity of the Government of Liberia (GoL) institutions and rural communities to sustainably manage and benefit from Community Forests (CFs) and buffer zone natural resources. |
| Norway | 2016-2023 | US\$ 36.7 million | World Bank, FDA | <p><u>Liberia Forest Sector Project (LFSP)</u></p> <p>Under the leadership of the FDA, in coordination with the MoA, the EPA, the LISGIS, the LC, and the MLME, the LFSP will finance TA, works, goods, workshops, training, services, and operational costs to <i>support the implementation of the REDD+ strategy</i>, focusing on investments for early implementation of strategic land use options in targeted landscapes. The project will also <i>support the development of institutional capacities, which will strengthen the enabling</i></p> |

| Funding Agency | Year | Budget | Implementing Partner | Description of Intervention |
|-------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| | | (Single Donor Trust Fund grant) | | <p><i>environment to sustain decentralized implementation of sustainable forest sector management</i>, with particular emphasis on the engagement of local communities. As part of the enabling environment, the proposed project will also include the operationalization and operations of an MRV system to track the country's forest cover and progress made in the reduction or removal of GHG emissions over time. The LFSP encompasses the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Component 1: Strengthened Regulatory and Institutional Arrangements for Implementation of REDD+ (US\$8 million), incl. support to reform and harmonize the existing legal regime and to strengthen institutional and professional capacities for improved management of forest landscapes. - Component 2: Strengthened Capacity for Management of Targeted Forest Landscapes (US\$23.8 million), incl. support for land use planning, conservation, community forestry, sustainable agriculture, and forests management to support local communities and their organizations within the targeted landscapes to improve the sustainable management and conservation of natural resources and improve the economic and social benefits they obtain from them. - Component 3: Forest Monitoring Information System (US\$2.3 million), incl. establishing and supporting an operational and successfully tested national system for MRV and an information system for safeguards. - Component 4: Project Management, Monitoring, and Communication (US\$3.4 million), support will be provided for the FDA's day-to-day project implementation and management including procurement, FM, M&E, preparation of annual work plans, and organization of audit reports. |
| World Bank (IDA, IBRD) | 2019-2024 | US\$ 19 million | MFD | <p>Public Financial Management Reforms for Institutional Strengthening Project: The development objective of the project is to improve domestic revenue mobilization systems, and strengthen financial control and accountability in public finances. The project consists of five components.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Component 1: Enhancing Domestic Revenue Mobilization Sources and Systems, is designed to improve taxpayer service and compliance to mobilize sufficient resources for the delivery of public services. It has the following two subcomponents: (i) Improve Tax Policy; and (ii) Capacity Development and Strengthening the Technological Basis of Tax Administration. - Component 2: Stabilizing and Strengthening Performance of Financial Controls and Systems, is designed to finance the introduction of the integrated financial management information system (IFMIS). It has the following four subcomponents: (i) IFMIS Improvement and Rollout Support; (ii) Enhancing the Budget Framework; (iii) Preparing for modernization of Procurement Systems in the Public Sector; and (iv) Open Data. - Component 3: Improving Public Sector Capacity for Enhanced Oversight and Accountability, aims to boost internal and external oversight by strengthening core accountability and integrity institutions, as well as providing support for the ability of civil society to participate in evidence-based policy discussions. It has the following two subcomponents: (i) Improving Parliamentary, and Internal and External Oversight Effectiveness; and (ii) Institutional Capacity Building. - Component 4: Improving Upstream and Downstream PFM Systems in Selected Sectors, was designed to reduce the extent of existing core PFM-related bottlenecks within the chosen sectors that significantly impede the goal of improved service delivery systems, a necessary precondition toward improving Liberia's human development. |
| World Bank (IDA), USAID, SIDA | 2014-2020 | US\$ 10.71 million | Civil Service Agency | <p>Liberia Public Sector Modernization Project: The development objective of the project is to improve pay and performance management in participating ministries, and strengthen payroll management in the civil service in Liberia. The project has four components.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Component 1: Improving pay management to address: (i) the challenge of the civil service to attract and retain competent managerial and professional staffs; and (ii) low levels of motivation and engagement among existing civil servants which undermines individual work effort. - Component 2: Strengthened payroll management to address: (i) the lack of effective payroll discipline that has facilitated entries into the payroll without due process; and (ii) weak establishment control leading to escalating wage bill. - Component 3: improved performance will address: (i) the challenge of management to <i>hold staff accountable for their performance in ensuring service delivery; and (ii) overlapping mandates, and weak management structures for the civil service.</i> - Component 4: Project and programme management to support the coordination and delivery of project inputs and overall implementation programme. |

TEI Safe and Sustainable Food Systems

| Stakeholder | Statute/Functions | Potential interest and role as regard the development of food systems | Potential contribution to the Team Europe initiative (resources, information, management capacities, etc.) | Implications and conclusions for involvement in the Team Europe initiative (direct/indirect involvement, complementarity, roles and responsibilities) |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Development Partners</p> <p>World Bank, IFC UNICEF, IFAD, AFDB, USAID, JICA</p> | <p>Development partners play pivotal roles in the provision of technical, budgetary and sectorial support to the Government of Liberia’s developmental aspirations through the conditionality and implementation mechanisms.</p> | <p>In the drive towards the development of food systems, Development Partners can utilize various mechanisms for cooperation aimed at – developing policy frameworks, project implementation support through investment project financing, and the provision of advisory services and analytics – knowledge and development – all aimed at raising investment financing to facilitate job creation, social inclusion for youth and women, creation of enabling environment, production, and value chain development and market access for consumption.</p> | <p>Coordination: Development Partners can facilitate a Macro-level integrated sectorial approach of investment at scale for transformation in the food systems approach.</p> <p>Development Partners can leverage their cooperation framework to explore synergies, complementarities.</p> <p>They can leverage experience, resources and lessons learnt to improve the national drive for resilient food systems.</p> | <p>Policy Dialogue: [Strategic]</p> <p>Development Partners are essential for policy dialogue across the supply chain.</p> <p>Facilitate collective large-scale interventions, work with GoL to improve tenure, assist the development of laws and policies and synergize implementation modalities.</p> <p>Allocate financing and engagement with GoL for ownership and sustainability</p> |
| <p>FAO</p> | <p>UN Food and Agriculture Organization</p> | <p>FAO provides policy and technical assistance to MoA, through its regular program, through the Technical Cooperation Programs (TCP), and through the EU-funded FIRST program.</p> <p>FAO is convening in 2021 the food system summit, and Liberia is going to play a key role in it.</p> | <p>Essential contribution thanks to its technical expertise, knowledge generation and sharing function, statistics, and normative role on food systems related issues</p> <p>Monitoring and reporting on food systems, fisheries, forestry, and land-related SDGS</p> <p>Political neutrality and convening capacity</p> | <p>Should be directly involved in the conceptualisation and implementation of the TEI-SSFs.</p> |

| Stakeholder | Statute/Functions | Potential interest and role as regard the development of food systems | Potential contribution to the Team Europe initiative (resources, information, management capacities, etc.) | Implications and conclusions for involvement in the Team Europe initiative (direct/indirect involvement, complementarity, roles and responsibilities) |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| International NGOs (Solidaridad, ZOA, WHH, ACDI/VOCA, Concern, Action Against Hunger) | International NGOs serve to facilitate the implementation of GoL's developmental aspirations at the micro (site) levels through project interventions in food systems. | <p>Implementation: technological and technical support</p> <p>International NGOs leverage field and direct expertise to resource users (farmers) to facilitate support for the improvement of agro-commodities production to reduce food insecurity and improve market access and trade.</p> | <p>Coordination – Knowledge Management</p> <p>At the micro-level of the food systems, international NGOs can contribute to job creation, economic development, gender and social integration, coordinate national and subnational interventions and actors through various platforms aimed at developing ownership and sustainability in the food systems.</p> <p>International NGOs can also implement, facilitate, and share lessons, technologies, successes as well as challenges integral to the development of food systems.</p> | <p>Amplification:</p> <p>Lesson learned from implementation can be utilized to facilitate the development of the key policies to improve agro-commodities production, value chain development and facilitate transformation and trade.</p> <p>International NGOs can also directly provide technical assistance to GoL at the subnational scale to help food systems resource users and food producers.</p> |
| Liberia National Investment Commission (LNIC) | It is the GoL's agency for FDI. It supports the growth of the domestic private sector while advocating for the improvement of the business environment. | <p>In relation to food systems it takes into account GoL's priorities in the fields of agriculture and agro-processing (rubber, oil palm, rice, cassava, marine fisheries, aquaculture, horticulture, cocoa).</p> <p>It works with the Liberia Bankers Association on access to finance and the availability of financial products to Liberian businesses throughout the country.</p> <p>It seeks budgetary support intended to support the growth of small & medium enterprises.</p> | | |

| Stakeholder | Statute/Functions | Potential interest and role as regard the development of food systems | Potential contribution to the Team Europe initiative (resources, information, management capacities, etc.) | Implications and conclusions for involvement in the Team Europe initiative (direct/indirect involvement, complementarity, roles and responsibilities) |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| European Investment Bank (EIB) | | There is an on-going negotiation between EIB and the GoL on a loan for an expansion project for rice production. The project envisages establishing up to 15 rice business hubs, most of which have existing infrastructure that may have to be rehabilitated. The project also seeks to invest in mechanisation. The EIB loan would be accompanied by an EC grant (likely dedicated to technical assistance). | | |
| Commercial banks | There are 9 commercial banks, 1 development finance company, 1 microfinance deposit-taking institution, 20 insurance companies, 20 microfinance institutions, 9 licensed rural community financial institutions, 400 credit unions and 1450 village saving and loan associations. Commercial banks serve mainly in Monrovia where 60% of the commercial branches are located. The presence of the commercial banks in rural areas is very limited and, in some counties, inexistent. In rural areas, non-bank financial institutions as credit unions and village savings and loan associations have grown significantly. Recently, the use of mobile money services has increased covering all counties. (Sources: IMF, 2016 and PARM, 2018). | | | |

Ongoing and pipeline initiatives relevant to agri-food systems of EU, Member States, and EIB

| | FR | DE | IE | SE | EIB | EU |
|-------------------------|---|--|----|--|---|--|
| Pipeline | Support the reactivation of Liberia Agriculture and Cooperative Development Bank (ACDB) | New program on health and possibly nutrition (related to Covid response) – committed, but not commissioned | | Second phase of GROW programme | Currently appraising a project in the rice value chain in Liberia. It may include activities related to seeds development, production, quality assurance and certification as well as distribution, financing of machinery and equipment, training and workshops; development of up to 15 identified Rice Business Hubs (RBHs) aiming at developing the whole rice value chain in the country | Currently Identifying TEI-SSFs Support to the cassava value chain in Liberia’s southeast under the West-Africa competitiveness programme (WACOMP) pending |
| Value chain development | Aquaculture (co-funding FishLib with EU) | | | GROW - Fisheries, cocoa (focus on <i>Lofa</i> county), vegetables (focus on inputs), and rubber (phased out) | | Liberia Cocoa Sector Improvement Programme (LICSIP) <i>Lofa, Nimba and Bong</i> Cocoa Value Chain Development Programme (COVADEP) <i>Bong, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Nimba and River Gee</i> (complements and builds on LICSIP by including more cocoa farmers, associations and communities, private-sector-led service centres and adding support to processors) PARTNERS Integrated Rice-fish Farming (IRFFS) <i>Gbarpolu, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Maryland and Margibi</i> |

| | FR | DE | IE | SE | EIB | EU |
|---|---|---|----|--|-----|---|
| | | | | | | Enhancing smallholder fish farming by agro-ecological intensification and integration into inclusive commercial value chain (Fish-Lib) - <i>Bong, Nimba, Lofa</i> |
| Business development | | | | GROW Liberia is an agri-business and investment advisory program that partners with businesses, investors, associations, and government agencies to accelerate inclusive economic returns within high growth industries in Liberia | | |
| Tertiary and technical education & TVET | TVET in agriculture, train youth to become entrepreneurs (STRIVE project) Support to/rehabilitation of agricultural technical schools (one next to <i>Kakata</i>) | TVET linked to improving rural roads and transportation | | | | Support to demand driven Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for young people in Liberia (multi-sector, includes agriculture) |
| Infrastructure (roads, energy, and storage) | | Feeder roads (road maintenance fund) Promotion of a climate-friendly electricity market in the ECOWAS region Sustainable Energy (global | | Feeder roads (<i>focus on North, North-East and South-East</i>) | | |

| | FR | DE | IE | SE | EIB | EU |
|---|---|---|--|------|-----|--|
| | | program co-funded with the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and UK) | | | | |
| Food security & nutrition | Support to fight Covid19 – monitor food insecurity in <i>Nimba, Bong, Montserrado</i> | | Support on health and Nutrition – application in counties and advocacy at the national level | | | Prosperous Agriculture Roadmap to Nutrition and Entrepreneurship, Reinforcing Sustainability (PARTNERS) Programme <i>Grand Kru, River Cess, Grand Bassa, Grand Cape Mount, Margibi, Sinoe and Bomi</i> |
| Food safety & quality, and trade conformity | | | | GROW | | |
| Strengthening Enabling environment | | Regional program Trade Facilitation West Africa Programme (co-funded with EU) | | | | Regional - West Africa Competitiveness Programme (WACOMP) – cassava value chain intervention Linking Extension and Research to Farmers for Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition (through FAO) Assistance to the National Aquaculture and Fisheries Authority Creating skilled, capable, and effective community co-management associations to secure legal and sustainable fisheries in Liberia (Community for fisheries) - <i>Robertsport, Gran Cess, Marshall, Buchanan</i> |

| | FR | DE | IE | SE | EIB | EU |
|--------|---|----|--|---|-----|--|
| Gender | The TVET program is focusing on Women and Youth | | Strong gender focus in nutrition programme | Women and youth economic empowerment in agri-businesses | | Gender mainstreamed across all actions |