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LIBERIA LAND CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROJECT (LCRP)

PROJECT IMPACT ASSESSMENT: BASELINE REPORT

MARCH 2013

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
GoL	Government of Liberia
IA	Impact Assessment
LC	Land Commission
LCRP	Land Conflict Resolution Project
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PLACE IQC	Prosperity, Livelihood and Conserving Ecosystems Indefinite Quantity Contract
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

INTRODUCTION

The Land Conflict Resolution Project (LCRP) aims to improve land administration, tenure security and resolve land disputes using Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in rural Liberia. One of LCRP's main objectives is to work closely with the Government of Liberia (GoL) to achieve its goals. Through a collaborative process, LCRP proposes to:

1. Support clan-level alternative dispute resolution activities;
2. Assist the Government of Liberia's Land Commission (LC) in public education and outreach on its activities;
3. Establish property rights inventories (also known as helping local communities create maps of their understanding of tenure arrangements) so that this information can be used in the ADR of land disputes; and
4. Assist the LC in promoting ADR such that it is accepted at the national level.

Part of LCRP's strategy for realizing its objectives is to carefully document, monitor, evaluate, and assess its programming in order to understand the potential impacts of the project and generate concrete lessons learned for the GoL. As part of this objective, LCRP is conducting an impact assessment (IA) of its program with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). The IA hopes to help answer questions about the impact of LCRP's ADR activities; education and outreach activities; and its property rights inventories on individuals and communities, including the effect on practices and views of dispute resolution and land administration. This final report presents the first stage of the impact assessment: a baseline survey of communities in the LCRP's area of intervention in Lofa and Nimba Counties. The baseline survey included almost over 1,000 individuals living in areas where the LCRP will conduct programming and areas where the LCRP hopes to conduct programming in the future. Key preliminary findings from the baseline survey include:

- Survey data reveals that Lofa and Nimba Counties have different land ownership patterns, but similar land conflict dynamics;
- Administrative authorities are more engaged by community members in Nimba than in Lofa County where traditional landlords play a greater role;
- Land users in Nimba report larger farms and possess more documentation for their land;
- In communities from both counties included in the baseline, informal mechanisms, including family, friends, neighbors, and elders play an important role in conflict resolution;
- Land disputes continue to erupt into violence and generate fears of future violence in both Lofa and Nimba Counties; and
- Qualitative work shows that community members and leaders welcome education and outreach activities and the inter-ethnic conflict, while less prevalent according to survey data, still presents a concern to the general public.

The IA team collected data in three communities where the LCRP conducted public education and outreach activities, including observations of ongoing program activities and five one-on-one semi-constructed interviews in each site. Qualitative data provides insight into the findings from the quantitative data. Semi-constructed open interviews also provide feedback on the on-going LCRP activities. Interviews included perspectives on women's access to property rights, the role of informal and traditional leaders in land dispute resolution, and the position of minority groups.

Section 1.0 of this final report briefly outlines the methodology used in the quantitative and qualitative data collection. Section 2.0 reports on the findings from the baseline survey on attitudes and norms towards community leadership and land administration in the community. It builds on the data presented in the midterm report (see Appendix B), paying special attention to the differences between Lofa and Nimba Counties, the two sites of data collection. Section 3.0 explores the information gathered on existing land disputes in the community, their nature, and current strategies for dispute resolution. Section 4.0 explores the qualitative data. Section 5.0 provides suggestions for next steps in the IA and conclusions. The tables referenced throughout this document are found in Appendix A.

1.0 QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

Baseline data is an essential component to a rigorous impact assessment of program outcomes. Assessing indicators of program outcomes prior to the start of a project permits an assessment of the effect of the program regardless of other political, social, and environmental changes over time. The baseline survey instrument included a range of topics, including land administration, leadership and dispute resolution, and land dispute dynamics. In each community, the impact assessment (IA) team interviewed a random sample of community members in order to get an understanding of the issues in each community as representative as possible. The IA team worked with community leaders to conduct a participatory selection process for inclusion in the survey process in each community visited.

To conduct the participatory random sampling process, the IA team first met with town leadership in the community. The team explained the exercise to the leadership and asked for permission and guidance. If permission was granted, the IA team asked the leadership to identify a chief or leader from each of the quarters or neighborhoods in the town. A key finding during this process was that not all towns had quarter divisions. This suggests that making programming decisions based on quarters would not necessarily work in some communities and that other geo-spatial structures should be considered as units of analysis. Once representatives from each quarter or neighborhood were present, the IA team asked them to identify the size of their areas from smallest to largest. Since this can be a conceptually challenging process, the IA used piles of small stones to represent each quarter and had the leaders collaboratively allocate the stones to represent the quarters from smallest to largest.

Once all the leaders agreed on the relative size of each quarter, the IA team assigned the number of interviews to each quarter based on relative size. In order to capture the perspective of vulnerable groups (those who might be adversely affected by land disputes), the IA team also consulted the community leaders about where members of these groups lived and made sure that interviews were allocated to the quarters where these households were located so that they were included in the sample. When IA team and the community leadership completed this process, a leader from each quarter and part of the IA team selected the households from each quarter.

To select households in the quarter, the IA team and the community leadership identified all the paths within the quarter and then randomly picked one (this process is known as “lucky ticket” in Liberia). The community leader and the IA team members then counted all the households along the path. To create the interval for household selection, the IA team and the community leaders divided the total number of houses on the randomly selected path by the number of households to be interviewed in that quarter. The IA team and the community leaders then walked the entire length of the path again, counting off this number, or interval, to select each household for inclusion. When a household was selected, members of the IA team made an appointment with the head of the household or his or her representative for an interview.

One of the key findings that came out down the interviewee selection process was that while many Liberians refer to quarters in their communities, the word “quarter” means different things in different communities. Quarter is often interpreted to mean a geographically defined neighborhood with a specific historical, familial history in some communities. In some communities, members of the same

quarter talk about sharing a “taboo” with other quarter members, but do not necessarily live in a defined geographic area together. As mentioned above, in some cases, the word “quarter” may not be used. A shared “taboo” often refers to a specific food (such as certain kinds of game that live in the forest near the community) that individuals that share that taboo do not eat (and if they do eat it, they describe physical or spiritual consequences). In communities where the definition of quarter membership aligned more closely with shared taboos as opposed to geographically defined neighborhoods, selecting interviewees using quarters became challenging. In these cases, as mentioned above, the IA team divided the communities into geographic zones or neighborhoods instead.

As mentioned in the last baseline assessment report, another issue that arose during the survey process was that some ethnic groups have still not returned to their pre-war settlement patterns since the end of the Liberian civil war. This is particularly in certain parts of Lofa County where the IA team conducted the survey. While geographically defined quarters may have existed before the war (or not, depending on the community), the community members now often live in ethnically segregated neighborhoods that do not easily correspond to the older concept of the quarter system. In these cases, selecting respondents using the quarter as a unit of analysis was not appropriate and could even cause problems. In this case, the IA team (in collaboration with community leadership from all ethnic and social groups) divided the community in zones in order to select the interviewees.

Using this random interviewee selection process, the IA team selected over 1,000 individuals to participate in the baseline survey. The average age of individuals asked to participate was 45 years old, and 31 percent of those selected were women. The average interviewee had 5.5 years of education and had been born in the town where he or she currently resided. A total of 34 percent of the sample identifies themselves as members of the Lorma ethnic group, 28 percent as Mano, 15 percent as Gio, 12 percent as Kpelle, and 6 percent as Mandingo. On average, respondents had 1.5 years more of education in Nimba County than in Lofa County. Given that survey aimed to speak with the heads of households or a representative of the heads, in order to gather information about all the land and property used by that household, the gender balance and average age are in line with expectations. Of individuals interviewed, 63 percent stated that agriculture was their primary occupation. The average household income for interviewees per month was \$52.20. A majority of the individuals who participated had been displaced during the Liberian civil war; almost two-thirds of respondents stated that during the war their house had been destroyed. However, the war experience was different in Lofa and Nimba Counties: in Lofa County, respondents were much more likely to have been refugees compared with respondents in Nimba County. (See Table 1.)

2.0 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND LAND ADMINISTRATION

Given the activities proposed for the Land Conflict Resolution Project (LCRP), a key focus of the baseline survey was community leadership and land administration in the community. The IA team gathered information on both the actual practices in the community, as well as opinions, attitudes, and views about these practices in both Nimba and Lofa Counties. Education and outreach activities, as well as Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) training, may aim to shift some of these practices and attitudes during the LCRP or to empower local leaders with information about land administration processes. By understanding the baseline levels of attitudes and practices, the IA aims to capture how the LCRP's activities may change the status quo over time.

2.1 COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Perceptions of community leadership are an important baseline characteristic of the areas where LCRP aims to roll out its intervention. Community leaders are involved in many aspects of land administration and dispute resolution process and their relationship with community residents can shape how information and outreach campaigns reach individuals and households in the areas of Lofa and Nimba where the LCRP will take place. For example, the current relationship between community residents and different community authorities could inform whether empowering those leaders to work on land disputes would be an effective intervention. Qualitative data (discussed below) suggests that leaders are keen to intervene in land disputes and that traditional leaders see themselves as playing a key role in both land dispute resolution and land administration.

A majority of community members felt that they understood how community leaders made decisions in their community (77 percent), with a slightly higher percentage agreeing that they could understand how decisions were made in the communities included in the survey in Nimba County. Of those interviewed, 72 percent felt that they actually had a voice in how these decisions were made, suggesting that many individuals in the communities do really feel that they participate in leadership in the community (again, community members felt that they had more of a voice in communities in Nimba County). A large majority felt that they had access to a fair judgment in the town (85 percent). (See Table 2.) While these levels are high, there is still room for improvement in terms of satisfaction and increased participation in community decision making. Particularly in Lofa County, where there may be more to be done to encourage an open and frank relationship between leaders and community members.

As Liberia transitions from the post-conflict period to focusing on future economic development, corruption has emerged as a factor that can shape and influence local politics. With the exception of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), around 30 percent of community members felt that various leaders and decision makers (including the traditional leaders, the courts, and police) were corrupt. Respondents reported that corruption was more of a problem in Lofa County, especially for traditional leaders and the courts. Interviewees were split over whether leaders favored specific ethnic groups over others—42 percent of residents felt that the courts discriminated against specific religious or

ethnic groups. (See Table 2.) This finding was backed up by qualitative data, especially from members of minority groups, who stated that they felt the court system often delayed cases they brought because of their ethnic identity.

On average, the differences on in the perceptions of the relationship between community members and community leadership did not differ significantly between Lofa and Nimba County, with attitudes towards leaders tending slightly more positive in Nimba than in Lofa County.

2.2 LAND ADMINISTRATION

In both Nimba and Lofa Counties, respondents identified traditional authorities as the most important in land administration. However, depending on the county, respondents identified slightly different traditional authorities. In Nimba, 14 percent of respondents named a traditional landlord as the most important authority involved in land administration. In Lofa, in contrast, 58 percent of respondents identified the traditional landlord as the most important authority. Of respondents in Nimba, 8 percent identified administrative authorities as important in land administration. In Lofa, no one named administrative authorities. (See Table 3.) When asked about what factor mattered most in gaining access to land, 60 percent of respondent in both counties stated that being a good citizen was the most important.

The baseline survey also asked about access to land for potentially vulnerable groups. These included women, as well as members of minority groups resident in a particular community and non-Liberians resident in Liberian communities. Of those interviewed, 47 percent stated that they knew a woman in the community who owned a deeded property. As mentioned in the previous IA report, it is important to note that this does not mean that 47 percent of women own deeded property in the community. Indeed, fieldwork suggests that this is certainly not the case and the very low levels of interviewees who stated that they had documents for their land confirms this. Rather, this means that 47 percent of the respondents could identify a woman with a deed (within each community, this could have been the same woman). Comparing Lofa and Nimba Counties, respondents in Nimba were more likely to know women who owned property with documentation than in Lofa.

On the question of equal rights for minorities, interviewees were divided: on average, 69 percent of individuals felt that minorities did have equal rights. (See Table 4). The division is stronger in Lofa County, where only 58 percent of interviewees stated that members of minority groups had equal rights and where only 42 percent of respondents stated that minorities from within Liberia owned land in their community with documentation (compared with 56 percent of respondents in Nimba County). Overall, vulnerable groups still struggle to access land. The baseline survey and qualitative work suggest that special attention should be made in creating dialogue between vulnerable groups and community leadership in order to secure their property rights.

2.3 TOWN LAND

The baseline survey covers different types of property, including land within the villages where individuals often have a primary residence (in addition to residences on their farms that are farther away from town, often known as “kitchens” in Liberian English). For housing within the village, 61 percent of community members acquired their rights through inheritance. In Nimba, requesting town land through an administrative authority is more common (10 percent of respondents) compared to Lofa (1 percent of respondents), whereas requesting town land from a traditional authority is more common in Lofa (23 percent) compared with Nimba (11 percent) (see Table 5). A total of 83 percent of community members stated that a member of their immediate family or their household “owned” their house (see Table 6).

In addition to town land with residential structures, the baseline survey also covered lands in the town used for farming or gardening purposes. Of those interviewed, 19 percent of community members responded that in addition to their houses, they planted gardens within the town (12 percent in the communities covered in Nimba County and 25 percent in Lofa). These gardens are administered

through similar systems to residential property in the town. Of those interviewed, 60 percent of communities stated that they acquired rights to their garden through inheritance and over 90 percent of the gardens were “owned” through a family member (see Tables 8 and 9). A total of 74 percent of households with gardens in town state that they are planting crops in their gardens this season, and 60 percent stated that they were going to sell crops from their garden. Very few interviewees in Lofa stated that they had deeds for their gardens (5 percent). While the proportion of respondents in Nimba County was also low (19 percent of respondents with gardens in the communities stated they had documents), this difference is part of a larger trend of more documentation in Nimba compared with Lofa.

Overall, community members did not feel insecure about their future access to their town gardens (see Table 10). The high numbers of people using town land for gardening, both to grow their own food and to sell crops for cash, is an important finding, especially since much of this land is used (“owned”) informally. Future land administration reform will need to address how this land should be managed.

2.4 FARM LAND

Of the community members interviewed during the baseline survey, 90 percent have at least one area where they are farming. In Nimba County, individuals who state that they know the size of their farms report farms with an average size of 110 acres compared with 23 acres in Lofa County. Part of this difference could be the result in the number of individuals who state they do not know the size of their farms in Lofa (39 percent) compared with individuals in communities surveyed in Nimba (15 percent). Nevertheless, the reported farm size in Nimba is surprising and bears further research. Of community members interviewed, 69 percent stated that they acquired their farmland through family inheritance (compared with 12 percent who stated that they acquired their land by either requesting it or buying it from traditional authorities) (see Table 11). The survey found that 86 percent of respondents reported that they or someone from their household owned their first farm.

A majority of respondents stated that they were cultivating their first farmland this year, but less than half stated that they planned to sell crops from their farms. This suggests that a relatively high proportion of individuals in this area do not engage in commercial agricultural and instead eat or trade what they grow (while selling vegetables grown on their town gardens for cash). Of community members interviewed, 16 percent stated that individuals considered outsiders to their community (“strangers”) worked on their farms with them. Importantly, this proportion of respondents is the same in both Lofa and Nimba Counties. Similar to residential and town properties, there is a sizeable difference between the two counties in terms of documentation for land. In Nimba County, 44 percent of individuals interviewed stated that they had documents for their farmland, compared with only 5 percent in Lofa County. At the same time, 24 percent of respondents in Nimba County feel insecure about their property rights, compared with only 16 percent in Lofa County. (See Table 13). A total of 13 percent of individuals reported a land dispute on their farmland (16 percent in Nimba County and 10 percent in Lofa County).

3.0 LAND DISPUTES AND LAND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

An important proportion of household heads interviewed for this survey responded that they had current or recent disputes on their property: 17 percent (187) persons stated they had a land dispute. For each dispute, the baseline survey collected information on the nature of the dispute and some of dispute resolution dynamics and how they are similar and different in Lofa and Nimba Counties (see Table 14).

3.1 LAND DISPUTES

The most common types of land disputes reported during the IA baseline survey were over farmland (55 percent). However, disputes over town land were also common (27 percent of all disputes occurred over town land). Disputes over town gardens and farm land or town land in another community were also reported, but were comparatively rare (see Table 14).

Encroachment is the most common type of land dispute described by survey respondents. The baseline study found that 46 percent and 32 percent of respondents in Nimba and Lofa Counties, respectively, stated that their disputes involved encroachment on their land. In Nimba County, disputes over boundaries were the next most common type of dispute (32 percent of respondents). In Lofa County, respondents reported disputes over ownership as the second-most common type of land dispute (26 percent). Disputes over inheritance were also reported (9 percent in Lofa and 7 percent in Nimba), as well as disputes over squatting (2 percent in Nimba and 5 percent in Lofa) (see Table 15).

The majority of disputes took place between individuals who lived in the same town, but who were not from the same family (43 percent). However, a sizeable portion of disputes (27 percent) took place between members of extended or immediate family. These patterns hold for respondents in both Lofa and Nimba Counties. Only 16 percent of disputes were between members of different ethnic groups, with 22 percent of disputants reporting interethnic disputes in Lofa compared with 11 percent of disputes in Nimba. This supports the finding that many land disputes in Liberia take place between members of the same ethnic group (see Table 16). The wide difference between counties is a bit surprising and suggests that inter-ethnic disputes in Lofa may require special attention from the Land Commission and other stakeholders.

The majority of recent or on-going disputes in the communities included in the baseline survey started after the Liberian civil war ended in 2003. Although the patterns were similar for both Nimba and Lofa Counties, slightly more of the disputes reported in Nimba started before or during the Liberian civil war. For 41 percent of the disputes, the interviewees stated that they started a short time ago (see Table 17).

Community members interviewed for the baseline survey who stated that they had a recent or on-going land dispute reported high rates of violence associated with their dispute. The patterns of violence differed slightly in Lofa and Nimba Counties. Of those who stated that they were currently involved in a land dispute, 23 percent said that the dispute had led to the destruction of property in Lofa County compared with 12 percent in Nimba County. In contrast, 52 percent of disputants in Nimba County stated that insults or verbal abuse had resulted from their land dispute. In 38 percent of cases, respondents reported threats of violence in the dispute in Nimba, compared with 26 percent in

Lofa. A total of 13 percent of respondents reported actual physical violence (the same for both counties). Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the relatively higher rates of threats and verbal abuse in Nimba County, 70 percent of respondents with a dispute stated that they feared there would be violence in the future as a result of their land dispute in Nimba, compared with only 47 percent in Lofa. In both counties, violence remains a pervasive factor in land disputes (see Table 18).

3.2 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

In addition to information on the land disputes themselves, the baseline data also includes information on land dispute resolution, either on-going or recently finished. Almost all of the respondents interviewed had sought help to resolve their land dispute in at least one place. The places people sought help were varied: respondents listed 15 different places where they sought help with their land disputes. On average, the first remedy that individuals sought for their land disputes was the help of family and friends (25 percent of respondents in Nimba and 21 percent in Lofa stated this was the first place that they took their dispute). The second-most common place was the elders in Nimba and the town chief in Lofa (21 percent for each of these places in each county, respectively). In Nimba, respondents also went to other traditional authorities, while in Lofa, respondents identified the town landlord as a place to resolve their disputes. Very few individuals sought help from either statutory or administrative authorities as the first remedy to their land dispute. About half of the individuals who brought their dispute one of these authorities first were satisfied with the first remedy (see Table 19).

Slightly less than 30 percent of respondents had already sought help from a second remedy to their dispute. The most common second place where disputants sought help with their disputes was the Magistrate's court in Lofa (37 percent) and the district government officials in Nimba (24 percent). This difference between the counties may have to do with the individuals currently in place at the district level and also in the court. In Nimba, following the district government, the county Land Commissioner, the Magistrate's court, other authorities, and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) were the next-most popular remedies for land disputes. In Lofa, respondents stated that family friends and neighbors, as well as the NRC, were the most common second remedies they sought to their land dispute. Overall, the baseline survey data suggest that there are important differences in the relative popularity/important of different authorities in resolving land disputes between these two counties. (See Table 20). This suggests that local preferences matter in land dispute resolution.

At the time of the IA baseline survey, 50 percent of the individuals interviewed stated that their land dispute was resolved. In both Nimba and Lofa Counties, family friends and neighbors were the most common type of authority reported to have resolved the dispute (28 percent). In Lofa, the traditional landlord (16 percent), the NRC land dispute resolution program, and the elders (13 percent each) are the second- and third-most popular dispute resolution forums. In Nimba, the village elders (21 percent) and the town chief (18 percent) were the second- and third-most common forums for dispute resolution. Despite the high levels of individuals who engaged the Magistrate's court and the district administrative authorities as the second authority in the dispute resolution process, it is worth noting that very few individuals actually reported that these authorities resolved their dispute (4 percent reported that the magistrate's court did so and no one reported that the district authorities resolved their dispute). For individuals who felt that their land disputes had been successfully resolved, 88 percent of interviewees stated that they were satisfied with the current resolution of the dispute. For individuals involved in land disputes (both ongoing and recently solved), only 50 percent reported feeling satisfied with the overall interventions in their disputes thus far (See Table 21).

3.3 LAND DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROGRAMMING

During the first round of IA data collection, we asked initial questions aimed to capture current exposure to dispute resolution programming. Further questions about actual LCRP programming must wait until the program itself has rolled out. These preliminary questions found that a sizeable proportion of respondents used radio programs as a way to find out about land administration issues (85 percent in Nimba compared with 66 percent in Lofa). Although many respondents answered affirmatively that they had heard about the land coordination centers rolled out by the Land

Commission, very few respondents had visited the one active coordination center at the time of the survey, in Zorzor District, Lofa County. Similarly, while between one-fifth and one-third of respondents had heard about the tribal certificate inventory activities carried out in Lofa and Maryland Counties, it is perhaps unsurprising that few individuals had actually participated in this activity (given that in Nimba County, at least, no inventory had yet been held). Respondents were almost in unanimous favor of future land administration programming, including further documentation of land and surveying activities, as well as peace education and medication skills training for village leadership (See Table 22).

4.0 QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

Coordination with government land administration activities delayed LCRP program rollout and limited the qualitative data collection that took place before the writing of this Final IA Baseline Report. Qualitative data was collected in two locations in Bong County, as well as one location in Margibi County where preliminary LCRP program activities took place. Qualitative researchers visited the sites for initial education and outreach program activities. Researchers participated in and observed the activities and spoke with a range individuals involved in order to explore their experience with both the LCRP activities and also their personal experience with land administration and land disputes.

Further qualitative work would help to confirm or expand on the current findings. However, despite the small sample size, the initial qualitative data suggests that community members ranging from women, members of minority tribes and youth support the kinds of information and awareness raising activities that the LCRP sponsors. As one traditional leader put it:

Everyone knows that my district in Bong County is one of the districts that is always having land disputes among its citizens because we have not had education on land issues and this is why are always in conflict...this makes this activity important for this community. (Traditional Leader, November 2012, Bong County)

Other respondents stated that they thought the information activities should be carried out in every district in Liberia and that this would have a positive effect on land disputes.

Qualitative data also provides information on key aspects of land disputes that future LCRP dispute resolution programming should take into account. First, as one woman respondent explained, some traditional leaders still feel that women do not have the same rights as men. Especially in more rural areas, such practices may be pervasive. This is supported by the baseline survey data, which finds that women are less likely to own land or have documents for land if they do have ownership. It is up to the Liberian government to decide whether women's land ownership is a priority for future programming and whether land dispute resolution programming should actively try to change norms around women's land ownership.

Second, interviews provide further detail on the role of traditional leaders in land disputes (despite the fact that these leaders might not recognize women's rights, as one woman respondent pointed out). The prominence of informal dispute resolution mechanisms and the strength of traditional leaders is well documented in the baseline survey data. Dissatisfaction with how disputes over land are handled in the court system appear to contribute to this feeling; all respondents stated that they had not had success with solving their disputes in court. Both community members and traditional leaders themselves explained during qualitative interviews that their unwritten knowledge of land ownership and rights is essential to current land administration systems in Liberia, even in regions like Bong County which are less rural than places in Lofa and Nimba covered in the baseline survey. One market lady explained how elders and other traditional leaders were able to intervene successfully in her land dispute because they knew the history of land ownership in the area. Traditional leaders see the benefits of technical interventions, but also see a role for themselves:

Survey or demarcation should be done whenever a dispute has been reported to Government or NGOs...I also think to resolve land disputes elders, Zoes and the

chiefs need to be involved because we are the keepers of the land (Traditional Leader, November 2012, Bong County)

Third, interviews suggest that minority groups in particular still struggle to access their rights and remedies to dispute resolution. Participants from different ethnic backgrounds suggested that ethnic diversity and “many ethnic groups living together” created the conditions for land conflict. This is an interesting finding, considering that the survey shows that many land disputes actually take place between members of the same ethnic group. At the same time, inter-ethnic disputes may have specific characteristics that make them difficult to resolve. A qualitative interview with a member of the Mandingo ethnic group demonstrates the problems with the formal court system that minorities have. (This matches the finding in the baseline data where almost no disputant found a final resolution to their conflict in the court system.) During this interview, the respondent claimed that his family had owned many lands in the area before the war, but that following their return from displacement during the Liberian civil war, they had not been able to regain access to their land. When they went to court with their documents, the court had stalled and refused to return a decision in the case. The respondent felt that this was because the judge and other court officials were from the majority ethnic group in the area. Despite the clear statutory merit of his case and his documentation, the court delayed their ruling to avoid going against their co-ethnics. In another qualitative interview in a different location, a similar narrative about a land dispute was reported.

Whether discrimination on the basis of ethnic identity is taking place (as the respondents in the qualitative interviews asserted) or not, the role of ethnic identity and how to successfully deal with disputes that pit one ethnic group against another and reengage social cleavages that were salient during the Liberian civil war remains an important part of future dispute resolution programming.

Fourth, interviewees suggest that education and outreach program participants took several lessons. Some respondents suggested that people with documents should have stronger claims to land. Recognizing the importance of written documentation, interviewees stated that the Liberian government could help individuals recover documents lost during the Liberian civil war and that this would go a long way toward helping resolve land disputes.

This type of argument appeared more common in urban areas, where documents are common. Another key concept was the importance of tribal certificates. Strong support for tribal certificate registration also came up in several interviews. In Kakata, one participant stated:

Other people have been telling us that the issue of tribal certificates were not that important when it comes to land ownership, now we have understood that people must take their certificates to the Land Commission registration. This means that our certificates are important. (Youth, November 2012, Margibi County)

In addition, participants spoke about the problems that “double-selling” land creates and suggested that the government enforce stiff penalties for selling land to more than one person (long jail sentences and fines were both suggested).

Continued qualitative data collection during LCRP activities will provide additional feedback on the perceptions of the information and awareness activities, as well dispute resolution activities that LCRP undertakes. In the future, qualitative data can provide further information on sensitive topics such as women’s land rights and the position of minority groups and how best to support these groups rights.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The IA provides the LCRP the means to evaluate its activities and impacts rigorously through systematic program rollout and data collection and analysis. At the same time, it gives key information on the areas where program implementation is currently ongoing. This report focuses on the baseline survey, which provides the foundation for future rounds of data collection and a rigorous evaluation of project impact, as well as qualitative data, which gives a more complex picture of both the situation in implementation communities and helps to explain survey data.

We present several key findings from the baseline survey data in Lofa and Nimba Counties, as well as the qualitative data in Margibi and Bong Counties.

First, survey data reveals that Lofa and Nimba Counties have different land ownership patterns, but similar land conflict dynamics. In particular, Nimbans report much larger amounts of farmers, higher levels of documentation for their land, and higher levels of tenure insecurity than in Lofa. Program impacts (for example, increases in land documentation) should be measured against the pre-program levels, which the survey reveals to be different in different locations in Liberia.

The survey also highlights that land usage patterns, while consistent across both counties, are interesting to note. For example, the high numbers of people that report using town land for gardening, both to grow their own food and to sell crops for cash, is an important finding, especially since much of this land is used (“owned”) informally. Although roughly one-in-five respondents reported having a paper for their town gardens in Nimba, very few respondents reported documentation in Lofa. Given its importance, future land administration reform will need to address how this land should be managed.

Second, differences in land ownership are part of far wider differences between the two counties that include the engagement of local leaders, in land administration, dispute resolution, and rights of different social groups. We found that administrative authorities are more engaged by community members in Nimba than in Lofa County. As we noted in the first IA report, traditional landlords play a greater role. In addition, respondents in Nimba reported higher levels of integration of minority groups and women. Although traditional leaders and elders still play a very important role, accessible, centralized, and more inclusive administrative structures are more prevalent in Nimba. Overall, data on land administration and dispute resolution suggest that respondents have preferences that reflect their local institutions and their local preferences.

Third, land disputes continue to erupt into violence and generate fears of future violence in both Lofa and Nimba Counties. While more individuals report land disputes in Nimba, the level of violence is also high Lofa, as are inter-ethnic disputes. This underlines the importance of the work that LCRP has undertaken. It also draws attention to the fact that the relationship between different groups remains an issue. A smaller proportion of reported land disputes are inter-ethnic; yet during qualitative issues, people raise the issue of disputes between ethnic groups as being an important conflict dynamic. Similarly, questions about whether certain groups have rights in the community reveals that many consider non-indigenous groups to a particular community to have fewer rights. At the same time, 15 percent of people report that they have “strangers” or outsiders working on their land, which is quite high. This raises the questions of the rights of these individuals, both in the short term as temporary workers, and in the longer term, as they become part of the community.

5.1 NEXT STEPS

This baseline reports suggests many areas where we might expect to see impacts from the LCRP, including land administration, dispute resolution, the inclusion of vulnerable groups, and usage of documentation. As we mentioned in the previous IA report, education and outreach activities may

change individuals' perceptions about the leaders who have the most authority over land administration. It may increase the number of documents that individuals have for their land (depending on the timeline of land reform) and it may change which authorities that are involved in land dispute resolution, what order individuals seek help from these authorities, and their levels of satisfaction. We find from qualitative data collection that individuals and leaders are open to the program and believe that information and outreach should manage land disputes.

Moving forward to the future of the IA, we want to stress that data collection in both areas where the LCRP programming takes place and in comparison areas will allow the IA to capture these impacts and provided detailed feedback to the Government of Liberia (GoL) and partners on strategies for ADR, education and outreach, and property rights inventories throughout Liberia. Therefore, maintaining a distinction between program areas and where to serve as comparison areas (at least in the short term) is essential. Any changes to programming roll out should be communicated and worked into any future IA plans.

APPENDIX A: TABLES

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Interviewees				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Age	45.24	46.40	44.14	1,064
Married	79%	85%	73%	1,080
Widow	7%	5%	9%	1,080
Female	31%	24%	37%	1,080
Years of education	5.48	6.87	4.31	1,064
Lives in town of birth	74%	74%	75%	1,064
Were you displaced inside Liberia during the war?	57%	54%	61%	1,059
Duration IDP (years)	3.90	3.30	4.37	584
Were you a refugee outside Liberia during the war?	48%	18%	74%	1,057
Duration Refugee (years)	6.15	3.20	6.76	494

Table 2: Perceptions of Leadership				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
I Understand How Leaders Make Decisions in My Town	77%	83%	72%	1,080
I Have a Voice in How Decisions Are Made in My Town	72%	79%	66%	1,080
I Have Access to Fair Judgment in My Town	85%	88%	82%	1,080
I Am Satisfied with How Leadership Makes Decisions in My Town	81%	87%	76%	1,080
Corruption is a Problem with Traditional Leaders in this Town	32%	25%	38%	1,080
Corruption is a Problem with Courts in this District	36%	31%	41%	1,080
Corruption is a problem with Police in this Town	33%	29%	37%	1,080
Corruption is a Problem with NGOs in this Town	13%	11%	16%	1,080
Traditional Leaders Do Not Discriminate Against Religious or Ethnic Groups	73%	76%	69%	1,080
Courts Do Not Discriminate Against Religious or Ethnic Groups	58%	57%	58%	1,080
Police Do Not Discriminate Against Religious or Ethnic Groups	60%	54%	65%	1,080
NGOs Do Not Discriminate Against Religious or Ethnic Groups	81%	79%	83%	1,080

Table 3: Land Norms				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Most Important Land Authority Traditional Authority	56%	75%	41%	1,034
Most Important Land Authority Admin Authority	3%	8%	0%	1,034
Most Important Land Authority Statutory Authority	1%	1%	0%	1,034
Most Important Land Authority Civil Society	1%	3%	-	1,034
Most Important Land Authority Traditional Landlord	38%	14%	58%	1,034
Most Important For Acquiring Land is Money	16%	21%	12%	1,080
Most Important For Acquiring Land is Being Born in This Town	15%	16%	15%	1,080
Most Important For Acquiring Land is Good Citizenship	59%	58%	59%	1,080
Most Important For Acquiring Land is Relations to Town Leaders	1%	1%	1%	1,080
Most Important For Acquiring Land is Other	6%	2%	10%	1,080

Table 4: Land Norms for Vulnerable Groups				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Minorities From Liberia Own Property with a Deed	48%	56%	42%	1,080
Minorities Not from Liberia Own Property with Deed	22%	24%	20%	1,080
Women Own Property with Deed	47%	51%	44%	1,080
Minorities Have Equal Rights in this Community	69%	82%	58%	1,080

Table 5: Land Acquisition for Town Land Used for Housing				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Inherit from Family	61%	62%	60%	1,056
Request from Traditional Authority	17%	11%	23%	1,056
Request from Admin Authority	1%	10%	1%	1,056
Buy from Traditional Authority	1%	1%	1%	1,056

Table 5: Land Acquisition for Town Land Used for Housing				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Buy/rent from Private Person	2%	2%	2%	1,056
Take it	2%	3%	0%	1,056
Other	16%	20%	13%	1,056

Table 6: Land Ownership for Town Land Used for Housing				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Me	53%	50%	55%	1,051
My household	10%	12%	9%	1,051
My extended family	10%	11%	10%	1,051
Member of household	6%	5%	6%	1,051
Member of extended family	4%	5%	4%	1,051
My quarter	2%	2%	1%	1,051
My community	1%	1%	1%	1,051
Landlord	2%	0%	4%	1,051
My stranger father	7%	9%	5%	1,051
Other member of town	1%	1%	1%	1,051
Other	3%	4%	2%	1,051

Table 7: Land Disputes on Town Land Used for Housing				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Current land dispute on house-spot land	7%	7%	7%	1,063
Non-community member using house-spot	19%	21%	18%	1,063
Deed for House Spot Land	9%	14%	4%	1,063
House-spot occupied during war	4%	4%	3%	1,063
Previous land dispute on house-spot land since the end of war	3%	3%	4%	1,063

Table 7: Land Disputes on Town Land Used for Housing				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Feels Insecure About Land Tenure for House Spot Land	15%	16%	13%	1,063

Table 8: Land Acquisition for Town Land Used for Gardens				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Has a town garden	19%	12%	25%	1,063
Town garden acquired: family inheritance	60%	58%	60%	207
Town garden acquired: request from traditional authorities	23%	0%	26%	207
Town garden acquired: request from admin authorities	0%	0%	1%	207
Town garden acquired: buy from traditional authorities	1%	16%	1%	207
Town garden acquired: Buy/rent from other person	1%	5%	0%	207
Town garden acquired: Take it	2%	5%	1%	207
Town garden acquired: Other	12%	14%	12%	207

Table 9: Land Ownership for Town Land Used for Gardens				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Me	66%	60%	69%	207
My household	13%	14%	11%	207
My extended family	14%	23%	12%	207
My quarter	1%	0%	2%	207
Landlord	1%	0%	2%	207
My stranger father	3%	7%	1%	207
Other member of town	1%	2%	1%	207
Other	0%	0%	1%	207

Table 10: Land Ownership for Town Land Used for Gardens				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Stranger on Garden land	16%	8%	16%	208
Has deed for Garden land	8%	19%	5%	208
Garden land occupied during war	2%	16%	3%	205
Previous land dispute on garden land since the end of war	2%	4%	2%	205
Worries could lose garden land for any reason in next five years	14%	19%	10%	205
Farmed garden plot this season	74%	84%	72%	205
Intends to sell crops from town garden	60%	71%	57%	205

Table 11: Land Acquisition for Town Land Used for 1st Farm				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Has Access to at Least One Farm	90%	91%	90%	1,063
Size of 1st Farm, (acres)	69.95	109.96	22.91	656
Does not know size of farm	28%	15%	39%	957
Farm Acquired: Family Inheritance	69%	68%	71%	957
Farm Acquired: Request from Statutory Authorities	0%	0%	0%	957
Farm Acquired: Request from Traditional Authorities	10%	7%	15%	957
Farm Acquired: Buy from Traditional Authorities	2%	4%	0%	957
Farm Acquired: Take It	2%	2%	0%	957
Farm Acquired: Other	15%	18%	13%	957

Table 12: Land Ownership for 1st Farm				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Farm 1 land ownership: Member of family or household	86%	87%	85%	957
Farm 1 land ownership: Community	3%	2%	5%	957

Table 12: Land Ownership for 1st Farm				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Farm 1 ownership: Community Authority	3%	0%	4%	957
Farm 1 ownership: Stranger father	5%	6%	3%	957
Farm 1 ownership: Other entity	4%	5%	3%	957

Table 13: Land Usage for 1st Farm				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Planted Crops on 1st Farm Land this Season	82%	80%	83%	957
Sells or Intends to Sell Crops from 1st Farm Land this Season	39%	38%	40%	1,080
Stranger Working on 1st Farm Land	16%	16%	16%	957
Deed Exists for 1st Farm Land	24%	44%	5%	957
1st Farm Land Occupied During War	5%	7%	3%	957
Previous Land Dispute on 1st Farm land Since the End of the War	7%	7%	6%	957
Feels Insecure About Land Tenure for 1st Farm Land	20%	24%	16%	957
Current land dispute 1st Farm Land	13%	16%	10%	961

Table 14: Land Conflict				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Any land dispute dummy	17%	21%	14%	1,080
Land dispute over town land	27%	22%	33%	187
Land dispute over town garden	4%	6%	2%	187
Land dispute over 1st farm plot	55%	57%	52%	187
Land dispute over 2nd farm plot	4%	6%	1%	187
Land dispute over 3rd farm plot	2%	1%	2%	187
Land dispute over town plot other town	1%	2%	0%	187
Land dispute over farm plot other town	5%	4%	6%	187

Table 15: Reason for Land Conflict				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Land dispute over inheritance	8%	7%	9%	186
Land dispute over boundaries	24%	32%	14%	186
Land dispute over encroachment	40%	46%	32%	186
Land dispute over secondary occupation	4%	1%	7%	186
Land dispute over ownership status	18%	11%	26%	186
Land dispute over squatting	3%	2%	5%	186
Land dispute over contracts	1%	0%	1%	186
Land dispute over other	3%	1%	6%	186

Table 16: Parties in the Land Conflict				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Land dispute with immediate family	27%	28%	25%	186
Land dispute with landlord	2%	0%	8%	186
Land dispute with town leader	1%	0%	1%	186
Land dispute with land administrator	1%	0%	1%	186
Land dispute with stranger father	1%	1%	1%	186
Land dispute with other member of town	43%	45%	42%	186
Land dispute with someone from different town	16%	20%	11%	186
Land dispute with other	9%	7%	11%	186
Disputing parties of different tribe	16%	11%	22%	186

Table 17: Land Dispute Start				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Land dispute started before the war	5%	8%	1%	186
Land dispute started during the war	3%	4%	2%	186
Land dispute started after the war	51%	51%	49%	186
Land dispute started a short time ago	41%	38%	47%	186

Table 18: Violence Related to Land Dispute				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Dispute resulted in property destruction	17%	12%	23%	186
Dispute resulted in insults	45%	52%	36%	186
Dispute resulted in threats of violence	33%	38%	26%	186
Dispute resulted in physical violence	13%	14%	12%	186
Worries dispute could result in violence in the future	61%	70%	47%	180

Table 19: First Remedy in Land Dispute				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Family friends neighbors	24%	25%	21%	174
Elders	18%	21%	14%	174
Town chief	16%	13%	21%	174
Traditional Authority	10%	14%	4%	174
Landlord	7%	2%	14%	174
Other	6%	7%	6%	174
Clan chief	3%	4%	3%	174
District govt	3%	5%	0%	174
Magistrate court	3%	4%	1%	174
NRC	2%	1%	4%	174

Table 19: First Remedy in Land Dispute				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Quarter chief	2%	0%	6%	174
Land commissioner	2%	2%	1%	174
Paramount chief	1%	1%	1%	174
County govt	1%	0%	1%	174
Peace committee	1%	1%	0%	174
Police	1%	1%	1%	174
Sectional chief	1%	1%	0%	174
Satisfied with first remedy	51%	49%	54%	174
Used multiple forums in dispute mediation	29%	32%	25%	174

Table 20: Second Remedy in Land Dispute				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Magistrate court	21%	12%	37%	52
District govt	15%	24%	0%	52
NRC	12%	9%	16%	52
Land commissioner	10%	15%	0%	52
Other	8%	12%	0%	52
Elders	6%	6%	5%	52
Family friends neighbors	6%	0%	16%	52
Quarter chief	6%	3%	11%	52
Circuit court	4%	3%	5%	52
Paramount chief	4%	6%	0%	52
Town chief	4%	3%	5%	52
County govt	2%	3%	0%	52
Peace committee	2%	3%	0%	52

Table 20: Second Remedy in Land Dispute				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Traditional Authority	2%	0%	5%	52
Satisfied with second mediation forum	41%	35%	50%	52

Table 21: Resolution in Land Dispute				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Family friends neighbors	28%	28%	27%	85
Elders	16%	21%	13%	85
Town chief	13%	18%	9%	85
Landlord	9%	3%	16%	85
NRC	8%	3%	13%	85
Other	8%	8%	4%	85
Traditional Authority	5%	10%	0%	85
Magistrate court	4%	3%	4%	85
County govt	2%	0%	4%	85
Quarter chief	2%	0%	4%	85
Clan chief	1%	3%	0%	85
Land commissioner	1%	3%	0%	85
Sectional chief	1%	3%	0%	85
Satisfied with overall mediation of dispute	50%	44%	58%	186
Tribe tensions involved in dispute	8%	4%	14%	186
Religious tensions involved in dispute	5%	2%	9%	186
Land dispute is now resolved	46%	37%	58%	186
Satisfied with resolution to dispute	88%	88%	89%	85

Table 22: Awareness and Views of Ongoing Land Issues Programming				
	Average	Nimba	Lofa	Obs
Learns About Land Administration through Radio Programming	75%	85%	66%	1,062
Visited Land Coordination Center	5%	6%	4%	1,062
Heard About the Land Coordination Center	46%	42%	50%	1,062
Heard About the Tribal Certificate Inventory	27%	22%	31%	1,062
Participated in the Tribal Certificate Inventory	3%	2%	4%	1,062
Is in Favor of Further Documentation of Land	95%	97%	93%	1,062
Is in Favor of Further Land Surveying	94%	96%	93%	1,062
Is in Favor Peace Education and Mediation Skills Training for Leadership	99%	99%	98%	1,062

APPENDIX B: IMPACT ASSESSMENT: MIDTERM REPORT



NORWEGIAN
REFUGEE COUNCIL

**Land Conflict Resolution Project
Impact Assessment
Midterm Report**

Prepared for TetraTech ARD

15 August 2012

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INTRODUCTION

The Land Conflict Resolution Project (LCRP) aims to improve land administration, tenure security and resolve land disputes using Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in rural Liberia. One of LCRP's main objectives is to work closely with the Government of Liberia (GoL) to achieve its goals. Through a collaborative process, LCRP proposes to

- 1) Support clan-level alternative dispute resolution activities
- 2) Assist the Government of Liberia's Land Commission (LC) in public education and outreach on its activities
- 3) Establish property rights inventories (also known as helping local communities create maps of their understanding of tenure arrangements) so that this information can be used in the ADR of land disputes
- 4) Assist the LC in promoting ADR such that it is accepted at the national level

Part of LCRP's strategy for realizing its objectives is to carefully document, monitor, evaluate and assess its programming in order to understand the potential impacts of the project and generate concrete lessons learned for the GoL. As part of this objective, LCRP is conducting an impact assessment (IA) of its program with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). The IA hopes to help answer questions about the impact of LCRP's ADR activities, education and outreach activities and its property rights inventories on individuals and communities, including the effect on practices and views of dispute resolution and land administration. This midterm report presents first stage of the impact assessment: a baseline survey of communities in the LCRP's area of intervention in Lofa County. The baseline survey included almost 500 individuals living in areas where the LCRP will conduct programming and areas where the LCRP hopes to conduct programming the future. Key preliminary findings from the baseline survey include:

- Not all communities have historically and geographically defined quarters
- Traditional authorities, including traditional landlords, are the most important authorities in land administration
- Inheritance is the most important way for people to acquire access to and rights over land
- Over a quarter (25%) of land disputes involve the destruction of property and 47% of individuals fear that land disputes could lead to violence in the future
- Family, friends, and neighbours were the most common 'authorities' where individuals reported that they had successfully resolved their land dispute

The midterm report proceeds as follows. Section 1 briefly outlines the methodology used in data collection. Section 2 reports on the findings from the baseline survey on attitudes and norms towards community leadership and land administration in the community. Section 3 explores the information gathered on existing land disputes in the community, their nature, and current strategies for dispute resolution. Section 4 outlines the next steps for the impact assessment and concludes.

METHODOLOGY

In order to assess the impact of the LCRP, an important first step is to understand the situation in the areas where the project will take place and comparison areas prior to the project's start. In order to capture this information, we conducted a baseline survey of individuals in these communities.

One of the goals of the baseline survey is to gain a general understanding of the issues relating to land administration, leadership and dispute resolution, and land dispute dynamics. To meet this goal, we interviewed a random sample of community members from the communities selected for inclusion in the survey. By choosing to select our interviewees randomly, we hope to get as representative an understanding of the issues in each community as possible without interviewing every community member. This presents a challenge in Liberian communities where there is limited accurate census information and no sample framework from which to draw a random sample. As a result we engaged the community leadership in a participatory random sampling process in each community we visited.

To conduct the participatory random sampling process, the IA team first met with town leadership in the community. We explained the exercise to the leadership and asked for permission and guidance. If permission was granted, the IA team asked the leadership to identify a chief or leader from each of the quarters in the town. Once representatives from each quarter were present, the IA team asked them to identify the size of the quarters from smallest to largest. Since this can be a conceptually challenging process, the IA used piles of small stones to represent each quarter and had the leaders collaboratively allocate the stones to represent the quarters from smallest to largest.

Once all the leaders agreed on the relative size of each quarter, the IA team assigned the number of interviews to each quarter based on relative size. In order capture the perspective of vulnerable groups, who might be adversely affected by land disputes, the IA team also consulted the community leaders about where members of these groups lived and made sure that interview were allocated to the quarters where these households were located so that they were included in the sample. When IA team and the community leadership completed this process, a leader from each quarter and part of the IA team selected the households from each quarter.

To select households in the quarter, the IA team and the community leadership identified all the paths within the quarter and then randomly picked one (this process is known as "lucky ticket" in Liberia). The community leader and the IA team members then counted all the households along the path. To create the interval for household selection, the IA team and the

community leaders divided the total number of houses on the randomly selected path by the number of households to be interviewed in that quarter. The IA team and the community leaders then walked the entire length of the path again, counting off this number, or interval, to select each household for inclusion. When a household was selected, members of the IA team made an appointment with the head of the household or his or her representative for an interview.

One of the key findings that came out of the interviewee selection process was that while many Liberians refer to quarters in their communities, the word “quarter” means different things in different communities. Quarter is interpreted to mean a geographically defined neighbourhood with a specific historical, familial history in some communities, while in others members of the same quarter talk about sharing a “taboo” with other quarter members, but do not necessarily live in a defined geographic area together. A shared “taboo” often refers to a specific food (such as certain kinds of game that live in the forest near the community) that individuals that share that taboo do not eat (and if they do eat it, they describe physical or spiritual consequences). In communities where the definition of quarter membership aligned more closely with shared taboos as opposed to geographically defined neighbourhoods, selecting interviewees using quarters became challenging. In these cases, the IA team divided the communities into geographic zones instead.

A different but related issue emerged in some communities that have still not returned to their pre-war settlement patterns since the end of the Liberian civil war. While geographically defined quarters may have existed before the war (or not, depending on the community), today the community members often live in ethnically segregated neighbourhoods that do not easily correspond to quarters. In these cases, selecting respondents using the quarter as a unit of analysis was not appropriate and could even cause problems. In this case the IA team in collaboration with community leadership from all ethnic and social groups divided the community in zones in order to select the interviewees.

Using this random interviewee selection process, the IA team selected almost 500 individuals to participate in the baseline survey. The average age of individuals asked to participate was 43 years old, and 38% of those selected were women. The average interviewee had 4 years of education, and had been born in the town where he or she currently resided. Given that survey aimed to speak with the heads of households or their representative, in order to gather information about all the land and property used by that household, the gender balance and average age are in line with expectations. 63% of individuals interviewed stated that agriculture was their primary occupation. The average household income for interviewees was \$52.20. A majority of the individuals who participated had been displaced during the Liberian civil war. (See table 1).

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND LAND ADMINISTRATION

An important part of the baseline survey focused on community leadership and land administration in the community. The IA team gathered information both the actual practices in the community, as well as opinions, attitudes and views about these practices. Education and outreach activities, as well as ADR training, may aim to shift some of these practices and attitudes during the LCRP. By understanding the baseline levels of attitudes and practices, the IA aims to capture how the LCRP's activities may change the status quo over time.

Community Leadership

During interviews, the IA team asked community members about their general perceptions of leaders in the community. Leaders play an essential and multifaceted role in community life, including making decisions about land administration and engaging in dispute resolution activities. A majority of community members felt that they understood how community leaders made decisions in their community (71%). 64% felt that they actually had a voice in how these decisions were made, suggesting that many individuals in the communities do really feel that they participate in leadership in the community. A large majority felt that they had access to a fair judgement in the town (82%). (See table 2). While these levels are high, there is still room for improvement in terms of satisfaction and increased participation in community decision making.

A sizable group of community members did feel that corruption was an issue with community leadership. With the exception of NGOs, around 40% of community members felt that various leaders and decision makers, including the traditional leaders, the courts and police, were corrupt. Despite this problem, a majority of interviewees felt that these leaders were not biased. One exception was the courts: only 62% of community members felt that the courts did not discriminate against specific religious or ethnic groups. (See table 2).

Land Administration

When it comes to land, the most important leaders identified in the communities the IA team visited were the traditional authorities. When asked generally about the most important leaders for land administration, 99% of interviewees stated that it was the traditional authorities. Of these traditional authorities, the traditional landlord is the most important one (see table 3). When asked about what factor mattered most in gaining access to land, 60% stated that being a good citizen was the most important.

Interviewees suggested that certain potentially vulnerable groups, including outsiders from other parts of Liberia and foreigners from different countries, as well as women, have access to land in the community and in some case may even own land with deeds. For example, 45%

of interviewees stated that they knew a woman in the community who owned a deeded property. It is important to note that this does not mean that 45% of women own deeded property in the community. Indeed, fieldwork suggests that this is certainly not the case and the very low levels of interviewees who stated that they had documents for their land confirms this. Rather that 45% of the respondents could identify a woman with a deed (within each community, this could have been the same woman). On the question of equal rights for minorities, interviewees were divided: 56% of individuals felt that minorities did have equal rights. (See table 4).

Town Land

In addition to asking general questions about leadership and land administration, the baseline survey also covers land administration for specific types of property, including town land. For housing within the village, 61% of community members acquired their rights through inheritance (compared with 22% who acquired their rights through traditional authorities) (see table 5). 85% of community members stated that a member of their immediate family or their household “owned” their house (see table 6).

22% of community members also stated that in addition to their houses, they planted gardens within the town. These gardens are administered through similar systems to residential property in the town. 61% of communities stated that they acquired rights to their garden through inheritance and 90% of the gardens were “owned” through a family member (see tables 8 & 9). Almost 80% of households with gardens in town state that they are planting crops in their gardens this season, but only 14% stated that they were going to sell crops from their garden. Very few interviewees stated that they had deeds for their gardens, but overall community members did not feel insecure about their future access to their town gardens (see table 10).

Farm Land

90% of the community members interviewed during the baseline survey have at least one area where they are farming. For the individuals that state that they know the size of their farms, they report very large areas (on average 21 acres). However, 40% of individuals state that they do not know the size of their farms and it is possible that if these farms were taken into account the average farm size would be much lower (see table 11). 73% of community members interviewed stated that they acquired their farmland through family inheritance (compared with 13% who stated that that they acquired their land through traditional authorities) (see table 12).

Over 80% of individuals interviewed stated that they were cultivating their primary farm land this year. However, only 40% stated that they planned to sell crops from their farms, suggesting that a relatively high proportion of individuals in this area do not engage in commercial

agricultural and instead eat or trade what they grow. 16% of community members stated that individuals considered outsiders to their community (“strangers”) worked on their farms with them. Interviewees felt relatively less secure about the future tenure of their farms compared with town land (15% stated they felt insecure about future access to their primary farm land). 94% of all individuals used informal and non-documented administration of their farm land. (See table 13).

LAND DISPUTES AND LAND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

15% of all individuals interviewed as part of the IA baseline survey (73 persons) stated that they had a current or recent land dispute on some part of their property. Data on these land disputes provides an assessment of the prevalence, nature and current practices of resolving these disputes. This information serves as a baseline for understanding the current level of disputes and dispute resolution in the communities.

Land Disputes

The most common types of land disputes reported during the IA baseline survey were over farm land. However, disputes over town land were also common (33% of all disputes occurred over town land). Disputes over town gardens and farm land or town land in another community were also reported, but were comparatively rare (see table 14).

The two most common ways that interviewees described their dispute were as encroachment of one person on to another person's land (33% of disputes) and as a dispute over ownership status (27% of disputes). Less common, but also reported, were disputes over boundaries (14%), disputes over inheritance (10%) and secondary occupation of land (7%) (see table 15). A majority of disputes took place between individuals who lived in the same town, but who were not from the same family (56%). However, a sizeable portion of disputes, 21%, took place between members of extended or immediate family. Only 23% of disputes were between members of different ethnic groups, underscoring the fact that many disputes remain issues within ethnic groups (see table 16).

Almost all the land disputes reported during the baseline survey started after the end of the Liberia civil war (the war ended in 2003). In 48% of the disputes, the interviewees reported that the dispute started recently (see table 17). While disputes may be recent, unfortunately community members still report high levels of violence. 26% of interviewees who stated that they were currently involved in a land dispute said that the dispute had led to the destruction of property, 36% stated that there had been insults and verbal abuse between the parties of the conflict, and 27% stated that there had been threats of violence. In 14% of cases, interviewees reported that the dispute had already led to a physical act of violence. Almost half of all individuals involved in land disputes stated that they were afraid that violence could take place in the future as a result of the dispute. (see table 18).

Dispute Resolution

In almost all cases, individuals involved in land disputes were making an effort to resolve their disputes. However, interviewees involved in land disputes sought assistance from a wide

variety of authorities and justice forums. Overall, individuals identified 13 different places where they first went to try to resolve their dispute. The most common places were the town chief (22%) and with family, friends and neighbours (20%). Interviewees also took their land disputes to the elders in the community (12%), to the traditional landlord (15%), and to the quarter chief (6%). Very few individuals brought their case to the formal court system when they first tried to resolve their dispute. Overall, only a slim majority of individuals were satisfied with the way that the authority where they first brought the dispute intervened (56%) (see table 19).

After the first intervention, about 1/3 of individuals involved in land disputes brought their case to a second authority, the most common being the magistrate's court (37%), followed by family, friends and neighbours (16%), and the Norwegian Refugee Council's land dispute resolution program (16%). 11% of individuals used the quarter chief as an authority to resolve their land dispute. 47% of interviewees reported that they were satisfied the second intervention in their land dispute. (See table 20).

At the time of the IA baseline survey, 59% of individuals reported that their current land dispute had been resolved. The most common intervening authority who interviewees reported solved their land dispute was family, friends and neighbours (28%), followed by the traditional landlord (16%) and the Norwegian Refugee Council's land dispute resolution program (14%). Smaller proportions of interviewees also reported that the community elders (12%) and the town chief (9%) resolved their disputes. Despite the high levels of individuals who engaged the magistrate's court as the second authority in the dispute resolution process, it is worth noting that very few individuals actually reported that the court resolved their dispute (5%). For individuals who felt that their land disputes had been successfully resolved, 91% of interviewees stated that they were satisfied with the current resolution of the dispute, a very high level of satisfaction. For individuals involved in land disputes (both ongoing and recently solved), only 60% reported feeling satisfied with the overall interventions in their disputes thus far. (See table 21).

Land Dispute Resolution Programming

At the baseline stage of the IA, we did not ask extensive questions about the experience of individuals with the LCRP since the project has not yet rolled out. However, the IA team did take the opportunity to get general opinions about past interventions aimed to help resolve land disputes, as well as future interventions. The results are very encouraging. While very few people have visited or used the new Land Coordination Center (LCC) (supported by the LCRP), almost 50% of interviewees had heard about the center. The data suggest that the message about the new LCC broadcast over the radio is successful in spreading information about land issues in the area (66% of interviews stated that they got news about land related issues

through the radio). Almost all the interviewees stated that they were in favour of initiatives that would help them to demarcate their land, provide additional documentation for their land and help their leaders gain conflict resolution skills. (See table 22).

CONCLUSION

Ongoing Impact Assessment Activities

The first round of preliminary data collected as part of the LCRP impact assessment came from Lofa County where the first stage of the LCRP programming will take place. Data analysis for this first round of data is currently ongoing. The analysis presented in this report is preliminary and full analysis will be presented in the final report. Currently, the IA team is conducting the baseline assessment in Nimba County, in the areas both where the LCRP plans to conduct programming and in designated comparison areas. In addition, the IA is preparing to start its qualitative data collection activities in conjunction with the roll out of project activities.

The IA will collect rich qualitative data in both program areas and comparison areas in Lofa and Nimba counties. The IA will collect data from different members of the community in four villages in Lofa and four villages in Nimba. The data collection will involve in-depth, semi-structured interviews about land administration and land disputes as well as the experiences of the LCRP in villages where the project is ongoing. The interviews will focus on understanding more clearly the themes brought out in the quantitative data, such as the preferences the communities members have for certain types of dispute resolution authorities and the different rights that individuals associate with land ownership. All the data collected will be coded and entered into a qualitative database for analysis.

Next Steps

The first round of data collection for the IA of the LCRP provides detailed baseline data on the current situation of community leadership, land administration and, land disputes and land dispute resolution in Lofa County. We find, overall, that traditional leaders and informal processes are key in managing land and land related issues in this part of Lofa. This comes out in the data on the most important leaders in land administration and where individuals state that they take their land disputes for resolution. The IA suggests that while many individuals are finding solutions to their land disputes, there still not a coherent system for land dispute resolution and that many land disputes lead to the destruction of property and other acts of violence.

In the final report for this baseline stage of the IA, we will provide a comparative analysis of information collected in Nimba County to try to understand the similarities and differences between this region of Liberia and others. We will also use qualitative data to explore what our initial findings mean (why, for example, are traditional leaders so popular, even more popular than the town chief?). In addition, we will also explore the preliminary impacts of the actual project activities through data collected during the first stage of project roll out.

Looking forward towards mid-line and end-line data collection, this first stage of the IA finds that there are many areas where we might expect to see project impacts. For example, education and outreach activities may change individuals' perceptions about the leaders who have the most authority over land administration. It may increase the number of documents that individuals have for their land (depending on the timeline of land reform) and it may change which authorities that are involved in land dispute resolution, what order individuals seek help from these authorities, and their levels of satisfaction. Data collection in both areas where the LCRP programming takes place and in comparison areas will allow the IA to capture these impacts and provided detailed feedback to the GoL and partners on strategies for ADR, education and outreach, and property rights inventories throughout Liberia.

APPENDIX A: TABLES

	Average	Obs
Age	43.93	478
Married	72%	478
Widow	10%	478
Female	38%	478
Years of education	4.35	478
Lives in town of birth	74%	478
Displaced Inside Liberia During the War	65%	478
Duration IDP (years)	4.53	387
Refugee Outside Liberia During the War	77%	471
Duration Refugee (years)	6.39	354

	Average	Obs
I Understand How Leaders Make Decisions in My Town	72%	478
I Have a Voice in How Decisions Are Made in My Town	64%	478
I Have Access to Fair Judgment in My Town	82%	478
I Am Satisfied with How Leadership Makes Decisions in My Town	75%	478
Corruption is a Problem with Courts in this District	45%	478
Corruption is a Problem with Traditional Leaders in this Town	41%	478
Corruption is a problem with Police in this Town	39%	478
Corruption is a Problem with NGOs in this Town	17%	478
NGOs Do Not Discriminate Against Religious/Ethnic Groups	87%	478
Traditional Leaders Do Not Discriminate Against Religious/Ethnic Groups	71%	478
Police Do Not Discriminate Against Religious or Ethnic Groups	7%	478
Courts Do Not Discriminate Against Religious or Ethnic Groups	62%	478

	Average	Obs
Most Important Land Authority is Traditional Landlord	60%	468
Most Important Land Authority is Other Traditional Authority	39%	468
Most Important Land Authority is Statutory Authority	1%	468
Most Important for Acquiring Land is Good Citizenship	60%	478
Most Important for Acquiring Land is Money	14%	478
Most Important for Acquiring Land is Being Born in This Town	13%	478
Most Important for Acquiring Land is Other	10%	478
Most Important for Acquiring Land is Relations to Town Leaders	1%	478

Table 4: Norms Around Vulnerable Groups		
	Average	Obs
Minorities From Liberia Own Property with a Deed	41%	478
Minorities Not from Liberia Own Property with Deed	20%	478
Women Own Property with Deed	45%	478
Minorities Have Equal Rights in this Community	56%	478

Table 5: Land Acquisition for Town Land Used for Housing		
	Average	Obs
House Spot Acquired: Family Inheritance	61%	473
House Spot Acquired: Request from Traditional Authorities	22%	473
House Spot Acquired: Other	13%	473
House Spot Acquired: Buy/rent from Private Individual	2%	473
House Spot Acquired: Request from Admin Authorities	1%	473

Table 6: Land Ownership for Town Land Used for Housing		
	Average	Obs
House Spot Ownership: Member of Family or Household	85%	475
House Spot Ownership: Stranger Father	5%	475
House Spot Ownership: Community Authority	4%	475
House Spot Ownership: Other Entity	4%	475
House Spot Ownership: Community	2%	475

Table 7: Land Tenure and Land Use for Town Land Used for Housing		
	Average	Obs
Deed for House Spot Land	4%	475
Feels Insecure About Land Tenure for House Spot Land	12%	475
Previous Land Dispute on House Spot Land Since the End of the War	5%	475
Current Land Dispute on House Spot Land	7%	475
Stranger Living House Spot Land	18%	475

Table 8: Land Acquisition for Town Land Used for Gardening		
	Average	Obs
Town Garden Acquired: Family Inheritance	61%	110
Town Garden Acquired: Request from Traditional Authorities	23%	110
Has a Town Garden	23%	475
Town Garden Acquired: Request from Admin Authorities	1%	110
Town Garden Acquired: Buy from Traditional Authorities	1%	110

Table 9: Land Ownership for Town Land Used for Gardening		
	Average	Obs
Garden Ownership: Member of Family or Household	90%	111
Garden Ownership: Community	3%	111
Garden Ownership: Community Authority	2%	111
Garden Ownership: Stranger Father	2%	111
Garden Ownership: Other Entity	4%	111

Table 10: Land Tenure and Land Use for Town Land Used for Gardening		
	Average	Obs
Planted Crops on Garden this Season	79%	107
Sells or Intends to Sell Crops from Garden this Season	14%	107
Stranger Using Garden Land	17%	110
Deed for Garden Land Exists	6%	110
Feels Insecure About Land Tenure for Town Garden Land	8%	107
Garden Occupied During the War	2%	107
Previous Land Dispute on Garden Land Since the End of the War	4%	107
Current Land Dispute on Garden Land	4%	107

Table 11: Land Acquisition for 1st Identified Farm Land		
	Average	Obs
Has Access to at Least One Farm	90%	475
Size of 1st Farm, (acres)	21.24	242
1st Farm Size Unknown	41%	424
1st Farm Acquired: Family Inheritance	73%	424
1st Farm Acquired: Request from Traditional Authorities	13%	424

Table 12: Land Ownership for 1st Identified Farm Land		
	Average	Obs
1st Farm Ownership: Member of Family or Household	85%	424
1st Farm Ownership: Community	4%	424
1st Farm Ownership: Community Authority	5%	424
1st Farm Ownership: Stranger Father	3%	424
1st Farm Ownership: Other Entity	3%	424

Table 13: Land Tenure and Land Use for 1st Identified Farm Land		
	Average	Obs
Planted Crops on 1st Farm Land this Season	83%	424
Sells or Intends to Sell Crops from 1st Farm Land this Season	41%	424
Stranger Working on 1st Farm Land	16%	424
Deed Exists for 1st Farm Land	6%	424
1st Farm Land Occupied During War	3%	424
Previous Land Dispute on 1st Farm land Since the End of the War	6%	424
Feels Insecure About Land Tenure for 1st Farm Land	15%	424
Current land dispute 1st Farm Land	11%	424

Table 14: Land Dispute		
	Average	Obs
Any Land Dispute	15%	478
Land Dispute over Farm Land	57%	73
Land Dispute over Town Land	33%	73
Land Dispute over Town Land in Another Town	5%	73
Land Dispute over Town Garden	3%	73
Land Dispute over Farm Land in Another Town	1%	73

Table 15: Reason for Land Dispute		
	Average	Obs
Land Dispute over Encroachment	33%	73
Land Dispute over Ownership Status	27%	73
Land Dispute over Boundaries	14%	73
Land Dispute over Inheritance	10%	73
Land Dispute over Secondary Occupation	7%	73
Land Dispute over Squatting	4%	73
Land Dispute over Other	4%	73
Land Dispute over Contracts	1%	73

Table 16: Relationship to Other Party of Land Dispute		
	Average	Obs
Land Dispute with Other Community Member	56%	73
Land Dispute with Member of Extended Family	12%	73
Land Dispute with Someone From Different Town	12%	73
Land Dispute with Other Entity	10%	73
Land Dispute with Immediate Family or Member of Household	9%	73
Inter-ethnic Dispute	23%	73

Table 17: Land Dispute Duration		
	Average	Obs
Land Dispute Started Before the War	1%	73
Land Dispute Started During the War	1%	73
Land Dispute Started After the War	49%	73
Land Dispute Started Recently	48%	73

Table 18: Violence Related to Land Disputes		
	Average	Obs
Dispute Resulted in Property Destruction	26%	73
Dispute Resulted in Insults and Verbal Abuse	36%	73
Dispute Resulted in Threats of Violence	27%	73
Dispute Resulted in Physical Violence	14%	73
Perception that Dispute Could Result in Future Violence	47%	70

Table 19: First Intervention to Resolve Land Dispute		
	Average	Obs
First Intervention - Town chief	22%	65
First Intervention - Family, Friends and Neighbors	20%	65
First Intervention - Landlord	15%	65
First Intervention - Elders	12%	65
First Intervention - Quarter chief	6%	65
First Intervention - NRC	5%	65
First Intervention - Traditional Authority	5%	65
Fist Intervention - Other	5%	65
First Intervention - Clan chief	3%	65
First Intervention - County Government	2%	65
First Intervention - Land Commissioner	2%	65
First Intervention - Magistrate court	2%	65
First Invervention - Paramount chief	2%	65
First Intervention - Police	2%	65
Satisfied with First Intervention Forum	56%	73
Used Additional Forums for Dispute Intervention	26%	73

Table 20: Second Intervention to Resolve Land Dispute		
	Average	Obs
Second Intervention - Magistrate court	37%	19
Second Intervention - Family friends neighbors	16%	19
Second Intervention - NRC	16%	19
Second Intervention - Quarter chief	11%	19
Second Intervention - Circuit court	5%	19
Second Intervention - Elders	5%	19
Second Intervention - Town chief	5%	19
Second Intervention - Traditional Authority	5%	19
Satisfied with Second Intervention forum	47%	19

Table 21: Resolution Reached in Land Dispute		
	Average	Obs
Resolution Reached - Family, friends, neighbors	28%	43
Resolution Reached - Traditional Landlord	16%	43
Resolution Reached - NRC	14%	43
Resolution Reached - Elders	12%	43
Resolution Reached - Town Chief	9%	43
Resolution Reached - Other	7%	43
Resolution Reached - Circuit court	5%	19
Resolution Reached - County Government	5%	43
Resolution Reached - Magistrate court	5%	43
Resolution Reached - Quarter Chief	5%	43
Satisfied with Overall Interventions into the Dispute	60%	73
Land Dispute is Now Resolved	59%	73
Satisfied with Resolution to Dispute	91%	43

Table 22: Awareness and Views of Ongoing Land Issues Programming		
	Average	Obs
Learns About Land Administration through Radio Programming	66%	475
Visited Land Coordination Center	4%	475
Heard About the Land Coordination Center	49%	475
Heard About the Tribal Certificate Inventory	31%	475
Participated in the Tribal Certificate Inventory	3%	475
Is in Favor of Receiving Paper Document for Land	93%	475
Is in Favor of Land Demarcation	93%	475
Is in Favor Conflict Resolution and Mediation Training for Leadership	99%	475

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