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This action is funded by the European Union

ANNEX 4

of the Commission Decision the Annual Action Programme 2017 in favour of the Republic of Liberia to be financed from the 11th European Development Fund

Action Document for Technical Cooperation Facility II

1. Title/basic act/ CRIS number	Technical Cooperation Facility II CRIS number: LR/FED/040-433 financed under the 11 th European Development Fund			
2. Zone benefiting from the action/location	Liberia The action shall be carried out at the following location: Liberia			
3. Programming document	National Indicative Programme (NIP) ¹ for the period 2014-2020 for Liberia			
4. Sector of concentration/ thematic area	Economic and development policy/Planning	DEV. Aid: YES ²		
5. Amounts concerned	Total estimated cost: EUR 640 000 Total amount of EDF contribution EUR 640 000			
6. Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)	Project Modality Direct management – procurement of services Indirect management with the Government of Liberia			
7 a) DAC code(s)	43010 – Multisector aid			
b) Main Delivery Channel	10000 - PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS - 12000 - Recipient Government			
8. Markers (from CRIS DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	x	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹ Commission Decision on the adoption of National Indicative Programme for the Republic of Liberia (2014-2020) C(2015) 1267 of 26.2.2015.

² Official Development Aid is administered with the promotion of the economic development and welfare of developing countries as its main objective.

	Aid to environment	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality (including Women In Development)	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade Development	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Main objective
	Biological diversity	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) thematic flagships	N/A			
10. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development SDG 16 of Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions			

SUMMARY

The overall objective of this intervention is to facilitate and support the cooperation between the EU and Liberia, notably the successful implementation of programmes and projects under the 11th European Development Fund National Indicative Programme (NIP).

The proposed programme will be implemented through three components: (1) Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) for the engagement of short-to medium-term consultants to assist in the main stages of the project cycle to ensure the effective implementation of the NIP and other EDF programmes in support of the Agenda for Transformation (AfT); (2) Visibility, information, communication, engagement and similar activities related to EU-Liberia development cooperation; (3) Training Support for Projects & Programmes (TSPP): this will finance various capacity development interventions such as training, seminars, awareness-raising activities prior to or during the implementation of a project or programme.

The proposed funding is EUR 640 000, which may be increased when funds are decommitted from the ongoing Technical Cooperation Facility (TCF).

1 CONTEXT

1.1 Sector/Country/Regional context/Thematic area

1.1.1 Public Policy Assessment and EU Policy Framework

Although Liberia has enjoyed relative peace and stability since the end of the civil war in 2003, the country remains one of the poorest countries in the world with one of the lowest levels of human development (ranking 177 out of 188 countries), weak state capacity, and a high level of dependence on international donors. The foreseen drawdown of the United Nations Mission to Liberia (UNMIL) represents an important milestone in the transition to peace, as it will expose the capacity of the Government of Liberia to deliver security service to the population.

The long term national vision is expressed in the "Liberia Rising 2030" which aims for Liberia to reach middle income status by 2030.

The National Development Plan, the Agenda for Transformation (AfT), aims to implement this vision in the period 2012-2017. The plan has two key objectives: (1) to create wealth and (2) to increase inclusiveness for a more equal and just society. In order to achieve these two overarching objectives, the 5-year plan sets key priorities under five pillars, which are consistent with identified current challenges for Liberia: (1) Peace, security and rule of law, (2) Infrastructure and economic transformation, (3) Human development, (4) Governance and Public Institutions, and (5) Cross-cutting issues (vulnerable segments of the population, environment, HIV/AIDS, Human Rights and labour and employment).

The AfT addresses the main challenges for economic and social development in Liberia, aiming to tackle the root causes of the conflict, focusing on security, growth, social issues and civil service reform. The Liberian Development Alliance (LDA) is tasked with the coordination of government, private sector, civil society and donors in support of the implementation of the AfT, including Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E).

The Government of Liberia has shown a high level of commitment and ownership in implementing the plan, but remains hampered by the institutional capacity to coordinate and follow-up on implementation. To implement the plan, Liberia has moved forward with and adopted a number of good quality sector policies, strategies and work plans in a number of sectors. However, there is not always coherence between the AfT and these sector plans, in particular as regards funding priorities and indicators. The Ebola outbreak and price falls in the main export commodities led to a reprioritisation of the AfT actions up to the elections of October 2017.

The focal sectors of the 11th EDF NIP (2014-2020) for Liberia are: (1) Good Governance: EUR 107 000 000; (2) Energy: EUR 100 000 000; (3) Education: EUR 32 000 000; (4) Agriculture: EUR 30 000 000

Additionally, the NIP foresees EUR 4 000 000 in support of civil society and EUR 6 000 000 in support measures, entailing National Authorising Officer (NAO) support (EUR 3 500 000) and the Technical Cooperation Facility (TCF).

Economic and social situation and poverty analysis

Economic growth averaged 7.6 % up to the Ebola outbreak in 2014. The economic growth helped reduce extreme poverty incidence between 2007 and 2013, but the Ebola outbreak and decline in prices of some of the countries key commodities led to a sharp decline in economic growth. Following Government action to reduce the shocks, growth is projected to increase in 2017. In the 2014 Household and Income Expenditure Survey the population living below the poverty line was 54.1. The majority of these are concentrated in rural areas of the country.

Despite improved enrolment rates, the quality of primary education remains poor and only a limited number of students have necessary skills to continue to higher level education or vocational training. Although there has been improved enrolment of girls, there continues to be an imbalance in education access for girls.

Liberia is ranked 146/155 countries on the 2014 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) *Gender Inequality Index*, and 150/161 in the 2014 UNDP *Gender Development Index*. Women are not only consistently discriminated against in terms of access to education and

employment opportunities, but gender based violence remains a grave and increasing problem in the country.

Governance, justice and public institutions remain weak despite the government implementing many reforms. Reform of the civil service and decentralisation has moved forward although slowly. There has been good progress on public financial management reform, but much still needs to be achieved in the fight against corruption and to improve transparency and accountability, in particular in the management of natural resources.

Liberia has shown regular progress since 2006 in governance indicators: the Ibrahim Index on African Governance (Mo Ibrahim Index of Participation and Human Rights) which noted an improvement from a rank of 30th in 2006 to 28th out of 54 countries in 2015. Transparency International's 2016 Corruption Perception Index ranks Liberia 90 out of the 176 countries and territories assessed. At the same time Afrobarometer in 2013 reported a wide distrust on most public institutions.

1.1.2 Stakeholder analysis

The final beneficiaries will be the people of Liberia. The direct target group will be the key governmental institutions who are or will be involved in the implementation of 11th EDF NIP, such as (but not limited to):

- Ministry of Finance and Development Planning: Will be a crucial player in the design and implementation of the State Building Contracts.
- General Audit Commission (GAC): Support to the GAC is foreseen to continue under the 11th EDF. The staff is already familiar with EDF procedures but capacity needs to be strengthened, for instance, on procurement and Programme Estimates management.
- Ministry of Education: Education will be one of the focal sectors of the 11th EDF NIP. While specific interventions are yet to be defined, the Ministry has important capacity gaps in terms of management, planning and coordination. While this project will support only one component of these gaps as relates to aid coordination and EDF procedures, these must be complementary.
- Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy: Energy will be a focal sector of the 11th EDF NIP. With support of the NAO staff, it is foreseen that the Ministry will be involved in important procurements for works and supplies contracts under the 11th EDF.
- Ministry of Agriculture: Agriculture will be another important focal sector of the 11th EDF NIP. Specific interventions are yet to be defined.

Other Ministries and agencies will nevertheless also be able to benefit from the programme as needed on a case-by-case basis.

Civil society and other cooperation stakeholders will also directly benefit opportunities such as conferences, seminars and workshops on key policy/issues related to development, trade and cross-cutting themes, as well as from training on EU-ACP cooperation procedures and principles.

1.1.3 Priority areas for support/problem analysis

The implementation of the 11th EDF NIP for Liberia is halfway through implementation. With UNMIL drawdown and presidential transfer of power, Liberia is entering a new phase of its post-war history. The lack of capacity in all levels of government continues to be a challenge in order to properly implement EU cooperation in Liberia. Efforts continue in order to strengthen both government and civil society counterparts. The Government of Liberia is fully aware of the challenges and opportunities in terms of capacity development, which have also been outlined in the AfT. The proposed TCF will prioritise the following areas of support:

- Identification and formulation of new projects and programmes
- Studies and reviews to enhance EU-Liberia cooperation in areas such as (but not necessarily limited to) public sector reform, food security, infrastructure, education, civil society, gender mainstreaming, trade, etc.
- Specific technical support to facilitate the implementation of ongoing cooperation programmes and projects.
- Visibility, information, communication, engagement and related activities.

2 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Risk	Risk Level (H/M/L)	Mitigating measures
Insufficient willingness by stakeholders to participate in activities relating to the implementation of the action	L	Special emphasis will be placed on the TA to be offered will be demand-driven and chosen according to the needs expressed by the Government of Liberia. Continued close cooperation with the NAO will be core in achieving this.
Insufficient human capacity in the EU Delegation to manage the relatively high number of specific commitments from the programme.	L	The EU Delegation is currently expanding its staff to fully implement the 11 th EDF NIP and ongoing projects. Support from HQ may be requested on an ad hoc basis and provided through floaters.
High turnover and low commitment of staff in ministries and agencies.	L	The Government commitment to recruit staff following the established procedures for the Liberian Civil Service Agency and to provide valid contracts will be crucial in ensuring that staff are committed civil servants.
Assumptions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberia will remain stable and there will be no re-occurrence of civil strife. • The Government remains committed to reform, to improving governance and economic management and particularly to establishing rigorous management and accountability procedures. 		

3 LESSONS LEARNT, COMPLEMENTARITY AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

3.1 Lessons learnt

The ongoing TCF under the 11th EDF ends in July 2018. The previous TCF under the 10th EDF was not subject to a Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) mission or a final evaluation. However, lessons learnt from the ongoing and previous TCF and other training projects in Liberia are:

- Institutional capacity development continues to be a core element in reinforcing the implementation of EU projects and programmes in Liberia. Continued capacity

constraints of public sector counterparts creates the need for technical support to facilitate the management and implementation of the NIP.

- The TCF is mainly a facility for technical assistance and less so for training and capacity building, as this is mostly done in the context of sector programmes.
- TCF needs to be more flexible as regards the possibility of using it to promote relations between the EU and Liberia generally, and specifically EU visibility in Liberia
- Cross-cutting issues, notably gender, as well as communication and visibility need to be better streamlined into EU cooperation in Liberia in general, and specifically there is need to push for a change of institutional culture in the institution as per the Gender Action Plan (GAP)

3.2 Complementarity, synergy and donor coordination

The 11th EDF NIP foresees EUR 3 500 000 in continued support to the NAO function of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning of Liberia. This support will aim, not only at strengthening the NAO office, but at improving the use of EDF procedures and aid management coordination. The TCF will complement the NAO support project by focusing on more specific needs during the implementation of the NIP, as identified by the Government of Liberia and the EU.

Specific programmes and projects to be implemented during the 11th EDF also foresee capacity development initiatives for their implementation. The foreseen 2-year State Building Contract (budget support) of EUR 25 000 000 includes support measures for EUR 3 000 000 in support of public financial management and monitoring and evaluation.

The main development partners operating in Liberia are the World Bank, the African Development Bank, USA, China, Sweden and the EU. UN agencies also play a crucial role in supporting government efforts. Cooperation between development partners is close. A range of sector-oriented and thematic donor groups exists that regularly discuss progress and problems in their respective areas, for instance coordination meetings in the Education and Health sectors, in public financial management and a Budget Support Working Group.

The Aid Management unit at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning is leading the efforts in coordinating donor support. The NAO is also situated in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) and so activities foreseen within the TCF will be aligned to other donor support to the Government of Liberia.

3.3 Cross-cutting issues

In addition to the four pillars, the AfT also encompasses cross-cutting issues which have to be taken into account for the development of Liberia: gender equality, child protection, people with disability, youth empowerment, environment, HIV/AIDS, Human Rights and labour & employment.

The TCF will contribute to a better integration of these cross-cutting issues in programmes definition and implementation. Also, specific studies may be requested to include to specific mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues.

There will also be specific emphasis on the participation of governmental and non-governmental counterparts from central and local levels to appropriate training, conferences and seminars on these issues, thus enhancing their awareness and understanding of these issues.

Activities under the TCF will also be aligned to specific EU action plans, for instance as regards gender mainstreaming and human rights.

4 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

4.1 Objectives/results

This programme is relevant for the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. It contributes primarily to the progressive achievement of SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development, but also promotes progress towards SDG 16 of Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. This does not imply a commitment by the country benefiting from this programme.

The overall objective is to facilitate and support the cooperation between the EU and Liberia, notably the successful implementation of programmes and projects under the 11th EDF NIP, including improved awareness amongst the general public.

The project purpose is the identification and implementation of specific interventions that will support key actors in Liberia to improve programme implementation and awareness of general development, trade issues, as well as EU policies in these areas.

4.2 Main activities

The activities, which will be defined during the programme, will be divided in the following two components:

(1) Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) (EUR 500 000): a facility for the engagement of short- to medium-term consultants to assist in the main stages of the project cycle to ensure the effective implementation of the NIP and other EDF programmes in support of the Agenda for Transformation (AfT). It is proposed that these services be provided by consultants and/or individual experts recruited by or on behalf of the NAO in accordance with EDF procedures. Specific tasks could be (but not necessarily limited to):

- Prepare projects for funding decisions (identification and formulation).
- Undertake short-term studies in support of Liberian counterparts. These will be conducted in the priority sectors of the NIP. Cross-cutting issues will also be included as object of these activities, most notably the mainstreaming of gender issues into programming and project implementation.
- Short- and medium-term technical assistance to ministries and agencies to establish satisfactory implementation and monitoring of on-going projects, where this cannot be provided for in the projects themselves or other projects.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of on-going and completed projects (evaluation) – only in cases where this is impossible as part of the projects themselves or other projects.
- Perform audits of on-going and completed projects, where this cannot be provided for in the projects themselves or in the interests of rationality.

(2) Visibility, information, communication and engagement (VICE) (EUR 100 000) is to provide support to make the EU-Liberia development cooperation better known where this is not possible through the projects themselves

Specific tasks could be (but not necessarily limited to):

- Organisation of events, e.g. workshops, seminars, roundtables, information sessions, community engagement etc. including the necessary logistics, support staff, venue rental and refreshments
- Design and publication of printed and audio-visual materials e.g. posters, banners, flyers, booklets, stickers, video clips, jingles, radio dramas etc.
- Organisation of project site visits or project presentations including preparatory visits, logistics and catering
- Photographic and video-recording services for the above activities

(3) TSPP – Training Support for Projects & Programmes (EUR 40 000): this will include various actions such as training, seminars, awareness-raising activities prior to or during the formulation of a project or programme. The programme will ensure that equal opportunity and a balanced gender representation is provided in all activities. Specific tasks could be (but not necessarily limited to):

- Organisation of a seminar or workshop to discuss specific EU policy initiatives
- Organisation of a training or workshop of and on-going and completed project or programme – only in cases where this is impossible as part of the projects themselves or other projects.

4.3 Intervention logic

The intervention assumptions are a stable country and a Government of Liberia that remains committed to the reform processes that the EU supports through its 11th EDF NIP. The intervention specifically aims at supporting the implementation of EU-Liberia cooperation. Gaps in terms of capacity in planning, formulation, implementation, etc., identified between Liberian and EU counterparts, will lead to the identification of the specific interventions to be contracted under the EDF. The key of the intervention is to be flexible enough to cater for needs as they arise, as well as that interventions cater to the needs of EU-Liberia cooperation in the context of the 11th EDF NIP.

In light of the inherent flexibility of the TCF, no logical framework has been developed. The main indicators to assess the proposed project are as follows:

- Improved execution on payments and contracts of the EDF in Liberia.
- Successful identification and formulation of new projects and programmes under the 11th EDF NIP.
- Successful evaluation and audit of interventions under the EDF in Liberia.
- Positive feedback from participants through mission - and evaluation reports of participants on trainings/conferences/workshops attended.
- Increased awareness about EU-Liberia development cooperation of stakeholders, beneficiaries, press, and the general public in particular youth

5 IMPLEMENTATION

Both in indirect and direct management, the Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review

procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures affecting the respective countries of operation.

5.1 Financing agreement

In order to implement this action, it is foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country, referred to in Article 17 of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement.

5.2 Indicative implementation period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 4.2 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 60 months from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission’s authorising officer responsible by amending this decision and the relevant contracts and agreements; such amendments to this decision constitute non-substantial amendment in the sense of Article 9(4) of Regulation (EU) 2015/322.

5.3 Implementation of budget support component

N/A.

5.4 Implementation modalities

5.4.1 Procurement (direct management)

Subject in generic terms, if possible	Type (works, supplies, services)	Indicative number of contracts	Indicative trimester of launch of the procedure
Technical assistance	Services	10	Duration of the programme
Visibility, information, communication and engagement	Services	1 or 2	Duration of the programme

5.4.2 Indirect management with the partner country

A part of this action with the objective of implementing component II (TSPP) will be implemented in indirect management with the Government of Liberia in accordance with Article 58(1)(c)(i) of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 according to the following modalities: the Government of Liberia will act as the contracting authority for the procurement and grant procedures. The Commission will control ex ante all the procurement procedures except in cases where programme estimates are applied, under which the Commission applies ex ante control for procurement contracts above EUR 40 000 and may apply ex post control for procurement contracts up to EUR 40 000. The Commission will control ex ante the contracting procedures for all grant contracts.

Payments are executed by the Commission, except in cases where programmes estimates are applied, under which payments are executed by the partner country for ordinary operating costs, direct labour and contracts below EUR 300 000 for procurement and up to EUR 300 000 for grants.

The financial contribution does not cover the ordinary operating costs incurred under the programme estimates.

In accordance with Article 190(2)(b) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 262(3) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 applicable in accordance with Article 36 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323 and Article 19c(1) of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, the partner country shall apply procurement rules of Chapter 3 of Title IV of Part Two of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012. These rules, as well as rules on grant procedures in accordance with Article 193 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 applicable in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323, will be laid down in the financing agreement concluded with the partner country.

5.5 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility in accordance with Article 22(1)(b) of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

5.6 Indicative budget

Module	Amount (EUR)
5.4.1 Procurement (direct management)	600 000
TAF - Technical Assistance Facility- (expertise required including: fees, living allowances and reimbursable expenses), including audits, monitoring and evaluations	500 000
Visibility, information, communication and engagement and similar activities including design, publication, logistics, catering etc.	100 000
5.4.2 Indirect management with the partner country	40 000
Training Support for Projects & Programmes (TSPP): various capacity development interventions such as training, seminars, awareness-raising activities	
5.9 Evaluation , 5.10 Audit (Included in 5.4.1)	N/A
5.11 Communication and visibility (Included in 5.4.1)	N/A
TOTAL	640 000

5.7 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

The contracting authority for this project shall be the relevant representative of the beneficiary country National Authorising Officer.

All activities under the TCF II will be initiated after agreement between the NAO and the EU Delegation.

The activities will be implemented through service contracts following international restricted tender, simplified procedure or framework contract procedure. These will be managed by the EU Delegation on behalf of the NAO.

5.8 Performance monitoring and reporting

Actions financed by this project will be monitored by the NAO and the EU Delegation. The NAO will also ensure day-to-day monitoring and performance tracking of this programme.

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and direct outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators. The report shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

5.9 Evaluation

Having regard to the nature of the action, an evaluation will not be carried out for this action or its components.

5.10 Audit

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

Indicatively, 1 contract for 20 000 EUR shall be concluded, in 2002.

5.11 Communication and visibility

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU.

This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action, to be elaborated at the start of implementation and supported with the budget indicated in section 5.6 above.

In terms of legal obligations on communication and visibility, the measures shall be implemented by the Commission, the partner country, contractors, grant beneficiaries and/or entrusted entities.

Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, the financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

The Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Action shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.

Visibility and communication activities will be integral part of service contracts under the VICE component. Indicatively, 1 or 2 service contracts for the total of EUR 100 000 shall be concluded, throughout the duration of the programme.

6 PRE-CONDITIONS

N/A.