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LIBERIA

LAND GOVERNANCE SUPPORT ACTIVITY

QUARTERLY REPORT

FY16, Q2 (JANUARY-MARCH 2016)



APRIL 2016

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DISCLAIMER

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
CDR	Collaborative Decision Resources Associates
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting
CNDRA	Center for National Documents and Records Agency
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CRL	Community Rights Law
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
GOL	Government of Liberia
GUC	Grants under Contract
HO	Home Office
IE	Impact Evaluation
LAP	Land Administration Project (World Bank)
LC	Land Commission
LCC	Land Coordination Center
LGA	Land Governance Advisor
LGSA	Land Governance Support Activity
LLA	Liberia Land Authority
LRL	Land Rights Law
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEP	Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
MLME	Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
PAC	Project Advisory Committee

PPP	Public-Private Partnership
SDI	Sustainable Development Institute
STARR	Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights
TBD	To Be Determined
TO	Task Order
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
VGGT	Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security
WONGOSOL	Women NGOs Secretariat of Liberia
WRI	World Resources Institute

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

USAID/Liberia contracted Tetra Tech as the Prime Contractor to implement the Land Governance Support Activity (LGSA) Task Order under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights (STARR) Indefinite Quantity Contract. LGSA supports the establishment of more effective land governance systems, ready to implement comprehensive reforms to improve equitable access to land and security of tenure, so as to facilitate inclusive sustained growth and development, ensure peace and security, and provide sustainable management of the environment. Tetra Tech and partners Landesa, World Resources Institute (WRI), Namati, Collaborative Decision Resources Associates (CDR), Sustainable Development Institute (SDI), and Parley form a collaborative team providing technical and organizational assistance to the Government of Liberia (GOL), civil society, and communities in their land rights reform process.

Throughout our Year 1 work plan LGSA makes the assumption that the Land Rights Bill and Liberia Land Authority Bill would be passed in a timely fashion. At present neither bill has moved through the legislature. An Interim Land Task Force has been appointed to institutionally bridge the gap between the Land Commission and the Liberia Land Authority. LGSA has updated the risk analysis and mitigation table to reflect the current situation.

Delays in the legislative agenda have not had a significant impact on LGSA's ability to continue project activities. Second quarter activities have focused on: the completion of an institutional audit of the Center for National Documents and Records Agency (CNDRA) and the development of a draft transition plan for the Liberia Land Authority; the completion of work plans of institutional partners, including a workshop which lead to consensus for the action research agenda to inform the customary land rights recognition process, and the development of concept notes to implement that research agenda; the finalization of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (MEP); the development of a gender strategy, completion of a gender assessment, and provision of a gender training for LGSA staff; continuation of the public awareness campaign on the Liberia Land Authority and Land Rights Bills; and work with the Professional Surveyors Association to revitalize that association.

Administratively, all senior, administrative, and technical project staff have been hired. Weekly general staff meetings are held to keep all project staff abreast of project activities. Weekly technical staff meetings are also held to ensure coordination of field activities both technically as well as logistically. Office space and housing have been secured for the Chief of Party (COP), Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP), and Land Governance Adviser. Financial management and procurement procedures have been established and are functioning. Personnel, vehicle, and security handbooks have been updated where appropriate.

I.0 INTRODUCTION

USAID/Liberia contracted Tetra Tech as the Prime Contractor to implement the Land Governance Support Activity (LGSA) Task Order under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights (STARR) Indefinite Quantity Contract. LGSA supports the establishment of more effective land governance systems, ready to implement comprehensive reforms to improve equitable access to land and security of tenure, so as to facilitate inclusive sustained growth and development, ensure peace and security, and provide sustainable management of the environment.

Tetra Tech and partners Landesa, World Resources Institute (WRI), Namati, Collaborative Decision Resources Associates (CDR), Sustainable Development Institute (SDI), and Parley form a collaborative team providing technical and organizational assistance to the Government of Liberia (GOL), civil society, and communities in their land rights reform process. LGSA is applying USAID's collaborating, learning, and adapting (CLA) principles through the demand-driven support to the land reform agenda led by the GOL (Component 1); strengthening of land governance human and institutional capacity (Component 2); development of a customary land rights recognition model based on the Land Rights Policy that can be scaled up (Component 3); and support of stakeholder engagement in land governance through communications and outreach and strengthening of local capacity through the provision of land sector services (Component 4). In all project activities, LGSA, through partnership with government and civil society, is developing a focused and results-oriented approach through innovative yet cost-effective tools and best practices.

I.1 WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT

A two day planning workshop was held March 1-2 for LGSA implementing partners (SDI, Namati, Landesa, CDR, and Parley), USAID, and the Land Commission to update partner work plans as well as reach consensus on the applied research agenda around the customary land rights recognition process. Representation from the Center for National Documents and Records Agency (CNDRA) and the Department of Lands, Surveys and Cartography (DLSC) were also present during part of the workshop. The first day focused on a review of implementing partners' work plans while the second day focused on the action research agenda which forms the core of Component three activities for the first year. This is discussed in detail under that component of this report.

I.2 RISK ANALYSIS

Throughout our Year 1 work plan LGSA makes the assumption that the Land Rights Bill and Liberia Land Authority Bill would be passed in a timely fashion. At present neither bill has moved through the legislature. The status of each bill is dealt with under the discussion of Component 1. The mandate of the Land Commission ended on January 9, 2016, but the Commission continued to function throughout the quarter only being formally and completely terminated on March 31, 2016. In mid-March the President appointed an Interim Land Task Force (ITLF) to fill the institutional gap between the Land Commission and the passage of the Liberia Land Authority Bill and the creation of the Liberia Land Authority (LLA). The foci of the ITLF is to: 1) engage the legislature for the passage of the Liberia Land Authority Bill; 2) maintain relations with donors, in particular USAID, the World Bank, and the Donor Consultative Group on Land; and 3) maintain the functions of the former Land Commission, CNDRA, and DLSC.

LGSA is working on the assumption that the LLA, once established, will continue to support the scope of the LGSA project. In Table 1.1 below we outline some of the potential risks and how LGSA will mitigate them should they occur. LGSA will monitor these risks, and others as they emerge, through a quarterly review to be included in the quarterly reports. Through project implementation LGSA staff will have a sense of what to

anticipate and when to engage USAID, the GOL, and the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) in a discussion on the implementation of mitigation measures.

TABLE I.1. LGSA IMPLEMENTATION RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Risk	Mitigation Measure
Liberia Land Authority Act not promulgated	Collaborate with the Interim Land Task Force (ITLF). The Land Governance Adviser will continue work on the institutional audits of relevant land governance institutions. These will be further elaborated if necessary. The Land Administration Policy provides a vision for GOL on the objectives for land administration. If the LLA is not promulgated the LA Policy identifies actions to be taken in Land Administration. Once the Land Administration Policy has been presented to the GOL, LGSA will support a public information campaign to inform the public of its contents.
Delay in functionality of Liberia Land Authority	Increase efforts with the ITLF by providing additional institutional restructuring expertise. A draft transition plan has been finalized and shared with the ITLF. This will be the basis for support to the transition team once it is appointed. It is assumed that members of the ITLF will be appointed as members of the transition team that will come into effect once the Liberia Land Authority Bill is passed thus providing institutional continuity. Clarity on the timing of operations will be necessary to avoid unrealistic expectations on full functionality, necessitating a prioritization of critical areas of effort.
Delay in World Bank Land Administration Project (LAP)	Now that the ITLF has been appointed there is an entity with which the World Bank can negotiate the LAP. LGSA will assist, where and when appropriate, in the finalization of the World Bank PAD to ensure a minimization of project overlaps.
Land Rights Act not promulgated	Continued work with rural communities to develop governance structures to manage access to community land and resources in accordance with the Land Rights Policy adopted by government. Collaborate with CSOs and Liberia Land Authority on actionable steps. These would include further public information campaigns for the Land Rights Policy. LGSA will support the establishment of a working group on land rights to further discussions of the objectives of the land rights policy to enhance the understanding of the policy's objectives.
Declining support of GOL stakeholders	Remain flexible to adapt to changing needs with the demand-driven approach; engage PAC consistently for guidance and communication of LGSA priorities; Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between LGSA, LLA, and USAID to detail steps to be taken when there is a change in level and type of support. With future changes in leadership comes the potential for a change in support of LGSA objectives. LGSA will work with the ITLF and Liberia Land Authority to ensure that a transition plan is in place to support LGSA activities, and engage the PAC as necessary should new leadership not be as supportive.
Community input not sufficient in application of Land Rights Law	Engage in community outreach once the Land Rights Law (LRL) passes; hold participatory consultations on content of Land Rights Policy and Law to engage CSOs and communities in implementing regulations and customary land rights recognition process. Continuously monitor community engagement and understanding of options available and resources provided.
Key land rights messages not appropriately disseminated	Form partnerships with local organizations/individuals with high social legitimacy to take on community engagement, public education, and outreach roles. Work will focus on media options and CSO/NGO partners.
Community land rights activities generate or exacerbate land conflicts	Collaborate with Land Coordination Centers (LCCs) and local dispute resolution entities to analyze risks and establish dispute resolution systems before work begins in the communities; CDR and Parley provide additional dispute resolution training as needed.
Customary land rights recognition process more time and resource intensive than anticipated	Share responsibility for implementation of agreed upon land rights process with government, CSOs and communities. Re-evaluate phased and costed customary land rights implementation plan to learn from ongoing experience and modify implementation plan accordingly.
Existing legislative framework for deed registration doesn't adequately support community deed process	Collaborate with the Center for National Documents and Records Agency (CNDRA)/LLA to clarify the legal foundation for deeds registration in hopes of simplifying the process. Propose legislative/regulatory reform if appropriate.

Risk	Mitigation Measure
Re-emergence of Ebola virus	Train staff/counterparts on health and safety measures; restrict activities as necessary.
Elections	Presidential elections to be held in 2017 and legislative (House of Representatives and Senate) elections may impact the level of support for land governance. Remain flexible to changing focus of GOL actors. Monitor role of land in campaign dialogue.

2.0 PROJECT UPDATE

2.1 SUPPORT PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) AND GOL ENGAGEMENT

2.1.1 ESTABLISH PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The delay in the passage of the Liberia Land Authority Bill has meant that there has been no movement to establish the Project Advisory Committee. However, with the appointment of the ITLF there is now an institution with which LGSA can engage to establish this committee. Preliminary discussions have been held with the Chairman of the ITLF and we have begun to identify potential individuals and institutions for possible PAC membership with the likelihood of the PAC being established and having its first meeting in early April.

2.2 COMPONENT I: STRENGTHEN POLICY, LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR LAND GOVERNANCE

2.2.1 PROVIDE ADVISORY AND DEMAND DRIVEN SUPPORT TO LAND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

LGSA has embedded the COP within the LC/ITLF where he spends half of his time providing day-to-day advice and mentorship on direction of the legal framework and general technical assistance. In addition, LGSA technical experts, the Land Governance Advisor and Land Administration Specialist, are also located part-time in the LC/ITLF.

There are two pieces of legislation currently under consideration by the Legislature: The Land Rights Bill (which provides legal authority for the provisions of the adopted Land Rights Policy), and the Liberia Land Authority Bill (which consolidates all government land administration and management activities under one entity).

The Land Rights Bill was submitted to the legislature for consideration in July of 2014. A public hearing on that bill was held in August 2015. However, at that time the LC and the Legislature decided that they should prioritize the Liberia Land Authority Bill given the pending expiration of the LC's mandate in early January 2016. Once the Liberia Land Authority Law has been promulgated work will resume on moving the Land Rights Bill through the legislative process. LGSA will work with the ITLF and LLA to organize a series of working group discussions to address issues of concern over specific provisions of the Land Rights Bill.

The Liberia Land Authority Bill was therefore submitted to the Legislature in August 2015. A public hearing was held in late September during an extended period of the Legislature. However, the bill did not move out of committee due to a lack of understanding of the provisions in the Bill. Numerous Cabinet working group sessions were held to review both the Liberia Land Authority Bill and the Land Rights Bill for resubmission to the Legislature during its session beginning in January. The COP worked with the Land Commission to prepare submissions and to review the content of the discussion as they were taking place.

A second public hearing on the Liberia Land Authority Bill was held in February. The Senate Committee has since been reviewing the provisions of the bill and at the end of March provided the ITLF with their proposed amendments for review by the ITLF and final submission to the committee.

2.2.2 CONDUCT AND DISSEMINATE POLICY RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

In December 2015, LGSA Consultant John Bruce reviewed the regulatory framework for future work in this area focusing on updating his 2010 study on land reform, completing a review of the processes undertaken by the Land Commission in the development of the current draft legislation, providing an analysis of the status of legal and regulatory review process, suggesting a prioritization of laws and regulatory reforms needed in the future, and identifying possible constraints to this process. His work will provide a basis of legal and regulatory reform activities for the Liberia Land Authority once it is established.

Dr. Bruce's report has been circulated for comments resulting in a number of suggested additions and revisions. The report is being finalized and will be disseminated in April 2016.

The proposed prioritization does not suggest an immediate drafting of legislation, as further research may need to take place, a policy task force may need to be established, etc. The utilization of task forces to address a specific policy reform agenda has proven to be a very effective mechanism to engage relevant individuals and institutions in the law and regulatory reform process and is likely to continue to be the mechanism adopted by the Liberia Land Authority once it has developed its work plan.

The Land Administration Policy essentially can be seen as the work plan for the new Liberia Land Authority. The road map for policy reform and legal reform remains on track, though with some adjustment of timeframe, and will be taken up by the Liberia Land Authority once it is established.

TABLE 2.1. YEAR I ROAD MAP FOR POLICY AND LEGAL REFORM

Legal Reform	Status and Next Steps	Short-to-Medium-Term Impacts	Anticipated Reform Timeframe
Liberia Land Authority Act	Under review by legislature; once passed, public outreach, guidelines for implementation	Establishment of LLA; streamlined approach to land governance; cohesion among GOL partners	Q3 – Q4
Land Rights Act	Under review by legislature; once passed, public outreach, guidelines for implementation	Formal recognition of customary land tenure; public awareness of land rights improved	Q3 – Q5
Regulations on County Land Board and County Land Team	Workshops and task force to develop regulations in consultation with county level stakeholders	Establish functionality of County Land Boards as provided in the Liberia Land Authority Act	Q3-Q5
Regulations under Land Rights Law	Not yet begun; begin consultations and drafting after Land Rights Act promulgated. Undertake action research on issues surrounding community self-identification and delimitation of community land resources	Enables demarcating and registering customary land; establishment of community land and management associations	Q5 – Q10
Land Survey Act	Creation of a task force to determine the provisions of the survey act within the context of Liberia needs and international standards	Reform of survey profession in Liberia	Q4-Q8
Regulations under Liberia Land Authority Law	Not yet begun; begin consultations and drafting after Liberia Land Authority Act promulgated	Procedures for making applications to LLA; codes of conduct established	Q4 – Q10
Land Rights Registration Act	Establishment of a task force to explore the feasibility of a single land rights registration act that would cover both deed and title registration and provide for the registration of customary rights.	Strengthen the process of land rights registration, clarifying issue of title vs. deeds registration and ensuring a mechanism for the registration of customary land rights.	Q4-Q8

Legal Reform	Status and Next Steps	Short-to-Medium-Term Impacts	Anticipated Reform Timeframe
Regulations on the sale, lease, and concessions of public and government land	Establish a task force to develop these regulations with broad public consultation	Clarification of the process for transparency in the alienation of public and government land	Q4-Q8
Amendments to harmonize policies and laws	Harmonize Land Rights Act's customary land provisions with Community Rights Law (CRL); Land Administration Policy provisions with legislation; and regulations related to survey, land valuation, and taxation	Harmonized legal framework; fewer misinterpretations of policies, law, regulations	Ongoing over life of project
Draft policies and laws related to land tenure	Ongoing review and comment on draft policies and laws related to land tenure (e.g. mining, decentralization, environmental protection, and forestry)	Policies, laws and regulations streamlined across sectors; less confusion in implementation	Ongoing over life of project

2.2.3 DEVELOP AND DISSEMINATE PUBLIC INFORMATION ON PROPOSED REFORMS

In January the LGSA, in coordination with the Land Commission undertook the second of a series of public awareness campaigns designed to provide information to the public on the proposed Land Rights Bill and Liberia Land Authority Bill. This is discussed at length under Component 4 below. A third series of public awareness campaigns will take place in the next quarter to visit the remaining counties.

2.3 COMPONENT 2: IMPROVE HUMAN AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY FOR LAND GOVERNANCE

2.3.1 SUPPORT MASTER’S-LEVEL TRAINING OF GOL LAND GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS

Minimal work has been done on this component pending the establishment of the Liberia Land Authority and the completion of an institutional audit of existing land sector agencies. Both activities are expected to be completed during the next quarter.

2.3.2 SUPPORT DECENTRALIZED MANAGEMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

In February and March the Land Governance Adviser and Land Administration Specialist, along with the Deputy Director and Montserrado Registrar of CNDRA, undertook an institutional audit of all CNDRA offices. The audit focused on staffing, facilities (furniture, equipment, technology, etc.), information, and the provision of services. A draft report has been prepared and is being finalized. The same format of the audit will be used to conduct a similar exercise with the former Land Commission and the Department of Lands, Survey and Cartography (DLSC) in the coming quarter.

During this audit, the team met with available local authorities in all counties visited including Superintendents, City Mayors, Resident Land Surveyors, and Land Commissioners. The purpose of the meetings were to acquaint the local authorities with the LGSA project, its objectives and activities, provide further details of the institutional audits and to assess the level of awareness of the Bills currently before the Legislature.

Preliminary findings indicate that:

- Contrary to previously held views of the lack of coordination between the Land Commissioners and Resident Land Surveyors, the audit team found that in most of the counties they share offices and thus work together with a general understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities.
- All of the counties have little or no knowledge of the two bills (Liberia Land Authority and Land Rights) before the Legislature.
- There are serious issues surrounding city parcels, illegal sales and multiple sales of land, and deeds not being updated after transactions in almost every county.

The Land Governance Adviser also completed a draft transition plan for the Liberia Land Authority. The proposed plan delineates actions to be taken, responsible parties, expected outcomes, and a tentative schedule for each action. A land governance functions/government entities matrix was prepared outlining the current situation as well as indicating which functions will be transferred to the LLA and which will be retained by government entities with their current mandate. In the next quarter the transition plan will be reviewed by the ILTF and preparations will begin in anticipation of the passage of the Land Authority Bill.

2.3.3 INCREASE AWARENESS AND CAPACITY OF GOL LAND GOVERNANCE INSTITUTIONS

Shortly after the Land Commission was established a week long orientation program was completed which provided the Commissioners and staff with key information and theoretical perspectives on the areas identified in the Liberia land program. The objectives of that retreat was to 1) ensure that Commissioners have a common body of knowledge regarding land tenure issues; 2) get Commissioners to work as a group, with one voice; 3) identify key issues that need to be addressed; and 4) develop a preliminary work plan. All participants in that workshop have indicated that it was a critical first step for the functioning of the Land Commission.

LGSA is proposing to undertake a similar exercise once the Liberia Land Authority is established and the transition team appointed. The focal participants will be members of the transition team, but will also include institutional and donor representatives, members of the NGO/CSO community, and land related professionals as appropriate. The workshop will be coordinated by Ivan Ford, but also include John Bruce as well as Sam Durland, an institutional reform specialist that assisted the Lesotho government in the establishment of their Land Agency. The objective of this training program will be to increase awareness within the institutions impacted by the establishment of the LLA on the principles and guidelines for responsible land governance and the implications of the Land Rights Policy and Land Rights Law. This will serve as an opportunity to address concerns that individuals or institutions may have on the new laws or the LLA itself. LGSA partners will provide input on the design of the participatory training and on the incorporation of women's land rights, customary tenure, and dispute resolution, among other subject areas.

Planning for this program will move forward when the Liberia Land Authority Bill passes into law. Assuming enactment before the end of April, this training program could be scheduled for mid to late June.

2.3.4 DEVELOP BUSINESS PLAN FOR LIBERIA LAND AUTHORITY, SUPPORT INSTITUTIONAL TRANSITION, AND ESTABLISH MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

No work has been done on this activity pending the establishment of the Liberia Land Authority and clarification of division of resources provided by LGSA and the forthcoming World Bank Land Administration project.

2.3.5 SUPPORT PUBLIC OUTREACH AND AWARENESS

Public outreach around the establishment of the Liberia Land Authority will begin once the institution is fully established.

2.4 COMPONENT 3: CONDUCT ACTION RESEARCH SUPPORTING LAND RIGHTS POLICY

As indicated earlier (section 1.1 above) a review of implementing partner work plans and proposals for action research supporting the land rights policy took place in early March. The workshop offered an opportunity for all implementing partners to present their proposed work plans to all partners, to discuss options, and to ensure coordination of activities. The ultimate focus of the workshop was to reach consensus on the action research topics and the approach to be used to move the research agenda forward. An illustrative learning agenda is presented as Table 2.2 below.

Implementing partners have since developed individual concepts notes to address the research topic to which they have been designated as the lead organization. These concept notes have been shared with the Chairman of the Interim Land Task Force from whom comments are yet to be forthcoming. Once the PAC has been established they will be briefed on the research agenda.

A number of broader issues remain outstanding and will be addressed both by the action research as well as by a number of workshops with knowledgeable people slated to begin early in the next quarter. These issues surround the definition of ‘community’ (‘community’ relative to clan, sub clan, town, etc.); the concept of ‘strangers’ and their role in community decision making, access to resources, and resource allocation; tribal certificates; community boundaries, etc. LGSA has proposed hosting a series of ½ to 1 day workshops with selected individuals to brainstorm on these issues.

TABLE 2.2: ILLUSTRATIVE LEARNING AGENDA TOPICS FOR CONSULTATION WITH GOL

No.	Topic	Description	Lead Organization
1	Study on Boundary Identification and Negotiations	Identify target communities for study. Conduct a desk study of boundary identification and demarcation strategies. Draft <i>Guidance on Best Practices for Community Land, Demarcation and Formal Recognition</i> . Review innovative approaches for using GIS and mobile technologies to reduce costs for boundary demarcation and registration of community constitutions and by-laws. Design and conduct several prototype training programs for community boundary identification and demarcation. Monitor, coach and document procedures and outcomes of inter-community negotiations to identify and demarcate their boundaries. Integrate lessons learned from community negotiations and refinement of the guidance document.	CDR/Parley
2	Study on Current Land Dispute Resolution Models	Research how land disputes of various types are currently and will be resolved in the future. Focus on entities that can or will provide dispute resolution services, their authorities and powers, where they will be located in relation to the LLA.	CDR/Parley
3	Study on Models for Community Land Governance	Identify all customary land protection initiatives that have been carried out to date in Liberia. Conduct a comprehensive mapping of Liberian CSOs that have worked on land, natural resource, and forestry related programming. Identify and review all customary land protection activities completed by international organizations and the Liberian government. After reviewing all customary land protection activities to date, select initiatives that have progressed far enough to take part in a series of 5-6 impact assessments. Document best practices and remaining challenges from previous initiatives to protect customary land in Liberia. The methodology and indicators for the assessments will be fully based on the finalized learning and research agenda.	Namati
4	Study on Women's Land Rights	Expand on LPIS women's land rights study to include community-based field research in order to design and implement a gender-equitable land governance decentralization process. Study to focus on how to protect women's rights and access to land rights in the context of external investment, concessions, land conversion of community land, and allocation of household plots in fee simple. Study will seek to better understand customary norms related to inheritance, co-habitation, and women's participation in decision-making processes. Study will explore gender aspects of dispute resolution mechanisms regarding land, and provide recommendations for enforcement when communities fail to respect women's land rights.	Landesa
5	Study on Process for Examining Claims	Review and recommend potential processes for examining and simultaneously vetting/documenting all claims within a community boundary (i.e. Tribal Certificates, private land, protected areas, concessions, competing community claims, shared resources, etc.). Conduct desk research on similar initiatives in other countries in the region. Design a pilot process to vet and document private land claims. After developing the process, four communities will be selected that have completed community land protection activities and will conduct action research on the process of vetting and documenting all tribal certificates, concession agreements, and other private land claims contained within the community.	Namati
6	Study on Definition of Community Membership	Conduct field research to help define what membership means to a community and identify conflicts associated with this process. Examine how to protect rights of strangers, widows, single or divorced women, women in informal unions, vulnerable groups.	SDI
7	Political Ecology of Land and Agriculture Concessions in Liberia	Emmanuel Urey's PhD dissertation on land tenure, governance, livelihood and food security strategies of various communities whose lands are either appropriated by concession or have different levels of land appropriation threats. Using a broad historical analysis, the dissertation also seeks to understand factors that have given rise to the granting of large-scale agriculture concessions by the Liberian government, methods of choosing locations where agriculture concessions are placed and how different communities respond to large-scale land appropriations.	Emmanuel Urey

2.5 COMPONENT 4: STRENGTHEN CIVIL SOCIETY, PRIVATE SECTOR, AND CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN LAND GOVERNANCE

2.5.1 DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS

During this quarter, the LGSA team saw the need to continue the outreach campaign while awaiting the passage of the Land Rights and Liberia Land Authority Bills in order to further disseminate information on the bills. Continuing from the first quarter, the public information campaign entered its second phase reaching an additional five counties.

As with the first phase of the campaign in quarter one, the objectives were:

1. to increase public information about the Land Rights Bill and Liberia Land Authority Bill and the progress towards getting the legislation passed;
2. to give citizens and community members talking/discussion points to meet and discuss with their national and community leaders; and
3. to engage local media institutions and encourage the dissemination of land governance-related information into the public domain.

The campaign took place over the course of 16 days and covered Lofa, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, River Cess and Grand Bassa Counties. A four-member team comprised of Richlue O. BURPHY, (LGSA Communications and Outreach Specialist), Prince Tucker (LGSA Driver), Arthur Tucker (Land Commission Communications Specialist), and Jerry Siakor (Land Commission Special Assistant to Commissioner for Outreach and Communications) was sent to the field to undertake the activities. In each county the team met with government and community leaders as well as other key stakeholders. The campaign made use of personnel from the existing Land Coordinating Centers (LCCs) in some of the counties to help with the monitoring of the messages and to support distribution of the information.

Materials used during phase one of the campaign were printed again for distribution. Five thousand stickers were given to community residents, motorcycle and vehicle drivers, as well as placed on public facilities. They contained the same key land rights messages that reinforced current law as well as principles of the Land Rights Policy and the pending bills. The recorded skit emphasizing these messages was distributed to community radio stations for multiple airings in simple Liberian English as well as in the key local languages of Kpelle, Bassa, Kru, Krahn, Lorma, Kissi Gbandi, Mandingo, and Mande.

During this second phase of the campaign, we introduced a public address system that was newly procured by the project. Events were organized at vantage points in the counties and people were gathered to watch video documentaries from the Land Commission. The documentaries included one produced by the Land Commission titled 'I Belong to You' that explained the processes involved in drafting the Land Rights Policy and the Land Rights Bill including validation workshops, stakeholder meetings, launching, and the roles others played. In addition, a video from Burundi was played that showed how the people of that nation came up with their own land rights law. This video conveyed that land issues are not peculiar to Liberia and that just as other nations were able to overcome them, Liberia can do same.

In some of the counties the campaign team also held forums on schools campuses which gave students and school authorities the opportunity to participate in discussions and ask questions on the two bills.

During the campaign, the Gender and Land Specialist teamed up with the Communication Specialist and M&E Specialist to conduct a five-day field mission to Lofa County in order to monitor and provide gender insights to the ongoing information campaign. Following the campaign, recommendations were made to the Communication Specialist to allow for better inclusion of women in the campaign. Suggestions included holding focused group sensitization, identifying alternative communication strategies with full participation of women and other marginalized persons, and allowing women to

participate and contribute to drama and jingles. The campaign incorporated the recommendations where possible in order to provide a more gender responsive outreach effort.

While in the field the Gender Specialist met with women's groups to gather information on specific land rights issues affecting women in their communities and to have better understanding of women's land rights status. This information will further inform plans for activities that will support women in asserting their rights when the bills become law.

During the campaign, the team often encountered community residents that were anxious to ask questions on land issues affecting them. Examples of questions asked were:

- How will the passage of the Liberia Land Authority Bill affect the ordinary man in the village who cannot read or write?
- Who is responsible to pass the Liberia Land Authority Bill - the President, the lawmakers or the public?
- What is the government doing with people who are selling one land to more than two persons?
- Can women own land?

Concerns were addressed in accordance with the Land Rights Policy. These inquiries and the resulting discussions encouraged engagement on land rights issues and demonstrated communities' continued interest knowing their rights and the corresponding laws.

2.5.2 Gender Responsive Strategies and Activities

On January 11, 2016 the Gender and Land Specialist, Izatta Nagbe, joined the LGSA team with the primary responsibility to support LGSA staff and external partners to mainstream gender across the land reform process. Using the findings from field engagements and one-on one discussions with LGSA staff and the information from the LGSA Inception Plans, the Gender Specialist developed a one year gender mainstreaming implementation plan.

During this quarter the Gender Specialist began the process of mapping women's land rights focused organizations and advocates through one-on-one engagements and meetings. The mapping targeted civil society organizations, government ministries and agencies, and the UN. This initiative was meant to enhance future collaboration as well as identify capacity gaps that will inform gender mainstreaming support and ensure a gender sensitive land reform process.

Collaborating with LGSA's partner Landesa, the Gender Specialist identified 30 gender focused organizations to participate in one-on-one meetings as well as a larger stakeholders meeting that was held in February. The meeting aimed to discuss the status of the land reform process, identify gender gaps and opportunities in the reform process, and to discuss effective mechanisms for gender responsive land reform process. Participants included relevant government ministries and agencies, civil society representatives, and representatives from the UN. 31 people (20 women and 11men) attended the meeting.

In continuation of gathering individual perspectives on ensuring gender responsive land reform, several bilateral meetings were held with key women's land rights stakeholders including the Women NGOs Secretariat (WONGOSOL), the Assistant Minister for Economic Affairs, and the Ministry of Justice. The Assistant Minister of Economic Affairs proposed creating a new Women's Land Rights body. She emphasized the need for engaging with communities and in particular rural women, establishing a clear and defined role of women in the new land structure, and strengthening cohesiveness between the women's land rights body and the Liberia Land Authority. She also stressed the need to collaborate with other stakeholders. WONGOSOL advised that having a gender focused institution will ensure that women's issues are not side swept in the reform process and stressed the need for clear and defined roles for women in the reform process.

To ensure full gender integration across LGSA programs and enhance the capacity of staff and partners the Gender Specialist, in coordination with Landesa, conducted a Gender Awareness Training for LGSA

staff and LGSA partners. Discussions focused on defining key gender terminology, the role of and commitment to gender/women's land rights within LGSA, gender inequality in access, use, control, ownership, and inheritance, and brainstorming on opportunities for conducting gender-responsive work within LGSA. An introduction to the LGSA Gender Strategy was presented as well.

During the latter part of the quarter a Gender Assessment was carried out in the following six counties: Montserrado, Margibi, Nimba, Lofa, Bong, and Maryland. Using a checklist the assessment took place over two weeks focusing on the administrative and management structures including the Land Coordination Centers, Land Commissioners, City Mayors, and Alternative Disputes Resolution (ADR) Practitioners in the counties. The assessment reviewed the staffing structure at these entities, their capacity to mainstream gender, program delivery, and staff knowledge of women's land rights issues in their localities. Gender gaps were identified within the land administrative and management structures. Key gaps identified were:

- Staffing at LCCs and among ADR practitioners had women making up less than 25% of the staff composition. It was found that the criteria used for the selection of ADR practitioners did not take into consideration the gender roles and differing challenges of men and women. In addition, the LCC staff did not receive training on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) nor was there any action taken to prevent SEA even though staff participating in the assessment agreed that SEA should be addressed as majority of the women coming to access the services are in vulnerable situations. There is a code of conduct for LCC staff but sexual conduct is not sufficiently addressed.
- The County Land Commissioners informed the team that community land management was solely in the hands of men and that women had little or no information on their land rights. Almost all counties informed that this practice was more prevalent in the Muslim community.
- Legislation established to promote equitable access to land and property was not known by those working in the land administration and management structures.

These findings and lessons learned will help to improve new land administration and management structures as well inform future gender mainstreaming interventions that will ensure gender equitable service delivery for men, women, youth and other marginalized persons.

2.5.3 Develop and Manage GUC Supporting Civil Society and Private Sector

With the addition of the Grants and Subcontracts Manager, Comfort Taub, in this quarter, potential mechanisms for grant solicitations were reviewed and discussed in relation to future project activities. Once USAID provides formal approval of LGSA's Grants Management Plan steps will be taken towards identifying opportunities for the grants program.

As part of her orientation to the project, the LGSA Grants and Subcontracts Manager participated in a remote training with home office Grants under Contract (GUC) staff. The training focused on acquisition versus assistance with an emphasis on choosing the appropriate implementing instrument for the LGSA task order.

2.5.4 STRENGTHEN PRIVATE PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS OF SURVEYORS AND LAND PROFESSIONALS

LGSA provided support for the 1st Annual Conference of the Association of Professional Land Surveyors of Liberia (APSUL) on Friday, January 29. The 100 registered participants were 93 male and seven female; 52 registered and licensed surveyors, 26 non licensed surveyors, 10 surveyor technicians, and 13 others; with 75 attending as government surveyors (including three surveyor technicians), six private surveyors, and 19 others. The major outcomes of this first meeting were:

- An overwhelming acceptance of the idea of privatization of the surveying profession;
- A data base of members created to include membership category, age, contact information and photo;

- Plans for a general meeting to be held to carry out with the election of APSUL executive committee.

The Association has been able to procure an office and has begun planning for the elections of officers to take place early in the next quarter. LGSA is assisting in the development of a code of conduct and grievance procedure mechanism for the profession. This is highlighted in the success story (Annex A).

2.5.5 FACILITATE ESTABLISHMENT OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (PPPS)

Namati continues the development of a roster of CSO/NGO entities in Liberia that have experience in the land sector. The engagement of these organizations will be critical for the customary land rights recognition activities under Component 3. Specific criteria being considered are related to experience and geographical diversity.

Further work will be done to identify and work with professional organizations that could benefit from engagement with LGSA through the undertaking of specific project activities.

2.6 QUARTERLY MONITORING AND EVALUATION REPORT

During this quarter of project implementation, four main activities took place: (1) training of LCC volunteers on data collection based on select indicators, (2) ePORT training in Ghana, (3) completion and submission of the M&E plan and (4) quarterly data collection.

2.6.1 QUARTERLY DATA COLLECTION AND VALIDATION

Monitoring and evaluation of project activities involves quarterly data collection, reviewing data and records, and reporting achievements against set targets. During this period, we visited all six of the Land Commission's Land Coordination Centers, which, although officially closed, continue to operate on a voluntary basis, and reviewed and validated their data through inspection of ledgers and other record books or forms. Data was verified at the community level as well as at the data source. Corrections were done where possible, with data collected for reporting. The process was jointly done with (former) LCC staff in the various counties and the Land Commission's M&E Manager. In addition to data collected from the LCCs, data was also gathered from the local authorities. However it was a challenge to decipher the reports from the local authorities as type writers are still being used and very little or poor information is given. Training is needed due to the poor recording and reporting.

Prior to the data collection the LCC staff were mentored with regards to LGSA indicators and data collection methods and tools. A total of 38 persons of the six LCC's were mentored, including:

1. Lofa: 4 persons
2. Bong: 4 persons
3. Maryland: 5 persons
4. Nimba: 5 persons
5. Margibi: 10 persons
6. Montserrado: 10 persons

Previously the LCCs supported volunteer mediation practitioners in supervision, training, and communication when the Land Commission was fully operational. Increasingly many of these practitioners are no longer willing to continue the service or are discouraged due to the abrupt closure of the LCCs. They cannot afford scratch cards to call disputants for mediation nor are they willing to walk the distances needed to carry out the mediation. With the rainy season approaching the volunteers will not be able to mediate cases and that may cause delays in mediation and subsequent resolution.

Due to a permanent closure of Land Commission and the LCCs, we have great concern regarding our ability to collect in the next quarter (April – June 2016) utilizing these resources.

2.6.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

No impact assessments were carried out this quarter.

2.6.3 OTHER M & E ACTIVITIES

A three day training on Tetra Tech’s electronic Project Observation Reporting and Tracking system (ePORT) was conducted in Ghana in which LGSA M&E Specialist, Anthony Kollie, was in attendance. The ePORT training was led by Home Office staff, namely M&E Specialist, Carolyn Ramsdell and Technology for Development Specialist, Leland Smith. The training was jointed funded amongst USAID projects in the region being implemented by Tetra Tech. The training focused on set-up, management, and best practices within ePORT which involved learning about using the multiple platforms that build the ePORT system. The overall objective of the regional training was to create a community of practice in West Africa to enhance development and approaches to implementing the M&E tools.

The M&E plan was in the process of finalization with USAID and the LGSA COR during this quarter. The next quarter will involve meeting with the Liberia Strategic Analysis Project (LSA) for training and subsequent entry of all LGSA’s indicators into USAID’s PIDS system.

TABLE 2.3: PERFORMANCE INDICATOR TRACKER

Name of Indicator	Baseline data	LOP Target	Year 1 Target	Y1,Q2 Achievement	Percent of Achievement	Remark
1.1: Number of specific pieces of legislation or implementing regulations proposed, adopted, and/or implemented affecting property rights of the urban and rural poor as a result of USG assistance ¹	0	12	2	0	0%	
1.2: Number of gender-responsive public consultations held regarding proposed policy, legal and regulatory reforms	0	48	8	1	2.1%	Conducted by the Gender Specialist.
1.3: Number of individuals trained in land tenure and property rights as a result of USG assistance	0	1900	200	0	0%	
1.3a: Percent of women trained in land tenure and property rights as a result of USG assistance	0	570	50	0	0%	
2.1: Number of land administration and service entities, offices, or other related facilities that the project technically or physically establishes or upgrades as a result of USG assistance	0	7	1	1	14.3%	CNDRA
2.2: Number of individuals seeking land administration services	425	2540	450	306	12.0%	From all six counties
2.3: Number of individuals from land governance institutions who received Master's-degrees in land administration and governance as a result of USG support.	0	4	0	0	0%	

¹ Indicator 1.1 contributes to a USAID Standard Indicator (FACTS 4.7.4-10 or EG.10.4-1)

Name of Indicator	Baseline data	LOP Target	Year 1 Target	Y1,Q2 Achievement	Percent of Achievement	Remark
2.4: Number of land transactions completed	2500	16000	2600	779	4.9%	Six counties did not report.
3.1: Percentage of adults in pilot areas who report that their land tenure rights are secure	TBD	15% over the base	0	0	0%	
3.2: Number of parcels/ communities with relevant parcel information corrected or newly incorporated into an official land administration system as a result of USG assistance	0	40	0	0	0%	
3.3: Number of households or organizations with formalized land rights as a result of USG assistance	0	20%	0	0	0%	
3.3a: Percent of these households for which the formal rights explicitly include women	0	30% of ind.3.3	0	0	0%	
3.4: Number of disputed land and property rights cases resolved by local authorities, contractors, mediators or courts as a result of USG assistance	70	400	70	37	9.3%	Not all of these cases were resolved with MOUs. Some were traditionally resolved by mediators in the absence of LCCs and some were resolved in courts.
3.5: Percentage of community governance entities implementing rules for the inclusion of women, youth and strangers	0	40	0	0	0%	
4.1: Number of gender responsive outreach materials on land tenure and property rights distributed through USG assistance	0	66	9	N/A	0%	

Name of Indicator	Baseline data	LOP Target	Year 1 Target	Y1,Q2 Achievement	Percent of Achievement	Remark
4.2: Number of gender responsive public outreach activities on land tenure and property rights held with USG assistance	0	474	4	1	0.2%	One activity conducted in 5 counties.
4.3: Number of new or existing private professional organizations of surveyors and other land related professions supported	0	9	1	1	11.1%	Surveyors association
4.4: Number of marginalized people who have access to land tenure and property rights services from land governance institutions	150	900	160	81	9.0%	From all six counties
4.4a: Percent of women among the marginalized people who have access to land tenure and property rights services from land governance institutions	TBD	75% of 900	75% of 160	50 (61.7%)	61.7%	From all six counties
4.5: Number of NGO's, CSO's and private sector organizations engaged in gender-responsive land tenure and property rights activities as a result of USG assistance	0	25	5	0	0%	

3.0 LGSA ADMINISTRATION

3.1 IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING

In January David Felson, LGSA's Deputy Project Manager from Tetra Tech home office, traveled to Liberia to review the first five months of start-up activities and to support project implementation planning and assist with financial projections for Year 1 of the project. He also met with USAID to clarify reporting protocols for project communication with the USAID Mission.

3.2 PARTNERS MEETING

During this quarter Megan Huth, LGSA's Project Manager from Tetra Tech home office along with individuals from Landesa, Namati, and CRM traveled to Liberia to attend the LGSA partner's workshop along with Parley, SDI, and representatives from the former Land Commission. The objective of the workshop was to present respective work plans and finalize the action research topics and methodology. The two day workshop was held at the Land Commission office building in order to make use of the vacant space.

3.3 PERSONNEL

Gender Specialist, Izatta Nagbe, joined the team in January.

Advertisements were placed and recruitment commenced for the Grants and Subcontracts Specialist. After interviews and reference checks, Comfort Traub was hired and started with LGSA in March.

Namati completed their recruitment process and have selected Doebazee Zaza as the Community Engagement Specialist. Mr. Zaza will be taking his post in Quarter 3.

3.4 PROCUREMENT

No major procurements occurred during this quarter. A master inventory list for LGSA is maintained with monthly reports submitted to the Tetra Tech home office detailing the equipment purchased and received by the project each month.

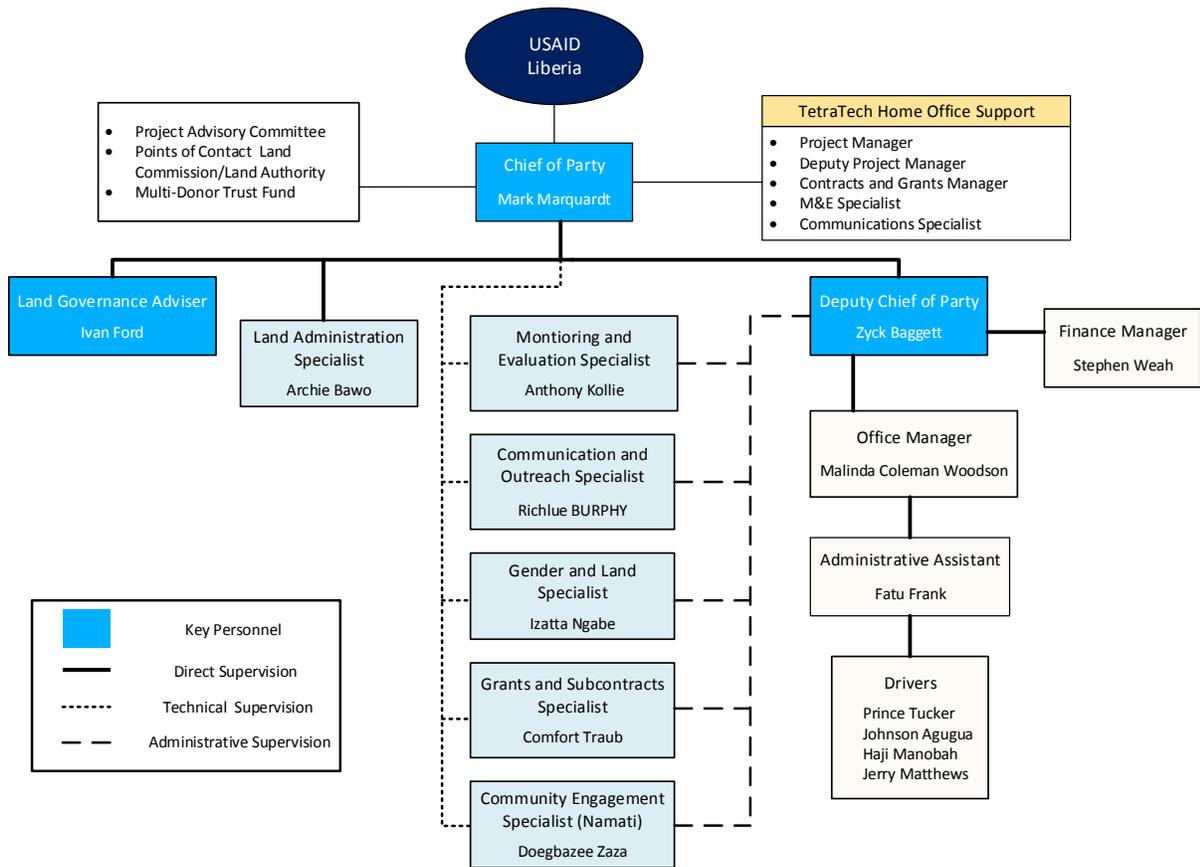
3.5 FINANCE

Our Finance Manager, Stephen Weah, is responsible for the LGSA financial reporting, along with the Tetra Tech home office. Accounting is done with QuickBooks and all reports and receipts are uploaded and submitted monthly to the home office.

3.6 POLICY DOCUMENTS

All local employee contracts were submitted to the Ministry of Labor for their review and attestation. Upon their recommendation, the contracts were submitted to a Liberian lawyer for review to ensure compliance with the new provisions of the recent Labor Law.

FIGURE 3.1: LGSA ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



ANNEX A: SUCCESS STORY



SUCCESS STORY

Surveyor's Association Finding Its Footing



Photo: Archie Bawo/USAID/LGSA

Presentation of APLSUL legal documents to J. Josephus Burgess, Interim President by Archie Bawo, LGSA Land Administration Specialist

“Historically the surveyors association has been ineffective in helping to improve the Liberia land sector. Surveyors are often seen by the general public as contributing towards some of the problems that the sector is currently facing, and we need to change this.”

J. Josephus Burgess, Interim President of APLSUL and Director of Surveys

“It will be a good thing to see the Surveying licensing Board come under APLSUL ... and the general public understand the gaps and who really is a surveyor, grantor, and grantee.”

Assistant Minister for Lands, Surveys and Cartography, at the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy, George Miller

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Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development
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Surveying and mapping plays a very important role in an effective land administration system. As Liberia strives for an improved land administration system that meets global standards, efforts are being made to establish a professional land surveyors association to collect and provide spatial information. Their services form a significant part of the land information infrastructure and management component of the land administration system.

A key transition in this process of institutionalizing surveyors is the legal transformation from the Cadastral Surveyors Association of Liberia (CASUAL) to the Association of Professional Land Surveyors of Liberia (APLSUL). Since USAID's Land Governance Support Activity (LGSA) began actively engaging and supporting APLSUL, the association has started taking key progressive steps in ensuring that it transforms the association as reforms take place within the land governance system.

Motivated by LGSA's support, APLSUL members have started pledging their support in the forms of tangible commitments to the association, by paying four months of their dues in advance, some making additional financial contributions for the operations of the association, while one donated a 5KVA generator for use at the new office. Office space has been procured and an ad-hoc elections commission has been established by the association to supervise APLSUL's upcoming special general elections slated for April 25, 2016. Furthermore, the association is in the process of developing a code of conduct and grievance procedure which will be adopted during the Electoral Workshop on April 9, 2016. This, and the associated publicity campaign, will assist in increasing public confidence in the profession as it provides a necessary mechanism for reprimanding its members and other surveyors for professional malpractice thereby becoming a self-regulating professional organization.

APLSUL has also begun a massive public relations and visibility campaign through radio talk-shows, newspaper articles, and banners placed in public locations. This campaign publicly conveys the Association's transformation which will help to increase the public's confidence in the profession.

Finally APLSUL is also in the process of paying arrears and renewing its membership to the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), to lift the expulsion of Liberia from the membership of that international body. Maintaining its membership will allow members to stay current on new developments and innovation in geometrics that could enhance their profession and possibly open opportunities for assistance with the training needs of surveying and mapping in Liberia.

ANNEX B: MEDIA

PRESS CLIPPINGS

1. **Group Warns Legislature Over Changes in Land Act (New Democrat, January 22, 2016)**
2. **Exacerbating Poverty: Civil Society Group Cautions Lawmakers Not to Temper with Land Rights Act (January 22, 2016)**

In this story, the Civil Society Working Group on Land warns the National Legislature not to change any aspect of the proposed law which was submitted for their consideration. The group claims they have information that considerable changes has been made to the Land Rights Bill without any public hearings. The group further warned that any such changes will erode rural communities their land rights.

3. **Land Dilemma; Country Risks Losing Over \$19 million over Delay (New Democrat, January 25, 2016)**

According to this story, Liberia stands to lose over \$19 million from donors and development partners in the land sector as the national legislature delays to pass the Land Rights and Liberia Land Authority Bills into laws. The story made mention of projects from USAID and the World Bank to support land governance and land administration but in the face of the law and legal frameworks and institutions. The story alleges that certain powerful individuals in and out of government are fighting the passage of the bills into law.

4. **Public Hearing on Liberia Land Authority Bill Reconvenes (Daily Observer, January 29, 2016)**

More of a feature article, the story announces to the public the public hearing on the Liberia Land Authority Bill that was convened by the Senate Committees and scheduled for February 17, 2016. This would be the last public hearing on the Authority Bill. Acknowledgement was made to Senator Chie for his bold step as chairman of the committee. The story also outlines the processes the bill has gone through and how far it has come.

5. **Grand Gedeh Communities to Give Out Land to Solve Crisis (FrontPage Africa, March 21, 2016)**

At least 6 communities out of nine in Grand Gedeh resolved to give out encroached parcels of land for concession purposes. The parcels of land which border Ivory Coast deep in the Gbarzon forest have been in conflict for over four years as citizens complain of Burkinabe's and Ivoirian's encroachments.

6. **Fear, Graft End Land Commission (New Democrat, March 28, 2016)**

This story talks of the final expiration of the tenure of the Land Commission and how operations cease but leave behind alarming financial responsibilities and other liabilities. It further outlines how President Madam Sirleaf served letters to all Commissioners and set up a task force for the transition to the new authority.

7. **Security Takeover; Government Behind Schedule (New Democrat, March 30, 2016)**

As UNMIL drawdown comes closer, people are concerned about the preparedness of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) to take over the national security of the state. Pundits say among other things, the slow pace on the part of the national legislature to pass the Land rights Law and other legislations currently before them is a risk factor in building peace and social cohesion in the country.

ANNEX C: PROJECT STAFF

Present Tetra Tech staff associated with the project are:

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