



Brussels, 24.11.2017  
C(2017) 7961 final

**COMMISSION DECISION**

**of 24.11.2017**

**on the Annual Action Programme 2017 in favour of the Republic of Liberia to be  
financed from the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund**

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### on the Annual Action Programme 2017 in favour of the Republic of Liberia to be financed from the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union

Having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2015/322 of 2 March 2015 on the implementation of the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund<sup>1</sup>, and in particular Article 9(1) thereof,

Having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2015/323 of 2 March 2015 on the financial regulation applicable to the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund<sup>2</sup>, and in particular Article 26 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) The Commission has adopted the National Indicative Programme for the Republic of Liberia for the period 2014-2020<sup>3</sup>, which provides for the following priorities: the first focal sector "good governance" will contribute to Liberia's Agenda for Transformation objectives of wealth creation and increased inclusiveness for a more equal and just society; the third focal sector "education" will ensure equal access to a high-quality free and compulsory basic education and to a variety of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Skill Development opportunities that lead to an improved livelihood.
- (2) The objectives pursued by the annual action programme to be financed under the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF) Internal Agreement<sup>4</sup> ("Internal Agreement") are to eradicate poverty, promote sustainable and inclusive growth, and consolidate and improve democratic and economic governance. To do so it will strengthen macroeconomic stability and Public Finance Management system in view to improve the delivery of public services and public investment. It also aims to enable Liberian youth to respond to economic growth opportunities by increasing their employability and entrepreneurship potential through strengthening the TVET sector. To achieve the objectives of the four focal sectors of the National Indicative Programme (NIP) the present Annual Action Programme will support Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in order that they adequately play their role in view to strengthen governance in those sectors.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 58, 3.3.2015, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 58, 3.3.2015, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Commission decision on the adoption of the National Indicative Programme for the Republic of Liberia (2014-2020) C(2015) 1267 final of 26.2.2015.

<sup>4</sup> Internal Agreement between the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the European Union, meeting within the Council, on the financing of European Union aid under the multiannual financial framework for the period 2014 to 2020, in accordance with the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, and on the allocation of financial assistance for the Overseas Countries and Territories to which Part Four of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union applies (OJ L 210, 6.8.2013, p. 1).

- (3) The action entitled "European State building contract II (SBC II)": Moving Liberia forward – Improving service delivery and public investment will aim to improve governance, public finance management, the budget process, transparency and accountability of public service delivery in view of increasing public and private investment. The action will be implemented through budget support, direct management and indirect management with the World Bank.
- (4) The action entitled "Youth Rising - EU Support to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for Young People in Liberia" will enable Liberian youth to respond to economic growth opportunities by increasing their employability and entrepreneurship potential through strengthening the TVET sector. The action will be implemented through indirect management with the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation.
- (5) The action entitled "Civil Society Initiative (CSI)" will enable CSOs to adequately play their role in view to strengthen governance in the NIPs focal sectors. It will be implemented through direct management, grant direct award, with non-governmental organisations.
- (6) The action entitled "Technical Cooperation Facility" will facilitate and support the cooperation between the EU and Liberia, notably the successful implementation of programmes and projects under the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund - National Indicative Programme (NIP). It will be implemented through direct management and indirect management with the partner country.
- (7) The envisaged assistance to Liberia is deemed to strictly follow the conditions and procedures set out by the restrictive measures concerning the said country.
- (8) It is necessary to adopt a financing decision the detailed rules of which are set out in Article 94 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012<sup>5</sup>, applicable in accordance with Article 2(1) and Article 26 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323.
- (9) It is necessary to adopt a work programme for grants in accordance with Article 128(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 188(1) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 applicable in accordance with Article 2(1) and Article 37(1) of Regulation (EU) 2015/323. The work programme is set out in Annex 3.
- (10) The Commission should entrust budget-implementation tasks under indirect management to the entities specified in the Annexes 1 and 2 to this Decision, subject to the conclusion of delegation agreements In accordance with Article 60(1)(c) and (2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 applicable in accordance with Article 2(1) and Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323, the authorising officer responsible needs to ensure that these entities guarantee a level of protection of the financial interests of the European Union equivalent to that required when the Commission manages European Union funds. These entities comply with the conditions set out in points (a) to (d) of the first subparagraph of Article 60 (2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and the supervisory and support measures are in place as necessary.
- (11) The Commission should entrust budget-implementation tasks under indirect management to the partner country specified in the Annex 4 to this Decision, subject to the conclusion of a financing agreement. In accordance with Article 60(1)(c) of

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<sup>5</sup> Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 of 29 October 2012 on the rules of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L 362, 31.12.2012, p. 1).

Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 applicable in accordance with Article 2(1) and Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323, the authorising officer responsible needs to ensure that measures are taken to supervise and support the implementation of the entrusted tasks. A description of those measures and the entrusted tasks are laid down in Annex 4 to this Decision.

- (12) The authorising officer responsible should be able to award grants without a call for proposals only in the exceptional cases set out in Article 190 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, applicable in accordance with Article 2(1) and Article 37(1) of Regulation (EU) 2015/323.
- (13) It is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 92 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 111(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, applicable in accordance with Article 2(1) and Article 29(1) of Regulation (EU) 2015/323.
- (14) Pursuant to Article 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, applicable in accordance with Article 2(1) and Article 26 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323, any substantial change to a financing decision that has already been adopted should follow the same procedure as the initial decision. It is therefore appropriate that the Commission defines the changes to this Decision that are considered non-substantial in order to ensure that any such changes can be adopted by the authorising officer responsible.
- (15) The measures provided for in this Decision is/are in accordance with the opinion of the EDF Committee established under Article 8 of the Internal Agreement.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

#### *Article 1*

##### **Adoption of the programme**

The Commission Decision on the annual action programme 2017 in favour of the Republic of Liberia to be financed from the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund as set out in the Annexes, is adopted.

The programme shall include the following action:

- Annex 1: State building contract II (SBC II): Moving Liberia forward – Improving service delivery and public investment;
- Annex 2: Youth Rising - EU Support to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for Young People in Liberia;
- Annex 3: Civil Society Initiative (CSI);
- Annex 4 : Technical Cooperation Facility II.

#### *Article 2*

##### **Financial contribution**

The maximum contribution of the European Union for the implementation of the programme referred to in Article 1 is set at EUR 51 640 000 and shall be financed from the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund.

The financial contribution provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

### *Article 3*

#### **Methods of implementation**

Budget-implementation tasks under indirect management may be entrusted to the entities identified in the Annexes 1, 2 and 4, subject to the conclusion of the relevant agreements.

The elements required by Article 94(2) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 applicable in accordance with Article 2(1) and Article 26 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323, are set out in the Annexes to this Decision.

Grants may be awarded without a call for proposals by the authorising officer responsible in accordance with Article 190 of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, applicable in accordance with Article 2(1) and Article 37(1) of Regulation (EU) 2015/323.

### *Article 4*

#### **Non-substantial changes**

Increases or decreases of up to EUR 10 million not exceeding 20 % of the contribution set in the first paragraph of Article 2, or cumulated changes to the allocations of specific actions not exceeding 20 % of that contribution, as well as extensions of the implementation period shall not be considered substantial within the meaning of Article 94(4) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012, applicable in accordance with Article 2(1) and Article 26 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323, provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objectives of the actions. The use of contingencies shall be taken into account in the ceiling set by this Article.

The authorising officer responsible may adopt such non-substantial changes in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 24.11.2017

*For the Commission*  
*Neven Mimica*

*Member of the Commission*