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LIBERIA ECONOMIC POLICY DIALOGUE ACTIVITY

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

OCTOBER 1, 2022 – SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

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LIBERIA ECONOMIC POLICY DIALOGUE ACTIVITY (LEPDA)

Year 4 Annual Progress Report

October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023

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ACRONYMS

ACET	African Center for Economic Transformation
AGO	Automotive Gas Oil/Diesel
AMELP	Activity Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Plan
ARIA	Africa Resilience Investment Accelerator
BIL	Banking Institute of Liberia
BVR	Biometric Voter Registration
CBL	Central Bank of Liberia
CePAR	Center for Policy Action and Research
CDG	Center for Democratic Governance
CHESS	Community Health Education and Social Services - Liberia
COP	Chief of Party
COR	Contracting Officer's Representative
CLE	Continuing Legal Education
CPP	Collaborating Political Party
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DFIs	Development Finance Institutions
DPO	Development Policy Operations
ECF	Extended Credit Facility
FPP	Financial Programming and Policy
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOL	Government of Liberia
GVL	Golden Veroleum Liberia
HPA	Heritage Partners & Associates
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
IMF	International Monetary Fund

IREDD	Institute for Research and Democratic Development
KII	Key Informant Interview
LAC	Liberia Agriculture Company
LBDI	Liberia Bank for Development and Investment
LDEP	Liberia Diaspora Engagement Program
LDX	Liberia Diaspora Exchange
LEPDA	Liberia Economic Policy Dialogue Activity
LISGIS	Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services
LLRCPC	Liberian Law Research Codification and Publication Center
LMA	Line Ministries and Agencies
LNBA	Liberia National Bar Association
LPRC	Liberia Petroleum Refinery Company
LRA	Liberia Revenue Authority
LRD	Liberian Dollars
MACs	Ministries, Agencies, and Commissions
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
MFF	Macro-Fiscal Framework
MGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOS	Ministry of State
MSMEs	Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
MYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports

NASSCORP	National Social Security and Welfare Corporation
NEC	National Elections Commission
NIC	National Investment Commission
NRDS2	National Rice Development Strategy 2
NSW	National Single Window
NWASHC	National WASH Commission
PaSD	Partnership for Sustainable Development
PDPF	Policy Development Process Framework
PDU	President's Delivery Unit
PMS	Premium Motor Spirit/Petrol
PUT	Policy Unit Team
REALISE	Recovery of Economic Activity for Liberian Informal Sector Employment
RMC	Research Management Consortium
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
SIWI	Stockholm International Water Institute
UP	Unity Party
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VAT	Value Added Tax
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

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YEAR FOUR HIGHLIGHTS

REFORM OVERVIEW

LEPDA was designed to assist the Government of Liberia (GOL) to undergo a series of steps in a policy development process, referencing LEPDA's Policy Development Process Framework (PDPF) as the guiding framework. One of LEPDA's main performance targets was to assist GOL to develop 20 distinct policies in this manner, completing at least three steps of the PDPF for each of the 20 policies. In addition, LEPDA also supported the engagement of civil society or private sector in all twenty policy efforts.

By the end of Y4, LEPDA had, in collaboration with GOL, completed a total of 22 policy efforts. In total, LEPDA and GOL had completed at least 3 steps of the PDPF in 21 of these 22 policies. LEPDA had also ensured civil society) or private sector engagement in 21 of the 22 policy efforts.

REFORM HIGHLIGHTS

ECONOMIC SHOCKS AND FOOD SECURITY

This year, LEPDA has successfully completed its program of providing technical assistance to the Government of Liberia on fiscal response to economic shocks and food security. To deliver this work, LEPDA assisted the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) to convene an inter-agency working group on economic policy, comprising MFDP itself, the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI), Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP), the Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) and others. The working group met nine times in total, including a four-day retreat in Ganta and a final validation workshop. Working with this group and MFDP, LEPDA developed a comprehensive analysis of the Government's approach to the regulation of imported rice and fuel and its approach to social safety nets.

In parallel, LEPDA worked with the Ministry of Agriculture to support its development of a new policy to promote the Liberian rice industry. Both policy efforts were supported by the development of a comprehensive economic model that allows policymakers to understand the impact of price, tariff and subsidy changes in the rice and fuel market, as well as the drivers of profitability in the Liberian rice industry. The policy on Liberia domestic rice production was adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture and formally presented to

stakeholders at a national rice symposium¹ held on September 25 & 26², 2023. ~~which was broadcast live on Liberian television.~~ As part of the output of the concession study conducted in year 3, LEPDA initiated the development of an outgrower scheme in the oil palm and rubber concessions that resulted to a financial model and legal analysis based on consultations held with government partners, concessions companies, financial institutions (banks), development finance institutions (DFIs), and the private sector. The outgrower scheme concept was largely endorsed by all stakeholders and pending on the government to initiate the process as provided for in the concession agreements.

ACCESS TO FINANCE

In Y4, LEPDA completed its study on the constraints on lending to Micro-, Small and Medium Enterprises. The study was received enthusiastically by development finance institutions and commercial banks. LEPDA then completed the implementation of two of the recommendations from the study: 1) building the capacity of credit analysts in Liberian banks to model cashflows of prospective borrowers and 2) assisting the Central Bank of Liberia CBL to conduct dialogue and outreach with local financial institutions with respect to its regulatory framework. To this end, LEPDA partnered with the Banking Institute of Liberia (BIL) to provide a five-day training program on cashflow forecasting and credit analysis to credit analysts from six of Liberia's nine banks. LEPDA also supported BIL in delivering a follow-on training program for credit analysts on the commercial code and the legal framework for lending. LEPDA also supported CBL in organizing a three-day program of dialogue between its senior technicians and senior bank executives.

AGRICULTURAL CONCESSIONS AND OUTGROWER SCHEMES

In Y3, LEPDA completed a landmark study on the challenges facing agricultural concessions in Liberia. One of the main findings of the study was that a major issue in the sector was the failure to establish outgrower schemes and the recommendation to establish them. Therefore, in Y4 LEPDA launched and completed an activity to design outgrower schemes for the oil palm and rubber concessions. Working closely with the Ministry of Agriculture, agricultural concessions, Liberian banks, donors and civil society, LEPDA developed a detailed programmatic model for outgrower schemes, including a comprehensive financial and economic model. In parallel, LEPDA also completed an analysis around the legal risks related to outgrower schemes.

¹ [HTTPS://TAAT-AFRICA.ORG/NEWS/LIBERIA-GETTING-RICE-RIGHT-GETS-A-BOOST-FROM-TAAT/](https://taat-africa.org/news/liberia-getting-rice-right-gets-a-boost-from-taat/)

² [HTTPS://WWW.LIBERIANOBSERVER.COM/LIBERIA-GOVT-AIMS-IMPROVE-DOMESTIC-RICE-PRODUCTION](https://www.liberianobserver.com/liberia-govt-aims-improve-domestic-rice-production)

STRENGTHENING THE COMMERCIAL COURT

In Y4, LEPDA completed work on strengthening the capacity of the commercial court and improving commercial litigation in Liberia. This year, LEPDA completed the development of a comprehensive training manual on the commercial code. This was used to deliver training to trial judges and magistrates from across the country and then handed over to the key justice sector entities in GOL. This was a critically important intervention to address the lack of knowledge of the Liberian Commercial Code by judges and legal practitioners and was an attempt to improve the litigation proceedings and timeliness of judgments of commercial disputes within the courts. LEPDA also worked with the commercial court and Judicial Institute to develop new Rules of Procedure for commercial litigation, which are now pending Supreme Court approval. As the Commercial Court presently does not have its own rules of procedure dedicated to addressing commercial litigation before it, these new rules are meant to speed up the process of case handling, management, and adjustment of disputes in a more efficient manner. LEPDA completed an activity to strengthen case management in the commercial court through improving the court reporting function via delivery of equipment and support for new court reporters. LEPDA also completed a program of training on the codification of Supreme Court opinions for the stakeholders in the legal sector. Up to now, there has not been a uniform or unified approach to the management and codification of opinions that are critically important to the jurisprudence of the court for its precedential value and for accessibility to all legal practitioners. There have been only a handful of legal scholars in the country who have been involved in Codification of Supreme Court and Statutory Opinions and those professionals are retired and wanted to ensure that the next generation of legal professionals can continue to properly manage the tedious and painstaking task of accurately recording Supreme Court opinions and Statutes to preserve the jurisprudence of the country and its historical significance, a key aspect of any functioning democratic republic. Once the Government of Liberia approves the National Law Reform Policy (NLRP) this practice will be enshrined in that policy.

WASH SECTOR GOVERNANCE

This year, LEPDA completed its assistance to the National WASH Commission (NWASHC) on the Sector Governance Reform Plan and the draft Operator Regulation. The goal was to assist NWASHC organize a dialogue to present the plan and proposed regulations to WASH stakeholders, including deputy ministers, assistant ministers, members of the WASH Legislative Caucus, CSOs, donor partners, and county authorities. LEPDA also finalized a WASH sector legal and regulatory analysis and reviewed it with stakeholders in government, civil society, and development partners. In parallel, LEPDA provided support to the WASH Commission Policy Unit Team (PUT) to develop a policy discussion paper on WASH sector decentralization efforts.

THE WASH PRIVATE SECTOR ENABLING ENVIRONMENT GOVERNANCE

In Y4, LEPDA launched a new effort to understand the enabling environment for private sector WASH firms, focusing on the drinking water industry. Working with the National WASH Commission and two civil society partners, LEPDA identified and applied a survey on 61 WASH private sector firms in two geographical clusters- the Nimba and Bong area, and Rural and Urban Montserrado. This process identified firms involved in water packaging, water tricking, construction of water and sanitation infrastructure, Solid Waste Management and Water Trucking. LEPDA then carried out detailed follow-up Key Informant Interviews with firms across these sectors. To further understand the economics of the water packaging sector, LEPDA developed an economic model of the sector. LEPDA conducted validation events in Bong County and Montserrado. Final dissemination of the paper will take place in the last quarter of implementation.

DIASPORA ENGAGEMENT

Late in Y3, LEPDA awarded a grant to EcoCAP, a Liberian Diaspora Organization based in the United States. The purpose of the grant was to enable EcoCap to develop and launch the Liberia Diaspora Exchange (LDX), an online diaspora portal to allow diaspora engagement and promote diaspora investment in Liberia. In Y4, EcoCap successfully developed and launched LDX, and conducted a series of four roadshows in the US to promote LDX and the Liberia Diaspora engagement policy. LDX began the process of registering users and delivered its first two online Diaspora events.

THE LEPDA SMALL GRANTS ACTIVITY

In Y4Q3, LEPDA launched and completed its small grants activity. Under this activity, LEPDA identified five grassroots CSOs from the South-East of Liberia- one CSO for each of the five counties in the region- and assisted them to develop grant proposals to conduct food security assessments in their communities. Working with a Civil Society partner, LEPDA trained the CSOs on grant applications, received and awarded grants to each CSO, trained them on food security assessments and assisted them in implementing their assessments. Finally, all five CSOs travelled to Monrovia to participate in a three-day working session in which they analyzed their results and prepared presentations. The CSOs presented their results at a half-day LEPDA event in late May, titled 'Food Security in Liberia- Voices from the Southeast.' The event was attended by MOA, MFDP, the Ministry of Health, LISGIS, USAID, the World Bank, and the IFC. All five CSOs submitted their final reports, bringing the activity to a successful close. LEPDA also assisted all five CSOs in updating their organizational registration and tax clearance and opening bank accounts in country.

I. INTRODUCTION

I.1. ACTIVITY BACKGROUND

The USAID Liberia Economic Policy Dialogue Activity (LEPDA) is a four-year, \$16.29M project implemented by Nathan Associates LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Cadmus Group, running from October 1, 2019, to September 30, 2023 with a no-cost extension to the activity through January 15, 2024. The purpose of LEPDA has been to strengthen policy-making capacity within the Government of Liberia (GOL) and facilitate the design and implementation of specific reforms to promote private sector-led, broad-based economic growth and development.

LEPDA delivers on its overall purpose through three main objectives:

- **Objective 1:** Establishment and implementation of a framework to promote policy reforms in specific areas, such as concessions, special economic zones (SEZs), trade facilitation/ports, import policies, etc., to improve the business climate, increase domestic revenues, and support private sector development.
- **Objective 2:** Establishment and implementation of a Policy Unit Team (PUT) to support smaller policy units located within line GOL ministries and agencies such as the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI), Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of State (MOS), Central Bank of Liberia, the WASH Commission, and others to support the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies addressing private sector development and economic management; and
- **Objective 3:** Strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) to conduct robust policy analysis as “think-tanks” while increasing citizen participation and advocacy in the policy-making arena to be effective partners in the overall policy-making process.

I.2 ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT

I.2.1 ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The economic context has been underpinned by the 2023 general and presidential elections, the ongoing war in Ukraine, and climate change related shocks. At the inception of the reporting period (i.e., October 2022), the Liberian economy was projected to grow by 4.7 percent in 2023 from a revised 2022 year-end estimate of 3.7 percent (IMF Article IV Report 2022). The real GDP growth figure has since been revised to 4.3 percent in April of this year. Similarly, the 2023 consumer price index has been revised to 6.9 percent from the initial estimate of 6.4 percent.

The growth in real GDP can be attributed to several factors, including broader macroeconomic policy reforms, non-mining sector growth, mining sector growth as well as

increase in the prices of Liberia’s major export commodities following the end of the COVID 19 lockdown. For instance, the price of palm oil increased by approximately 26 percent from US\$2.91 per kg in 2022 to US\$3.10 per kg in 2023.

Table 1: Liberia's major export commodity prices³

Major export commodities	Jan-Dec. 2022	Jan-Mar 2023	Apr-Jun 2023	June 2023	July 2023	Aug 2023	Jun-Aug 2023 (Average)	Jan-Aug. 2023 (Average)
Iron Ore (US\$/dmt)	121.30	126.10	112.00	113.50	114.40	110.20	112.70	116.93
Gold (US\$/ton)	1,801	1,888	1,978	1,943	1,951	1,919	1,938	1,935
Rubber RSS3 (US\$/kg)	1.81	1.64	1.54	1.53	1.49	1.47	1.50	1.56
Rubber – TSR20 (US\$/kg)	1.54	1.39	1.34	1.32	1.30	1.29	1.30	1.34
Timber/Log (US\$/cum)	368.90	375.60	381.20	379.40	387.10	381.90	382.80	379.87
Cocoa (US\$/kg)	2.39	2.68	3.01	3.17	3.39	3.46	3.34	3.01
Palm Oil (US\$/mt)	1,276.00	955.00	919.00	817.00	879.00	861.00	852.33	908.78

To contain the inflation pressures, on August 1, 2023, the CBL further raised the monetary policy rate to 20 percent from 17.5 percent. The rate had been previously raised from 15 percent in May to 17.5 percent. According to the CBL, the decision to raise the monetary policy rate is to control the level of Liberian Dollars in circulation. This policy intervention by the CBL has been complemented with a directive aimed at curtailing exchange rate manipulation. As a result of these interventions, the exchange rate appears to have stabilized in the third quarter of 2023.

Table 2: Average currency exchange rate (LRD\$ per US\$)⁴

Date	Buying Rate LRD/USD	Selling Rate LRD/USD
Dec. 2022	153.4955	155.1749
Jan-Mar 2023	157.0780	159.1229
Apr-Jun 2023	167.3812	169.5546
Jul-Sept 2023	184.4994	186.4620

³ Figures are extracted from the World Bank’s commodities price data.

⁴ Figures are extracted from the CBL’s daily exchange rate publication.

Date	Buying Rate LRD/USD	Selling Rate LRD/USD
Dec 2022	153.4955	155.1749
Jan 2023	154.7024	156.6817
Feb 2023	156.4925	158.5894
Mar 2023	160.0389	162.0977
Apr 2023	162.1357	164.2890
May 2023	166.1887	168.2195
Jun 2023	173.8192	176.1554
July 2023	182.9042	184.9753
Aug 2023	185.2336	187.1746
Sept 2023	185.3604	187.2360

I.2.2 POLITICAL CONTEXT

Liberia’s general and presidential elections, scheduled for October 10, 2023, overshadowed political activities in the country during the period under review. To jumpstart electoral activities, the National Elections Commission (NEC) released a revised electoral calendar, which included periods for voter registration, issuance of writ of elections, and the release of final voter registration figures. The electoral calendar also included the candidate nomination period, political campaign period, election day, and the period for the announcement of results.

The activities in the electoral calendar have been progressing as planned with voter registration, the issuance of the writ of elections, and candidate nominations completed on time. However, there has been a delay in the release of the final registration roll. The opposition Unity Party (UP) recently petitioned the Supreme Court of Liberia for a Writ of Mandamus on the NEC to compel the Commission to make available copies of the final registration roll. Subsequently, the Supreme Court ordered the appearance of the

Chairperson and Commissioners of NEC to appear before it on September 30 to give reasons why the UP's petition for Mandamus should not be granted.⁵

At the end of the candidate nomination process on July 14, NEC registered 20 presidential aspirants along with their vice-presidential candidates. NEC also recorded 100 senatorial aspirants who are vying for 15 vacant seats in the Liberian Senate. The Liberian Senate is comprised of 30 senators – two for each of the country's 15 counties. For the 73 seats in the House of Representatives, which are all vacant, NEC registered 889 aspirants.⁶

With August 5–October 8 earmarked for political campaigning; aspirants of all categories have been traveling across the country to canvass for votes among the country's 2,471,617⁷ registered voters. The campaign process has been mostly peaceful. However, there have been some incidents of campaign violence recorded across the country with major occurrences recently in Lofa County, involving supporters of the ruling Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC) and UP.⁸

⁵ [HTTPS://FRONTPAGEAFRICAONLINE.COM/FRONT-SLIDER/LIBERIA-SUPREME-COURT-CITES-NEC-ORDERS-THE-COMMISSION-TO-PRODUCE-COPIES-OF-FRR-TO-STAKEHOLDERS-SATURDAY-4PM/](https://FRONTPAGEAFRICAONLINE.COM/FRONT-SLIDER/LIBERIA-SUPREME-COURT-CITES-NEC-ORDERS-THE-COMMISSION-TO-PRODUCE-COPIES-OF-FRR-TO-STAKEHOLDERS-SATURDAY-4PM/)

⁶ NEC's [2023 Candidate Nomination Aspirants Preliminary List](#)

⁷ [HTTPS://NECLIBERIA.ORG/](https://NECLIBERIA.ORG/)

⁸ [HTTPS://FRONTPAGEAFRICAONLINE.COM/FRONT-SLIDER/LIBERIA-U-S-EMBASSY-CALLS-FOR-JUSTICE-IN-FOYA-VIOLENCE-THAT-LED-TO-LOSS-OF-LIVES/](https://FRONTPAGEAFRICAONLINE.COM/FRONT-SLIDER/LIBERIA-U-S-EMBASSY-CALLS-FOR-JUSTICE-IN-FOYA-VIOLENCE-THAT-LED-TO-LOSS-OF-LIVES/)

2. PROGRESS

2.1 POLICY REFORMS

2.1.1 ONGOING DURING YEAR FOUR

I. FOOD SECURITY POLICY

SCOPE		Assist GOL to develop a food security policy	
LEAD GOL MAC		Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)	
LEPDA LEAD		Economic Policy Lead	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	LEPDA's Senior Food Security Advisor presented a draft work plan to the Minister of Agriculture after deployment (late June). In mid-September, the Minister indicated her intention to organize a conference to present an MOA food security policy to stakeholders in late October. The Advisor developed an updated plan for the development of this policy, which was finalized with the Minister and her senior staff in September.	June - October 2022
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	<p>LEPDA reviewed existing data relevant to food security to support initial analysis. With the agreement of MOA, LEPDA designed and implemented a Rapid Rural Appraisal (a rapid food security assessment). The analysis was completed by September 9 and was shared with the Minister in the week of September 12-16. In parallel, the LEPDA Food Security Advisor reviewed the World Food Program food security assessment to corroborate the LEPDA findings.</p> <p>In October 2022 the Senior Food Security Advisor held a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture to capture her basic approach to the problem of food security. At this point it became clear that the preferred approach to food security was to develop the domestic rice industry. Based on this direction, the Advisor held a series of three meetings with the MOA Policy Team (the Minister's senior technical staff) to review the fundamentals of policy development and various options for a food security policy given the basic set of options developed by the Minister. Based on these sessions the Ministry</p>	August 2022 – March 2023

SCOPE		Assist GOL to develop a food security policy	
		<p>and LEPDA were able to develop an initial set of policy recommendations.</p> <p>In November 2022 participants from MOA and LEPDA Food Security Advisor participated in the MFDP retreat in Ganta (discussed below). Participants included senior technicians, Assistant Ministers and Deputy Ministers from GOL entities with an economic mandate including MFDP, MOCI and CBL, as well as the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP). The initial set of policy recommendations were presented and discussed in the retreat and were broadly endorsed by all parties. The initial policy recommendation was further refined based on the Ganta retreat in December 2022.</p>	
B3. Design interventions	Completed	<p>During the period of January 2023 to March 2023 (Y4Q2), LEPDA initiated and completed the development of an economic model of the local rice industry. This comprised models consist of four types of farms that are of different sizes, and a model of a medium-sized independent rice mill. The models were designed to calculate the profitability of the different actors and allow the user to observe the change in profitability after changing key parameters such as input costs, yields, labor costs, and transportation costs. LEPDA presented a draft of the model to the Minister of Agriculture in February 2023 and obtained extensive feedback. The meeting was also used to further capture the Minister’s thinking on the local rice industry. LEPDA subsequently presented it to technicians from MOA and the management of the Fabrar rice company. Subsequently, LEPDA further developed the rice model to allow it to estimate the magnitude of grants or subsidies that would be needed by farms or mills to be profitable. The model also provided a full costing for grants needed, consistent with a rapid expansion of the sector in line with the GOL strategy. This allowed the design of the key interventions for the sector.</p> <p>As part of this process, LEPDA also convened a meeting between MOA and MFDP to review the economic model and discuss its fiscal implications.</p>	January 2023 – April 2023
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	In March 2023, LEPDA was able to combine the results of the initial engagements with MOA, conversations with the Minister, a strategy	April 2023

SCOPE		Assist GOL to develop a food security policy	
		<p>document prepared personally by the Minister, and the results of the economic model created into a single policy or strategy document. LEPDA shared the paper with the Minister of Agriculture and her technical team in the same month.</p> <p>In April 2023, the Minister wholly endorsed the paper and indicated that it should be adopted as a Ministry policy.</p>	
C7. GOL engagement	Completed	<p>Upon approval of the rice policy, the Minister directed her team to organize a ‘rice symposium’, based around the policy and the supporting analysis done by LEPDA. The rice symposium took place in September and was funded by the World Bank. During this quarter (Y4Q3), the Ministry of Agriculture has been working on the structure for the workshop. The Ministry has also insisted to the World Bank that the symposium be used to present and validate the structure of the policy and that it be used to promote donor alignment with it.</p> <p>LEPDA’s Senior Food Security Advisor has provided ‘light-touch’ technical assistance to the Ministry to help staff conceptualize the event and develop the program. LEPDA presented an overview of its economic model during the symposium.</p>	April – September 2023
C8. Outreach and dialogue	Completed	<p>In August 2023, LEPDA organized a half-day presentation of the rice model. The meeting was attended by the Minister of Agriculture, the IFC, World Bank, Civil Society Organization RMC and management of two private rice mills. During the meeting, the Minister supported the analysis done by LEPDA and further explained her approach to the participants.</p>	August 2023
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS	Completed		
NARRATIVE	This was achieved through the Rice Symposium and through the stakeholder presentation organized in August.		

2. ECONOMIC SHOCKS

SCOPE	Assist GOL to develop a policy on fiscal response to the 2022 economic shock		
LEAD GOL MAC	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning		
LEPDA LEAD	Economic Policy Lead		
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	Upon deployment, LEPDA's Senior Economic Policy Advisor began to engage with the MFDP Department of Economic Policy to develop a work plan. Planning has been an ongoing process but has accelerated with the start of inter-agency planning meetings in September 2022. The policy development plan will be finalized at the next planning meeting in October.	October 2022

SCOPE	Assist GOL to develop a policy on fiscal response to the 2022 economic shock		
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	<p>Upon deployment during Y3, the LEPDA Senior Economic Policy Advisor started working with MFDP counterparts to understand the basic mechanism for rice subsidies. LEPDA also collected economic statistics to support issue analysis. LEPDA’s Rapid Market Appraisal also supports issue analysis.</p> <p>During Y3, LEPDA and MFDP agreed to organize an inter-agency retreat to analyze the issue of rice prices and subsidies. With LEPDA support, MFDP launched a series of analysis and planning meetings with other GOL stakeholders (the “interagency economic analysis and planning working group”) in preparation for the planned retreat to develop a GOL-wide policy response to these issues. Participants consisted of senior technicians from entities including MFDP, MOA, MOCI, MGCSP, Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC), Liberia Petroleum Regulatory Authority (LPRA), CBL, and Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA). The group met twice in September and a further three times in October and November.</p> <p>In parallel, LEPDA assisted MFDP to collect information needed to inform the analysis including international economic statistics; national economic statistics; data on GOL economic recovery and stimulus activities; data on the regulatory approach for the fuel and rice sectors; information on existing social safety net programs; LEPDA also conducted background research on best practices in subsidy design and management.</p>	October-December 2022
B3. Design interventions	Completed	<p>During Y4Q1, LEPDA assisted MFDP to organize a four-day retreat to analyze the data collected thus far and develop initial policy options. The retreat took place in Ganta, Nimba County, from December 6 – 9, 2022. Participants included the members of the inter-agency working group as well as Deputy Minister and Assistant Minister-level representatives from MFDP, MOCI, and MGCSP. Based on the outcomes of the retreat, LEPDA assisted MFDP to develop a zero draft of a policy discussion paper. This included an extensive situation analysis, analysis of the GOL</p>	December 2022-March 2023

SCOPE	Assist GOL to develop a policy on fiscal response to the 2022 economic shock		
		<p>policy response to date and the key recommendations from the Ganta workshop.</p> <p>Several important recommendations emerged from the Ganta workshop, including phasing out existing tariffs, tax expenditures and subsidies in the rice and fuel sector, and providing resources to stimulate the national rice industry (as proposed by the Ministry of Agriculture, see above). To fully develop these proposals, during Y4Q2, LEPDA developed an economic model. The model allows a projection of imported rice and fuel prices based on a global forecast, estimated costs of importation, and a schedule for tariffs and subsidies. The model includes modules to project the revenue impact of changes to prices and the GOL tariff and subsidy regime, as well as welfare impact of such changes. LEPDA also linked this model to the rice industry model created for the Ministry of Agriculture, to allow that model to calculate the change in profitability to the country's rice industry caused by phasing out of tariffs and subsidies. The model allowed MFDP and other GOL stakeholders to specify the proposed policy interventions exactly, and to quantify their impacts in terms of commodity prices, revenues, and welfare.</p> <p>During this period, the LEPDA Senior Economic Policy Advisor mobilized to Liberia to engage MFDP and other members of the inter-agency working group in the process of modelling and to discuss the zero-draft paper. The Advisor conducted two more meetings with the group and facilitated a meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture on the rice model.</p>	
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	<p>During Y4Q3 LEPDA assisted MFDP to develop a comprehensive draft of the Policy Discussion Paper. This was based on the zero draft that emerged from the Ganta retreat and enriched with the results of the economic modelling. The paper also drew on the food security policy developed by the Ministry of Agriculture, with LEPDA support. To complete the paper, some minor refinements of the economic modelling and additional analyses were completed.</p>	April 2023 – June 2023

SCOPE	Assist GOL to develop a policy on fiscal response to the 2022 economic shock		
C8. Outreach and dialogue	Completed	<p>With the policy paper largely drafted, LEPDA engaged MFDP in scheduling the final validation event. After some initial delays, the final validation event was conducted on July 3, 2023. As with other meetings of the inter-agency working group, MFDP prepared and dispatched invitations, while LEPDA secured logistics. LEPDA also assisted MFDP in preparing a presentation for the event.</p> <p>After the completion of the event, LEPDA's Senior Economic Policy Advisor completed one final round of consultations with the senior stakeholders (Deputy Ministers of MFDP, MGCSP and MOCI). Based on this final round of meetings, LEPDA assisted MFDP to prepare a final version of the policy discussion paper. The paper was submitted to DM Flomo on July 28, 2023. During August, LEPDA organized a presentation of its rice model for donors, GOL, CSOs and the private sector. During the presentation, LEPDA also presented the fiscal and welfare analysis of the rice sector done under this workstream.</p>	July – September 2023
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS	Completed		
NARRATIVE	Completed through rice model presentation organized in August.		

3. GOL MACRO-FISCAL FRAMEWORK (MFF)

SCOPE	Complete the development of a macroeconomic modelling and forecasting tool for GOL, hand over the model, support public launch, and train GOL technicians in its use		
LEAD GOL MAC	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning		
LEPDA LEAD	Economic Policy Lead		
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	<p>In Y1, following several discussions with GOL partners MFDP and CBL on the development of the design of a model for forecasting economic activity suitable for the Liberia context, LEPDA developed a financial programming style model named the “Country Adaptable Macro-Fiscal Tool (CAMFT),” using available data (not validated) on the real, external, debt, fiscal, and monetary sectors.</p> <p>To build understanding and identify issues around forecasting the economy, in Y2Q1 (March 2021), LEPDA presented the draft model to key stakeholders (policy level and technical staff). This was meant to jumpstart the understanding and consensus, including the next steps of data validation and completion, adoption, and rolling out of the model to the government.</p> <p>Based on this process, LEPDA assisted MFDP in developing a roadmap for the implementation and rollout of the model.</p>	Year 1
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	<p>In Y2Q3 (April 3-11, 2021), LEPDA supported MFDP to conduct a one-week intensive data validation exercise to populate the model with actual data covering the real, external, fiscal, and monetary sectors. The GOL agencies included the MFDP, CBL, Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS), Liberia Revenue Authority (LRA), MOCI, and Ministry of Labor. The exercise identified several elements of the model that were incomplete and some calculation errors which were addressed.</p>	April 2021
B3. Design interventions	Completed	<p>Following the validation and recommendations from the exercise in April of 2022, LEPDA’s Lead Economist developed a sub-model of the real</p>	April 2022 – October 2022

SCOPE	Complete the development of a macroeconomic modelling and forecasting tool for GOL, hand over the model, support public launch, and train GOL technicians in its use		
		<p>sector and validated it against the IMF macro data for Liberia.</p> <p>In Y3Q2 (June 2022), LEPDA hired a former IMF country economist and macro-fiscal framework expert as a consultant to work closely with LEPDA on the initial review and revisions to the model following feedback from MFDP. In Y3Q4 (August 2022), LEPDA began improving the draft model, cross-checking for accuracy, and revising/refining the model to improve functionality and accuracy for projections.</p>	
C7. GOL engagement	Completed	<p>When the model was ready to be tested, it was delivered to the Government of Liberia’s technical staff. A week-long training on macro-fiscal modelling and forecasting was organized in Y4Q1, in Gbarnga, Bong County for 24 economists from MFDP, CBL, and other agencies of Government. The training was in response to the request of Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) to develop a macroeconomic and fiscal model for forecasting purposes for Liberia based on the existing limited modelling capacity. The training was organized and delivered to enhance the capacity of economists to structure, formulate and articulate a macro-fiscal forecasting model that is realistic, simple, comprehensive but easy to understand and comprehend, integrated for all the segments of the national economy (real economy, fiscal, financial, and external sectors).</p> <p>The training started with a general presentation on the overview of macroeconomic aggregates, system of national accounts, financial programming, and policy (FPP) models, budget constraints of economic agents, projecting GDP, projection of real private consumption and investment, and projection of inflation: GDP deflator and projection of exchange rate. The training continued with modeling and forecasting methods as well as approaches and scenarios’ demonstrations using real national data. The simulations helped participants to test and practice using the model. According to the participants, the training was very useful, hands-on, and will enhance their economic modeling and forecasting. At the end of the training, they were</p>	October 2022

SCOPE	Complete the development of a macroeconomic modelling and forecasting tool for GOL, hand over the model, support public launch, and train GOL technicians in its use		
		<p>asked to use the model for 2-3 weeks and provide feedback, after which a launch program for the framework model would be determined and implemented.</p> <p>In Y4Q2, LEPDA made several follow ups on the usage of the model. According to the economists at MFDP, they have not encountered major problems using the model. During the last follow up, they indicated that they had not used real data to test the model due to the change in Liberia's fiscal period (from June to January each year) which made access to real data a challenge. LEPDA remain engaged with MFDP for the possibility of launching the final model.</p>	
C8. Dialogue	Completed	On August 25, 2023, LEPDA assisted MFDP to organize a dialogue session, presenting the macro-fiscal model to senior executives of four Liberian commercial banks. The presentation and discussion was led by MFDP, with logistical support from LEPDA.	August 2023
CSO/Private Sector Engagement Status	Completed		
Narrative	Completed through the dialogue session with commercial banks in late August.		

4. SME ACCESS TO FINANCE

SCOPE	Strengthen the capacity of financial institutions for SME loan underwriting and assist GOL to roll out the regulatory framework for SME lending		
LEAD GOL MAC	Central Bank of Liberia		
LEPDA LEAD	Economic Policy Lead		
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	<p>From the period of August 2021 – June 2022, LEPDA supported analysis of access to finance issues through three CSO grantees: a grant to Naymote on financial inclusion for women; a grant to the Center for Policy Action and Research (CePAR) on Digital Financial Services, and a grant to Institute for Research and Democratic Development (IREDD) to research access to finance for MSMEs. All three entities conducted a mixture of quantitative surveys, Key Informant Interviews (KII), Focus Group Discussions, validation events, and policy dialogues.</p> <p>In reviewing grantee research, LEPDA identified that some of the research (Naymote and especially IREDD), was overly influenced by the perspectives of SME borrowers and did not accurately or fairly capture lender perspectives on the challenges in lending to SMEs.</p> <p>LEPDA partnered with IREDD to conduct an additional round of KIIs with senior management of financial institutions to identify their perspectives on SME lending. Based on this work, LEPDA and IREDD developed an analytical framework comparing borrower and lender perspectives on access to finance for SMEs. The framework was shared with CBL and improved over a sequence of three meetings between CBL, IREDD, and LEPDA, leading to CBL endorsing the content of the framework. A final version of the framework was used to inform a roundtable discussion held in August 2022, organized by IREDD and LEPDA and attended by leading commercial banks, including United Bank of Africa (UBA) and Liberia Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI); micro-finance institutions, including BRAC; and CBL. The presentation summarizing the framework was also shared with the Head of the Commercial Court.</p>	August 2021 - September 2022

SCOPE	Strengthen the capacity of financial institutions for SME loan underwriting and assist GOL to roll out the regulatory framework for SME lending		
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	<p>In September 2022, LEPDA and IREDD prepared a policy discussion paper based on the analytical framework described above. The policy discussion paper was shared with CBL for comments and eventual endorsement. The paper was finalized in February 2023.</p> <p>Based on the research and round-table process, the paper made two key recommendations: to support CBL outreach to financial institutions with respect to its regulatory framework and to provide capacity development to credit officers with respect to cashflow forecasting.</p>	September 2022- February 2023
C8. Outreach and dialogue	Completed	<p>During Y4Q2, LEPDA conducted detailed discussion and feedback sessions on Access to Finance with the International Finance Corporation and the World Bank. LEPDA received positive feedback from both IFC and World Bank. Based on this feedback, LEPDA finalized the paper.</p> <p>During the same period, LEPDA held a series of engagements with CBL regarding the recommendation on the need to conduct outreach on its policies and regulations to financial institutions. Based on these discussions, CBL developed a concept note to conduct a three-day program on the CBL regulatory structure with commercial banks and financial institutions.</p> <p>The dialogue was organized by CBL in early August. It was attended by 21 senior representatives of Liberian banks and other financial institutions. During the dialogue, CBL directors presented different aspects of their regulatory framework, with each aspect discussed and debated. The event was considered very successful, with all participants highlighting the need for a follow-on event including the commercial court.</p>	January – September 2023
D13f. Communications and Training	Completed	<p>Based on the second recommendation to develop the capacity of credit officers on credit analysis and cashflow forecasting, initial consultation was held with financial institutions to solicit their perspectives on the training content, and they provided very useful information. The consultation was also extended to the Banking Institute of Liberia (BIL) as the only institution certified to provide banking training and secured its cooperation in supporting the delivery and sustainability of the training course once developed.</p> <p>To develop the training course, the Nathan Home Office Team was mobilized to develop the curriculum, training</p>	April 2023 – September 2023

SCOPE	Strengthen the capacity of financial institutions for SME loan underwriting and assist GOL to roll out the regulatory framework for SME lending		
		<p>presentations, and case study models for teaching. To ensure that the training materials were responsive to the needs of the trainees, a pre-assessment tool was designed to solicit applications, and follow-ups were made for financial institutions to nominate participants. In addition, a virtual validation event for the training materials was conducted with executives of banks and other stakeholders.</p> <p>The training was delivered by LEPDA with the support of BIL from July 10-14. The training was delivered to 17 trainees, including cash flow analysts from Liberian Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI), International Bank Liberia Limited (IBLL), Global Bank, Access Bank, Afriland Bank, Cititrust Microfinance, and Liberian Enterprise Development Finance Company (LEDFC). Representatives of CBL and IREDD were also included.</p> <p>During the development of this training, BIL proposed delivering a two-day training on the commercial code, to a similar group of trainees. BIL submitted a proposal to this effect to LEPDA, and based on this proposal LEPDA awarded a Purchase Order to BIL to deliver the training. The training was completed in late September 2023. BIL delivered the training to a total of 21 participants, comprising mid-level credit officers and managers.</p>	
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS	Completed		
NARRATIVE	IREDD has been engaged in the activity throughout, including the research and development of the policy paper and subsequent training activities.		

5. AGRIBUSINESS TESTING AND CERTIFICATION

SCOPE	Assist GOL to develop policy on improving access to agribusiness testing and certification		
LEAD GOL MAC	Ministry of Agriculture		
LEPDA LEAD	Economic Policy Lead		
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	Based on the outcome of the Agribusiness Forum, LEPDA engaged the Minister of Agriculture to propose that it would assist the Ministry to develop a short policy paper outlining priorities for improving agribusiness access to testing and certification for export. LEPDA proposed that it would provide a consultant to support the research, working with MOA technicians, and proposed a timeline for the work. The Minister responded enthusiastically, reporting that she had been seeking assistance on this topic for years and agreed to the proposal.	March 2023
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	<p>In February 2023, LEPDA organized a two-day Agribusiness Forum that brought together stakeholders from both private sector, government, and donors to discuss the challenges agribusinesses face in Liberia. The forum was designed around four thematic areas: agribusiness operational management, financing agribusiness, accessing, and serving export markets, and product development and innovation. Day one was used for high level statements and presentations by the USAID Mission Director, the Minister of Agriculture, the Country Manager of AfDB, followed by success stories of two Liberian successful agri-entrepreneurs: Mahmud Johnson of J-Palm and Ms. Rugie Barrey of Business Incubator, both of whom highlighted their challenges to date, successes, and opportunities ahead. Paul Oliver, Economist of the USAID Economic Growth Office, and the team from World Bank STAR-P program also made presentations. The forum was attended by over 45 people (18 agribusinesses, 2 banks, MOA, MoCI, MFDP, NIC, USAID-LEPDA, and other private sector groups).</p> <p>On day two, group discussions were held on the four thematic areas; and thereafter, each group presented its findings to the plenary, highlighting challenges such as lack of lack of capacity (technical and managerial skills), access to finance, storage and preservation facilities, access roads and high cost of transport, packaging, and lack of an effective standards system to</p>	October 2022 – August 2023

SCOPE	Assist GOL to develop policy on improving access to agribusiness testing and certification		
		<p>facilitate testing and certification for agri-products for export. The issues of testing and certification came out very strongly among the challenges agribusinesses face. This was evidenced by testimonies of the two entrepreneurs who reported that due to the absence of testing facilities in Liberia, they are required to take samples of products to Ghana, Nigeria, or other countries to get tested and certified for export. This increases their cost of production and cost of the final products, impacting their ability to be competitive in the market. A report for the forum was written and submitted in May 2023.</p> <p>Under its Y4 work plan, LEPDA had planned to support MOA in a policy area related to market linkages. Based on the outcome of the workshop LEPDA recognized that the topic of the policy research should be agri-product testing and certification. Discussion with the Minister of Agriculture (described above) confirmed strong MOA interest in this topic. Having selected this topic area, LEPDA initiated the process of recruiting a local consultant. A qualified local consultant, with extensive experience in supporting Liberian agribusiness on testing and certification, was recruited, and mobilized late in Y4Q3 (May 2023)</p>	
B3. Design interventions	Pending	<p>During the period June through August, LEPDA completed the research and analysis needed to design the interventions for the policy discussion paper. LEPDA's consultant conducted an extensive literature review to map how testing and certification work in comparable countries such as X and Y. The consultant conducted KIIs with the National Standards Lab, X, Y and Z. As the major gaps started to become clear and recommendations emerged, the consultant also conducted follow-up meetings to validate the emerging findings</p>	June-August2023
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Pending	<p>LEPDA began the process of drafting the policy discussion paper in August 2023. The paper will be completed by October 2023.</p>	August-October 2023
C8. Outreach and dialogue	Pending	<p>LEPDA and MOA will organize a validation event for the policy discussion paper. This will include MOA, representatives of Liberian agribusinesses, the National Standards Lab, and interested development partners.</p>	November2023

SCOPE	Assist GOL to develop policy on improving access to agribusiness testing and certification
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS	Completed.
NARRATIVE	Private sector partners have been engaged in the process throughout the year.

6. OUTGROWER SCHEMES - AGRO-FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

SCOPE	Assist GOL and agricultural concession operators to develop a national framework for outgrowers and prepare a funding proposal for the establishment of the first wave of outgrowers.		
LEAD GOL MAC	Ministry of Agriculture		
LEPDA LEAD	Economic Policy Lead		
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	During Y3Q3, LEPDA developed a concept for this policy effort and shared it with the Minister of Agriculture, who endorsed the effort and the overall process. LEPDA has secured the participation of three major concession operators (Firestone, Mano Oil Palm, and Golden Veroleum (GVL)) and interest in principle from one other (Liberian Agricultural Company (LAC)). LEPDA has also begun the process of engaging Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) through engagement with African Development Bank, World Bank, US Development Finance Corporation, and the Africa Resilience Investment Accelerator (ARIA) umbrella organization. After completing the stakeholder engagement process in October 2022, LEPDA finalized the detailed approach for this activity.	August 2022 - October 2022
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	Issue analysis was completed during the LEPDA study. MOA, NBC, and the concession operators have indicated that they accept the analysis.	September 2022
B3. Design interventions	Completed	In October 2022, LEPDA conducted a two-day pilot Outgrower Scheme Initiative Design Workshop held at the Cape Hotel in Monrovia. The aim of the workshop was to bring stakeholders together to review and analyze the possibilities of the establishment and implementation of an outgrower scheme in Liberia as provided for in almost all agricultural concession agreements. Over the two days, the discussions focused on key areas, such as the identification, profiling, and selection of outgrowers; approaches and principles of extension systems to support the schemes; outgrower scheme financing; contract and legal issues related to outgrower frameworks; and the institutional framework needed to establish successful outgrower schemes in Liberia. The workshop was opened by the Minister of Agriculture. The workshop was attended by 24 people (4 females and 20 males) from three concessions companies (Firestone, Golden Veroleum Liberia, and Liberia Agricultural Company), GOL (MFDP, National Investment Commission, National Bureau of	November 2022 - May 2023

SCOPE	Assist GOL and agricultural concession operators to develop a national framework for outgrowers and prepare a funding proposal for the establishment of the first wave of outgrowers.		
		<p>Concessions, MOA, Law Reform Commission, etc.), and a CSO (NAYMOTE), among others. Based on the workshop, LEPDA was able to draft a “Statement of Common Principles” for outgrower schemes. The purpose of the document is to act as a provisional or interim outgrower scheme framework that can guide the development of pilot outgrower schemes. LEPDA shared the statement with MOA and key concession operators for feedback.</p> <p>In Y4Q2, LEPDA initiated the process of developing a detailed model for outgrower schemes in the rubber and oil palm sector, based on the workshop, the statement of principles, and the research conducted during Y2 and Y3. The basic concept drew heavily on a model successfully used in Ghana, adapted to be consistent with the Concession Agreements and more recent developments related to the environment and land rights. To develop the model, LEPDA engaged the Agricultural Concessions, MOA, the Liberia Land Authority, the Cooperative Development Agency, Liberian Commercial Banks (Liberia Bank of Development and Investment, UBA, and AfriLand Bank), and the International Finance Corporation. By the end of the quarter, a basic approach was defined, and LEPDA had developed a detailed financial model for a pilot for the oil palm sector, including a program costing and financial projection for individual farmers. A design and model for the rubber sector was also developed, although the work was not as far advanced.</p>	

SCOPE	Assist GOL and agricultural concession operators to develop a national framework for outgrowers and prepare a funding proposal for the establishment of the first wave of outgrowers.		
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	<p>During Y4Q3, LEPDA developed a discussion paper, presenting the design of the outgrower scheme along with the financial analysis developed in the model. A summary of the paper was shared with oil palm concessions, commercial banks, Development Finance Institutions, the Ministry of Agriculture, and the National Bureau of Concessions.</p> <p>During engagement with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Minister presented a strong interest in the approach, and discussing it with other stakeholders. Late in June, LEPDA organized a breakfast meeting for all stakeholders to present and discuss the model. The meeting included: the Minister of Agriculture, the Director General of the National Bureau of Concessions, Golden Veroleum, the Liberia Agriculture Company, the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank, the Africa Development Bank, Afriland Bank, LBDI, and the Civil Society Organization, Naymote.</p> <p>As a result of the meeting, the Minister of Agriculture indicated her desire to take the approach forward.</p> <p>Based on the meeting, LEPDA prepared an updated version of the outgrower scheme model. The model was documented in a full program document, summary document, PowerPoint presentation and Excel model.</p>	June 2023
C8. Outreach and dialogue	Ongoing	LEPDA will conduct a final round of dialogue on the model, focusing on concessions, banks and donors, during the months of October and November.	October- November 2023
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS	Completed		
NARRATIVE	CSO engagement was achieved through CSO dialogue on LEPDA research, as well as through providing a grant to Naymote to conduct a social audit in agricultural concessions areas. Additional CSO engagement was generated through Naymote participation in the stakeholder engagement discussed above. Private sector engagement has also been extensive, due to the engagement of agricultural concessions.		

7. OUTGROWER SCHEMES - LEGAL FRAMEWORK

SCOPE	Assist GOL to design the legal framework needed for the establishment of outgrower schemes		
LEAD GOL MAC	Ministry of Agriculture		
LEPDA LEAD	Legal Coordinator		
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	LEPDA has conducted initial discussions with MOA, the Law Reform Commission (LRC), Firestone, and Golden Veroleum on this policy initiative. LEPDA expects to secure the leadership of the Minister of Agriculture and the participation of remaining concessions by the end of September 2022. The overall work plan for this effort will be agreed with MOA and LRC and finalized.	September - October 2022
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	<p>LEPDA's concession study already identified the need to provide legal protections to both concession operators/agribusinesses and farmers/suppliers and recommended development of specific legislation for this purpose. As part of the preparation for this workstream, LEPDA collected and reviewed literature on legal issues related to contract farming and reviewed legislation governing contracting farming and outgrower schemes from two other countries (India and Thailand).</p> <p>In October 2022, LEPDA retained Cllr. Betty Lamin-Blamo, an experienced legal expert with a background in concessions and contract law to analyze the legal issues around outgrower schemes. Cllr. Betty Lamin-Blamo participated in LEPDA's November 2022 workshop on outgrower schemes. The workshop was attended by MOA, Law Reform Commission (LRC), Firestone, Golden Veroleum and Commercial Banks. Subsequently, with support from LEPDA, Cllr. Blamo conducted interviews with concessions, commercial banks, and GOL actors. Cllr. Blamo also conducted a legal analysis of the existing relevant laws, including laws governing land tenure and contract enforcement as well as the content of the existing concession agreements. Cllr. Blamo submitted a draft report to LEPDA in June 2023 (Y4Q3).</p>	October 2022 - June 2023
B3. Design interventions	Completed	The draft report submitted in Y4Q3 included several recommendations for strengthening the legal framework for outgrower schemes in contract farming.	July – August 2023

SCOPE	Assist GOL to design the legal framework needed for the establishment of outgrower schemes		
C7. GOL engagement	Ongoing	In early October 2023, LEPDA will organize a consultation event to review the draft legal framework with relevant stakeholders including the Law Reform Commission, MOA, GOL legal stakeholders, concessions, commercial banks, and CSO Naymote.	October 2023
C8. Outreach and dialogue	Pending	In Y4Q4, LEPDA will solicit feedback on the legal and regulatory reform proposals from Civil Society Organizations, including but not limited to Naymote.	October 2023
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS	Completed		
NARRATIVE	CSO engagement was achieved through CSO dialogue on LEPDA research, as well as through providing a grant to Naymote to conduct a social audit in agricultural concessions areas. Naymote has been engaged throughout LEPDA's work on outgrower schemes. The private sector has been engaged throughout the process through close cooperation with concession operators.		

8. COMMERCIAL CODE TRAINING

SCOPE	Support the judicial institute to provide training to judges and other stakeholders on key components of the commercial code and related legislation		
LEAD GOL MAC	Judicial Institute		
LEPDA LEAD	Legal Coordinator		
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	A work plan for the development of the commercial litigation capacity assessment was agreed upon with the Judicial Institute (JI).	April 2021
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	<p>During the period October 2021 - January 2022, a LEPDA consultant worked with JI to carry out a commercial litigation capacity assessment. As part of this process, LEPDA conducted two validation workshops to present the preliminary findings, with stakeholders including judges, magistrates, the law school, LRC, MFDP, MOCI, Chamber of Commerce, Liberia Business Association, IREDD, and CDG. These took place on September 30 and October 1, 2021. A report, including recommendations to provide training to judges and magistrates on the commercial code, was finalized during Y3Q1.</p> <p>During Y3Q3 and Y3Q4, LEPDA's research with IREDD on Access to Finance also identified delays in adjudication of commercial disputes within the courts as a constraint to access to finance, further highlighting the need to address this issue.</p>	October 2021-January 2022
B3. Design interventions	Completed	<p>LEPDA hired the Heritage Partners & Associates, LLC., (HPA), a Liberian Company to work with JI and the Commercial Court in developing the curriculum and set of training modules covering common areas of litigation. This included commonly litigated topics such as mortgages, negotiable instruments, finance leases, bankruptcy, insolvency, fraudulent conveyance, arbitration, mediation, and adverse claims.</p> <p>On March 21, 2023, HPA working with the Commercial court and JI held a Peer review section for the validation of key topics to be included in the training manual with 31 people attending the engagement. Participants included lawyers, bankers, Judges, and institutions involved with commercial transactions.</p>	October 2022 – March 2023

PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
D13f. Communications and Training	Completed	<p>HPA and LEPDA conducted a review of the deliverable timetable to provide a realistic timetable for the development and rollout of the Commercial Court Training Manual because the timetable was untenable due to delays in executing the contract.</p> <p>HPA conducted the second stakeholders' engagement to validate the training manual on April 28 involving 30 participants from the same sector as the peer review engagement. Thereafter, on May 12, a 1-day TOT was held at the JI training center to train 17 participants from JI, Judges from the Commercial Court, Debt Court, Civil Law Court, CBL, and others. Following the TOT, a 3-day training on the Commercial Code training manual was held from May 24-26. Judges from across the country with commercial related jurisdiction, Debt court and Commercial Court Judges, lawyers, bankers, CBL. and commercial related institutions were present for the training. The training was held at the Boulevard Palace Hotel in Sinkor.</p> <p>LEPDA submitted the draft final version of the Commercial Code Training Manual to the Chief Judge of the Commercial Court, Judge Eva Mappy-Morgan who submitted the manual to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, who will write the Foreword for the training manual. The Supreme Court will review the training manual and take the necessary actions to have it adopted and used as a training tool by the JI.</p>	April – August 2023
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS	Completed		
NARRATIVE	CSO engagement was achieved through the CSO dialogue/validation workshop, comprising members from the LNBA, Banking Institute, Liberia Business Association, and others described in step B2 above.		

9. COMMERCIAL COURT RULES OF PROCEDURE

SCOPE	Support the Commercial Court to develop Rules of Procedure for court operations		
LEAD GOL MAC	Commercial Court		
LEPDA LEAD	Legal Coordinator		
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	In September 2022, LEPDA held initial discussions with the Head of the Commercial Court, during which this policy effort was identified. LEPDA developed a full work plan in consultation with the Judicial Institute in consultation with the Commercial Court during Y4Q1.	September - October 2022
B3. Design interventions	Completed	LEPDA's sub-contractor, Heritage Partners & Associates (HPA) presented the draft rules of procedure to LEPDA, Commercial Court and JI for review prior to a stakeholders' engagement. A copy of the draft rules was also presented to the Chief Justice for her review.	May 2023
C7. GOL engagement	Completed	<p>LEPDA supported a consultation with CSOs and the private sector to identify areas of the commercial court process in need of clarification for potential inclusion in the Rules of Procedure. Based on this consultation, the LEPDA consultant worked with the Commercial Court and Judicial Institute to prepare a draft set of Rules of Procedure.</p> <p>With support from the Commercial Court and LEPDA, HPA organized consultation with judges, JI staff, and stakeholders, particularly commercial banks, and lawyers in private practice, to build understanding and support for the initiative and to identify the main areas that should be covered by the rules of procedure. This was done through a series of direct consultations, and a stakeholder review event organized on June 30, 2023.</p>	October 2022 - June 2023
C9. Draft full policy paper	Completed	<p>HPA submitted the final report comprising inputs from LEPDA, the Commercial Court and stakeholders who participated in the review discussions leading to the development and validation of the Rules of Procedures of the Commercial court.</p> <p>Participating stakeholders came from the Debt Court for Montserrado County, Commercial Court, Commercial Banks, Central Bank of Liberia, LNBA, JI and lawyers in private practice.</p>	June - July 2023

C10. Final pre-submission review	Completed	LEPDA submitted the draft final copy of the Rules of Procedure to the Chief Judge of the Commercial Court, Eva Mappy-Morgan. Judge Morgan was instrumental in the development of the rules. Judge Morgan submitted the copies of the Rules of Procedures to the Supreme Court via the office of Court Administrator. Prior to the close of the March 2023 Term of the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice requested the Commercial Court to submit draft copies of the Rules to Justices of the Court for their review. Any announcement regarding promulgation of the rules is expected to be made during the opening of the October 2023 Term of the Supreme Court.	August 2023
D13f. Communications and training.	Completed	LEPDA supported the holding of a consultation engagement for key stakeholders, including judges, lawyers, bankers, and other sector stakeholders, to review the draft rules and obtain their feedback. This engagement was held on June 30 at Cape Hotel. Approximately 30 participants attended the engagement.	June 2023
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Completed	
NARRATIVE		LEPDA consulted LNBA, Banking Institute, Liberia Business Association, Commercial Banks, lawyers in private practice, and other CSOs on the design of the Rules of Procedure, as described in section B3 above.	

10. LAW REFORM POLICY

SCOPE		Assist the Law Reform Commission to prepare the National Law Reform Policy (NLRP) for Cabinet submission	
LEAD GOL MAC		Law Reform Commission	
LEPDA LEAD		Legal Coordinator	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	In Y2Q2, LEPDA had an agreement with LRC on the plan for dialogue and GOL engagement, as well as planning for training on legal and regulatory drafting	January - March 2021
C7. GOL engagement	Completed	LRC introduced the NLRP to GOL and other stakeholders, including the Judicial Institute, Liberia Business Association, Governance Commission, private sector, and the law school, and discussed the need for Executive approval to implement the policy to promote effective standardization and harmonized laws.	November 2021
C8. Outreach and dialogue	Completed	In a second workshop, LRC introduced the NLRP to Civil Society in a capacity building and dialogue workshop. Participants included CSO partners, the teachers' association, and the media, to discuss the need for Executive approval to implement the policy and to inform the public about the policy.	November 2021
C10. Final pre-submission review	Pending	The legislature could not meet due to their breaks and elections. If the CDC led government is re-elected, the LRC may have an opportunity to arrange a session with the legislature for the purpose of making the presentation of the NLRP. During the period, LEPDA and LRC met with the Vice President of Liberia to solicit her assistance in getting the legislature to pass on the Law Reform Policy. The VP met with the leadership of the House and Senate and discussed the policy and the possibility of getting the LRC to make a presentation. The process could not continue due to the VP's continuous absence from the country and the legislature absence for agriculture break and campaigning for the upcoming elections.	October 2022- March 2023
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Completed	
NARRATIVE		CSO engagement was achieved through the CSO dialogue workshop described in step C8 above.	

II. WASH PRIVATE SECTOR ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

SCOPE		Assist GOL to develop policy on improving the enabling environment for investment in the WASH sector	
LEAD GOL MAC		National WASH Commission (NWASHC)	
LEPDA LEAD		Private Sector Development Specialist	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	During YQQ3 and Y4Q1, LEPDA conducted discussions with NWASHC and obtained agreement to proceed with this policy effort. LEPDA has also engaged its two proposed implementing partners (CHES and Partnership for Sustainable Development (PaSD)) in the planning process.	September 2023 – October 2023
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	<p>From September 2022 to December 2022 LEPDA worked with NGOs CHES and PaSD to design the overall activity. The activity was conceptualized to have three phases: Phase 1 was an initial identification of WASH private sector firms and administration of a ‘mini-survey’ of the firms identified. Phase 2 was the administration of detailed follow-up KIIs and development of a policy discussion paper. Phase 3 was the validation of the policy discussion paper with WASH private sector firms. Consequently, LEPDA proceeded to contract CHES and PaSD to conduct Phase I of the activity. In February 2023, LEPDA worked with CHES and PaSD to design the mini-survey and code for input into the ODK platform. This ensured that CHES and PaSD would both use the same methodology for conducting the mini survey. Thereafter, the local partners recruited and trained data enumerators and deployed them to the field. During the months of March and April, 2023, the partners proceeded to identify WASH private sector firms in their areas of operation- rural and urban Monsterrado, in the case of PaSD; and Nimba and Bong in the case of CHES. LEPDA partners identified and surveyed a total of 61 firms in the water bottling, mineral sachet, water trucking, sanitation, water infrastructure construction and solid waste management sectors. During this period, LEPDA also initiated the recruitment of an experienced private sector development consultant to support the remainder of the effort.</p> <p>In May and June, 2023, LEPDA conducted an analysis of the mini-survey data. The purpose of this was to provide an understanding of some of the challenges faced in the sector, to enable the selection of firms for detailed KIIs and to inform the design of the KII guidelines. In late June, LEPDA, supported by the local private sector development expert, and the two local partners developed the work plan for</p>	September 2022 – August 2023

SCOPE		Assist GOL to develop policy on improving the enabling environment for investment in the WASH sector	
		Phase 2 of the activity (KIIs and development of draft policy discussion paper). LEPDA worked with CHESS and PaSD to complete all KIIs during the month of August.	
B3. Design interventions	Completed	Starting in August, LEPDA reviewed the results of the mini-survey and KIIs to develop an initial analysis. The initial analysis highlighted some results including the sensitivity of businesses to changes in revenues and profits, the challenge of fleet management and the cost of power. To further understand these issues, LEPDA developed an economic model of a mineral sachet firm. Late in August, LEPDA convened a meeting with CHESS and PaSD to review the analysis and agree upon a set of interventions for the sector.	August 2023
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	Based on the work done to date, LEPDA developed a draft policy discussion paper along with a presentation of the key analysis and results.	September 2023
C8. Outreach and dialogue	Ongoing	In September, LEPDA completed two validation events for its draft policy paper. One event took place in Bong in early September, and one took place in Monrovia, and the National WASH Commission, in mid-September. The events included participants from the WASH private sector and GOL. The analysis and recommendation of the paper were strongly supported. LEPDA will finalize the paper and share the results with key stakeholders, including the USAID WASH projects, in the final quarter of implementation.	September-October 2023
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Completed	
NARRATIVE		CSO engagement was achieved through working with two local CSOs (CHESS and PaSD) as implementing partners. Private Sector engagement was achieved through engaging private sector in research and validation.	

12. WASH SECTOR DECENTRALIZATION POLICY

SCOPE		Assist GOL to develop policy on decentralization in the WASH Sector	
LEAD GOL MAC		National WASH Commission (NWASHC)	
LEPDA LEAD		WASH Coordinator	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	TARGET DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Complete	LEPDA conducted a meeting to review this activity in September and agreed on the overall work plan. During the first month of Y4, LEPDA developed an updated PDP with the NWASHC PUT to be signed-off by NWASHC leadership.	September - October 2022
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	LEPDA engaged a consultant to help the PUT review the key policy documents related to decentralization and LEPDA's policy work relevant to WASH sector decentralization to enable the PUT to identify the issues that decentralization raises for the sector. This will include (1) the Local Governance Act; (2) The Draft Revenue Sharing bill; (3) LEPDA's case studies on subnational WASH service delivery; and (4) LEPDA's capacity assessment of the readiness of subnational entities to deliver effective WASH services. LEPDA also engaged both the CWSA and Safe Drinking Water activities to ensure effective coordination and approaches.	November 2022
B3. Design interventions	Completed	LEPDA worked with the PUT to identify measures to overcome the barriers to achieving the vision of a decentralized WASH sector. A two-day workshop was held on policy brief writing and discussions of proposed priority interventions to enhance decentralization efforts were discussed to inform the Decentralization Policy Paper to be developed by the WASH Commission with LEPDA support.	November 2022 – March 2023
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	LEPDA worked with the PUT to develop a detailed outline for a policy paper, based on steps 2 and 3 above. LEPDA held a series of 5 sessions with the PUT to review all aspects of the Local Government Act and the Local Government Act 10-year Implementation Plan to determine the potential impact on WASH sector decentralization efforts and the role of the NWASHC in those efforts. The draft document is now being reviewed by the PUT and the NWASHC leadership and has been shared with the two WASH USAID projects (CWSA and Safe	December 2022 – October 2023

SCOPE		Assist GOL to develop policy on decentralization in the WASH Sector	
		Drinking Water). It will subsequently be shared with other MACs.	
C8. Dialogue	Pending	LEPDA will facilitate a presentation of the discussion paper to key GOL entities and WASH sector CSOs for discussion.	October- November2023
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Pending	
NARRATIVE		The WASH sector CSOs will participate in a final meeting to review the discussion paper.	

13. WASH SECTOR GOVERNANCE REFORM PLAN

SCOPE		Assist GOL to develop a governance reform plan for the WASH sector	
LEAD GOL MAC		National WASH Commission (NWASHC)	
LEPDA LEAD		WASH Coordinator	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	Early in Y2, NWASHC requested LEPDA for assistance in developing a governance reform plan for the sector. In February 2021, LEPDA contracted the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) to provide technical assistance to the NWASHC and other GOL stakeholders. Upon mobilization, SIWI developed a work plan that was shared with NWASHC. NWASHC proposed the establishment of a WASH sector Task Force to support the process.	January 2021 - February 2022
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	LEPDA supported NWASHC and stakeholders to review relevant WASH sector governance policy documents that enabled SIWI to identify key governance issues. With LEPDA support, SIWI convened a series of Task Force meetings for WASH sector stakeholders to plan a three-day WASH-BAT Workshop, preceded by a one-day Training of Trainers on the WASHBAT Methodology for Facilitators and Rapporteurs. The WASH-BAT Training of Trainers and workshop were completed in June 2022 (Y3Q2). In the workshop, GOL, CSO, and private sector stakeholders analyzed the bottlenecks in sector governance and developed initial recommendations to overcome them to inform development of the WASH Sector Governance Reform Plan.	May - June 2022
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	After completion of the WASH-BAT workshop, SIWI prepared a detailed workshop report and a sector governance reform plan. Based on feedback from LEPDA, SIWI convened a set of three consultative meetings to refine and improve the reform plan. The plan was submitted to USAID in September 2022. Based on USAID feedback, LEPDA finalized the plan in Y4Q1.	July - November 2022

PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
B5. Screen policy discussion paper	Completed	LEPDA assisted the NWASHC PUT to present the draft plan in two events. First, NWASHC presented the plan in the WASH sector coordination meeting. Second, LEPDA supported the organization of a high-level dialogue, including deputy ministers, assistant ministers, members of the WASH Legislative Caucus, CSOs. Donor partners, and county authorities.	December 2022 – May 2023
B6. Finalize policy discussion paper	Completed	LEPDA assisted the PUT to finalize the Governance Reform Plan based on the outcome of the screening process.	May 2023
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS	Completed		
NARRATIVE	CSO and private sector actors were engaged in the WASH BAT process and participated in all stages of the review process through the sector coordination meeting and stakeholder workshops.		

14. WASH SECTOR REGULATORY FEE STRUCTURE

SCOPE		Assist GOL WASH sector actors to design the regulatory fee structure for the WASH sector	
LEAD GOL MAC		National WASH Commission (NWASHC)	
LEPDA LEAD		WASH Coordinator	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	Early in Y2, NWASHC requested LEPDA assistance to develop an improved fee structure for the WASH sector. As a result, LEPDA contracted SIWI to provide technical assistance. A work plan was agreed with NWASHC upon mobilization of the technical assistance program.	January 2021 - April 2022
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	After completion of the WASH-BAT process, SIWI began an initial analysis of the current fee structure in place for the sector. SIWI collected information about current regulatory fee structures in entities including the Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation, the National Public Health Institute of Liberia, the Ministry of Public Works, and the Ministry of Mines and Energy.	June - October 2022
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	Based on the initial analysis and research, SIWI developed a draft regulatory document establishing an improved fee structure for the sector.	September - November 2022
B5. Screen policy discussion paper	Completed	LEPDA organized a meeting with the NWASHC PUT and leadership to review the draft regulatory document prepared by SIWI.	November 2022
B6. Finalize policy discussion paper	Completed	SIWI updated the draft paper based on input from the NWASHC PUT and leadership. LEPDA also engaged a local consultant to conduct a review of the draft regulation to ensure compliance with Liberian law.	December 2022 – June 2023
C7. GOL engagement	Completed	LEPDA assisted the NWASHC to organize a dialogue event for senior WASH sector stakeholders, including GOL, private sector, and civil society, to review the draft regulatory document/fee structure. The event took place in May 2023.	May 2023

C12. Disseminate approved policy	Pending	LEPDA worked with the NWASHC and CSOs to hold sessions on the legal and regulatory framework with the WASH Legislative Caucus, Stakeholders, and USAID WASH projects to advance the reform agenda on the legal and regulatory framework. The NWASHC CEO has requested LEPDA's support to hold a Board Meeting with the agenda to approve the draft regulation so that it can begin implementation. The meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2023.	August- November 2023
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CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS	Completed
NARRATIVE	NWASHC engaged throughout the process with CSOs and private sector actors. CSOs and private sector actors had the opportunity to participate in the GOL engagement process and were included in the step 13f (Communications and Training).

15. DISAPORA ENGAGEMENT POLICY

SCOPE		Assist GOL to Support Diaspora Investment Policy	
LEAD GOL MAC		Ministry of State Without Portfolio – Liberia Diaspora Engagement Program (LDEP)	
LEPDA LEAD		Legal Advisor	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare Policy Development Plan (PDP)	Completed	In Year 1, the President’s Delivery Unit (PDU) and the Liberia Diaspora Engagement Program (LDEP) at the Ministry of State Without Portfolio requested LEPDA assistance to promote the Diaspora Engagement Policy that had been developed prior to LEPDA inception but had not yet been implemented. LEPDA worked closely with LDEP to develop a Policy Development Plan to move the policy forward.	January 2020- July 2022
C7. GOL Engagement	Completed	LEPDA provided in-kind grant support to the PDU and LDEP to improve its communications capability through the provision of computers, printers, internet, and office furniture for a meeting room and for staff. This support was used to engage more effectively with GOL and partners to promote the Diaspora Engagement policy.	September-October 2023
C8. Dialogue	Completed	The LDEP held a virtual meeting with Diaspora organizations and individuals in May of 2022. Through an FAA grant from LEPDA, and in cooperation with the MOS LDEP, Ecocap Investment Group (EIG) has conducted extensive dialogue on the Diaspora policy with diaspora groups in the US and in Liberia. In June, two roadshow events were held in the DC Metro area in Atlanta with additional roadshows held in July and August in Philadelphia and Minnesota. While the policy paper has already been developed, LDEP and Ecocap have raised awareness with government and diaspora organizations to inform implementation efforts.	May 2023 – August 2023
I3e. Donor-funded programs	Completed	LEPDA grantee Ecocap engaged in communications and awareness raising efforts to promote the diaspora policy with private sector and Diaspora Community Organizations (DCOs) involved in diaspora engagement through a series of in-person and virtual roadshows in the USA and Liberia. Ecocap launched the Liberia Diaspora Exchange (LDEX) website and app that provides access to a network and investment information and profiles for diaspora members and others interested in investment in Liberia. Ecocap has also developed a training video on the LDEP policy and conducted a perception survey on diaspora investment. ⁹ Ecocap has also	

⁹ [HTTP://WWW.LDEX.COM/](http://www.ldex.com/)

SCOPE		Assist GOL to Support Diaspora Investment Policy	
		developed 4 investment profiles on its LDx platform on Digital Finance, FinTech, Poultry-Eggs, and Housing and Construction for interested investors.	
13f. Communications and training	Completed	LEPDA has provided policy brief training for PDU members, including a former PDU staff member who is currently the new LDEP Coordinator.	
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Completed	
NARRATIVE		Diaspora NGOs in the United States (some with offices in Liberia) have engaged in the roll-out of the Diaspora Liberia Diaspora Exchange (LDEX) online platform and awareness efforts on the Diaspora Engagement Policy through roadshows and consultations.	

2.1.2 COMPLETED BEFORE YEAR FOUR

16. LIBERIA WATER AND SEWER CORPORATION COST AND REVENUE

SCOPE		Assist GOL to identify drivers of water network financial performance and develop profit improvement plan	
LEAD GOL MAC		Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation (LWSC)	
LEPDA LEAD		WASH Coordinator	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	LEPDA initiated work in June 2021 (Y2Q3). LEPDA's lead consultant developed a set of tools to conduct a water audit and cost-revenue analysis and shared these with LWSC staff and staff of the USAID-funded outstations. To support the process, the consultant and LEPDA staff organized the delivery of a series of six online meetings with LWSC staff to train them on the water audit process, present the data collection tools, review progress and emerging findings, and follow up on data not yet provided.	June-August 2021
B3. Design interventions	Completed	Once the water audit and revenue-expenditure model were complete, LEPDA's consultant worked with LWSC to identify available interventions that would improve cost-revenue characteristics, such as adding customers through adding kiosks, individual connections, and pre-paid meters. The consultant worked with the LWSC team to identify relevant parameters (e.g., cost per kiosk and estimated number of potential new customers of different types) and identified other	August-October 2021

		needed actions through the core analysis (e.g., reduction of staffing and reduction of non-revenue water (NRW)).	
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	LEPDA submitted a full report containing the issue analysis and proposed set of interventions in October 2021 (Y3Q1). LEPDA received feedback from USAID requesting reorganization of the report and additional information for interventions.	October 2021
B5. Finalize policy discussion paper	Completed	LEPDA and the lead consultant worked with LWSC staff to collect additional information needed to document the interventions, and an updated report was submitted in January 2022. LEPDA presented the updated paper to USAID and went through a series of modifications, with the paper approved by USAID in April 2022.	October 2021 - April 2022
C7. GOL engagement	Completed	During April and May 2022, LEPDA presented the final analysis to LWSC senior management and to the leadership of the National WASH Commission. The presentation was also delivered to LEPDA partner SIWI to support work on the WASH governance study. The full report was also shared with the Ministry of Finance Expenditure Monitoring Unit (EMU), to inform planning for a WASH sector Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS). The report was reviewed by the EMU Director and strongly endorsed.	April-May 2022
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Completed	
NARRATIVE		Completed through review of report by CSO Partner PaSD	

17. GOVERNANCE OF LIBERIA SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

SCOPE		Assist GOL to implement the SEZ initiative through assistance on site feasibility and design of the Liberia SEZ Authority	
LEAD GOL MAC		Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP)	
LEPDA LEAD		Legal and Regulatory Expert	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	The basic identification and analysis of governance issues was completed during LEPDA's feasibility study for the Buchanan Special Economic Zone. This was completed during Y1 and approved by USAID.	January – June 2020

B3. Design interventions	Completed	In Y2, LEPDA agreed to support implementation of the SEZ by conducting a study on the governance of the Liberia SEZ Authority. This study included a financial model/costing of the authority, organizational design, and roll-out plan.	November 2020 – January 2021
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	LEPDA's policy recommendations with respect to LSEZA were documented in a report that was finalized during January 2021 (Y2Q2). The report was presented to MFDP in the following month and was also shared with external stakeholders.	January 2021
C7. GOL engagement	Completed	LEPDA's recommendations with respect to the organization of the LSEZA were presented by USAID to a high-level meeting of GOL stakeholders in August 2022.	August 2022
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Complete	
NARRATIVE		This has been achieved through LEPDA's grant to the Center for Democratic Governance (CDG).	

18. VALUE-ADDED TAX (VAT)

SCOPE		Assist GOL in ongoing implementation of VAT introduction	
LEAD GOL MAC		Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP)	
LEPDA LEAD		Economic Policy Lead	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare PDP	Completed	In Y3Q1 (December 2021), LEPDA's Lead economist held a technical meeting with the MFDP Tax policy team to discuss preparatory planning for a series of VAT dialogue engagements. The team concluded the outline of four critical institutions for LEPDA support regarding the dialogues. This included a separate dialogue event with the private sector, civil society, government, and Legislature.	December 2021
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	During Y3Q2, LEPDA provided technical support for the ongoing policy process. LEPDA conducted a review of work done to date, and at the request of	January-March 2021

		<p>MFDP researched and drafted a presentation on international experience of VAT implementation. It also drafted a fact sheet on VAT.</p> <p>LEPDA also conducted a series of meetings with MFDP, LRA and the ECOWAS advisor embedded in MFDP to assist them to prepare presentations for delivery in the upcoming dialogue events as well as to conduct detailed planning of the sessions.</p>	
C7. GOL engagement	Completed	<p>In Y2Q3 (Feb. 7), LEPDA supported MFDP and LRA to a stakeholder engagement dialogue informational meetings on VAT implementation. The dialogue was held with key government institutions with the participation of over 35 participants comprising deputy ministers, directors, and representatives from the utility services.</p> <p>At LEPDA's suggestion, during this quarter MFDP also submitted the draft VAT legislation to the Law Reform Commission for review and comment. LRC subsequently provided its feedback.</p> <p>During Y2Q3 LEPDA also provided technical support for an additional GOL review and validation of the draft law and supporting material. During this time, Lead Economist was invited by MFDP to travel to Buchanan for the validation of the VAT document including the VAT white paper, draft VAT law, and the timeline for implementation.</p>	February – May 2021
C8. Outreach and dialogue	Completed	<p>During Y2Q3, LEPDA assisted MFDP and LRA to organize further dialogue events with the civil society and the private sector.</p> <p>The second engagement dialogue, on March 11, was held with the CSOs with an attendance of over 30 persons representing various thematic areas in the CSO space.</p> <p>In Y2Q3 (May 19), LEPDA supported MFDP and LRA to hold the third stakeholder engagement dialogue informational meetings on VAT implementation. The engagement dialogue was held with the private sector with an attendance of over 35 people representing various business sectors of the economy.</p>	March- May 2021
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Completed	
NARRATIVE		On March 11 and May 19, LEPDA supported the VAT dialogue with CSO and the Private sector, respectively. At the CSOs	

	dialogue were representatives from 30 CSO institutions. Regarding the private sector, there were 35 people representing various business sectors of the economy.
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19. NATIONAL RICE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2

SCOPE		Assist MOA to develop a Private Sector Development component for its national rice development strategy	
LEAD GOL MAC		Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)	
LEPDA LEAD		Economic Policy Lead	
STATUS		Completed	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	LEPDA designed a research instrument for a value-chain survey and trained 12 MOA staff (including PUT members) to implement the survey—LEPDA provided financial and operational support for the staff to travel to six rice-producing counties (in six teams of two) to administer. This took place in March 2021 (Q2 of Y2). Upon completion, LEPDA analyzed the data, while MOA prepared and delivered its own summary and report. In parallel, LEPDA conducted an extensive desk review on rice production and rice markets in Liberia.	January-March 2021
B3. Design interventions	Completed	Based on the analysis, LEPDA's lead consultant for the study developed a set of interventions to support growth of the rice sector. These were validated in a session with the MOA data collection team in April 2021.	April-May 2021
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	LEPDA's Rice Private Sector Development Analysis was developed from May-August 2021 (Q3 and Q4 of Y2). Comments from MOA PUT members and the data collection team were incorporated into the paper, that was submitted to USAID in late August 2021.	May-August 2021
B6. Finalize policy discussion paper	Completed	In the period of September and October 2021 (Y2Q4 and Y3Q1), LEPDA revised the discussion paper/analysis several times and conducted several meetings with USAID. Eventually, the revised paper was cleared for re-engagement with MOA. During October 2021, LEPDA conducted a final presentation of the analysis to MOA PUT members and senior management.	September - October 2021

		During September and October 2021, LEPDA assisted MOA to draft an updated version of the NRDS2 policy document, including a PSD component based on LEPDA's analysis. This was eventually endorsed/approved by MOA in early May 2022 (Y3Q3). MOA requested LEPDA support in organizing a forthcoming validation for the completed document.	
C7. GOL engagement	Completed	LEPDA provided logistical and financial support for a validation workshop on the updated draft on September 6, 2022. The validation workshop included staff of MOA, Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Liberia Land Authority, the private sector, and development partners.	September 2022
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Completed	
NARRATIVE		Achieved through MOA validation workshop.	

20. NATIONAL SINGLE WINDOW

SCOPE		Assist implementation of Single Window policy through development of Options Paper/Honest Broker Assessment	
LEAD GOL MAC		Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI)	
LEPDA LEAD		Economic Policy Lead	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare PDP	Completed	In Y2Q4, following a recommendation from the World Bank and approval from the Ministry of Commerce (MoCI), LEPDA prepared a proposed scope of work to support MoCI and other trade facilitation stakeholders to prepare an “honest broker options paper” on the National Single Window. (NSW).	July-September 2021
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	In Y3Q1, LEPDA designed a survey instrument and administered it to 15 custom-centric agencies of government that are involved in cross-border trade and issue licenses, permits, certificates, and other trade-related (LPCOs). The LEPDA Home Office team also started to conduct background research and analysis to inform the development of the options paper.	October-December 2021
B3. Design interventions	Completed	LEPDA held four webinar sessions, a security sector meeting, and a validation workshop. In Y3Q1 (October 10, November 9, & December 7), LEPDA delivered three webinars (workshops) respectively covering the participation of LRA, MoCI, and 16 other government	October 2021 – March 2022

		<p>institutions on the NSW policy. The First two webinars attended by LRA and MoCI included an in-depth review of NSW design and implementation. The third webinar expanded participation to include all other government institutions involved in border trade either through the issuance of licenses, permits, certificates, or inspectorates. For the third webinar, there were 23 participants comprising of ministers, directors, and heads of trade departments from the 16 government institutions. In Y3Q2 (January 5), LEPDA convened a meeting between LRA and key security sector institutions to properly clarify their role in the implementation of the NSW. All clarifications were made at the meeting. In the same Y3Q2 (February 16), LEPDA organized the fourth webinar to include a discussion with the private sector actors on issues related to NSW. Participation included 17 people representing shipping lines, terminal operators, brokers' unions, banking institutions, e-payment providers, mobile network operators, and courier agents. This webinar was a step forward to support improved trade and promote private sector development.</p>	
B4. Draft policy discussion paper	Completed	<p>Following the analysis of the survey instrument and the feedback from the webinar sessions, the LEPDA team developed a draft honest broker policy paper in 3-options for implementing the NSW. In Y3Q2, LEPDA organized a validation workshop with MoCI and LRA, along with key GOL stakeholders to review the draft policy paper. The workshop was a success; however, there were few recommendations made by LRA about the options. Later in Y3Q2, the draft was shared with MoCI, LRA, World Bank, and USAID for comment/feedback. Comments received from the government, World Bank, and USAID were incorporated and the draft paper was re-submitted to USAID in March 2022 for final approval.</p>	
B6. Finalize policy discussion paper	Completed	<p>In Y3Q3, LEPDA finalized the options paper after approval from USAID. In the same Y3Q3, LEPDA submitted the final paper to MoCI, and shared a copy with LRA, MFDP, and the World Bank.</p>	April 2022
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Completed	
NARRATIVE		One of four webinars delivered by LEPDA was focused entirely on private sector actors (see B3. Above)	

21. CBL CAPACITY FOR LOGISTICS AND SECURITY RELATED TO PRINTING OF NEW BANK NOTES

SCOPE		Build capacity of CBL to manage logistics and security during currency printing	
LEAD GOL MAC		Central Bank of Liberia (CBL)	
LEPDA LEAD		Legal and Regulatory Expert	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare PDP	Completed	Via Kroll, LEPDA developed a work plan for support in this area in partnership with CBL.	Jan-March 2021
A2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	<p>Via Kroll, LEPDA identified and analyzed the issue by assessing the degree to which recommendations from the previous phase have been implemented. As part of this process, LEPDA extracted and reviewed all previous report recommendations related to logistics processes, and presented, discussed, and obtained CBL responses on status of implementation.</p> <p>Via Kroll, LEPDA then reviewed the one-off and single journey Logistics and Security Plan drafted by the CBL Procurement team (using the template created for the 2020 banknote printing exercise) and provided suggested updates where necessary, to cover issues that were not addressed such as weather, road conditions and also some of the identified learnings and single points of failure from the 2020 'one-off' journey.</p>	March – April 2021
B3. Design interventions	Completed	<p>LEPDA provided technical advice to CBL in relation to the transportation of the first shipment (i.e., 40 million pieces) of new L\$100 banknotes from the point of manufacture to Monrovia, via Kroll. This work included technical advice related to logistics and security including:</p> <p>Reviewing the selection and security considerations of the shipping route (point of manufacture to Monrovia, Liberia) to identify and mitigate risks.</p> <p>High-level due diligence on parties engaged to transport new issue banknotes (e.g., logistics partners, possible trans-shipment points).</p>	May-August 2021

		<p>Selection of route (airport onto road to CBL vaults inside of Monrovia).</p> <p>Sourcing of appropriate cargo vehicles for local road transportation and protocols designed to mitigate risks with those vehicles, etc.</p> <p>Assessment of shipment insurance requirements (principally to minimize potential for invalidation of cover).</p>	
D13a. Implementation	Completed	Via Kroll, LEPDA provided advisory support and remote observation of real-time first delivery of new L\$100 banknotes to CBL vault complex in Monrovia. This phase of work was particularly complex given the increased volume of new L\$100 banknotes to be delivered.	September 2021
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Completed	
NARRATIVE		LMDI support for public engagement on CBL printing and diffusion of \$L100 notes	

22. CBL CAPACITY FOR VALIDATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF NEW BANK NOTES

SCOPE		Build capacity of CBL to manage acceptance and validation during currency printing	
LEAD GOL MAC		Central Bank of Liberia (CBL)	
LEPDA LEAD		Legal and Regulatory Expert	
PDPF STEP	STATUS	NARRATIVE	DATE
A1. Prepare PDP	Completed	Via Kroll, LEPDA developed a work plan for support in this area in partnership with CBL.	Jan-Mar 2021
B2. Identify and analyze issue	Completed	The basis for identification and analysis of issues was included in the final report for the previous stage of engagement, which stated “Within the CBL there was no ‘institutional memory’ or record keeping suggesting that previous banknote printings had been rigorously inspected on arrival for acceptability and in line with the specifications and parameters set out in earlier printing contracts.”- i.e. issue identified was that a system for validation and acceptance of new bank notes had not been developed, institutionalized and applied. Via Kroll, LEPDA also further identified the need for support for validation during agreement of Scope of Work and work planning with CBL.	Jan-Mar 2021

B3. Design interventions	Completed	<p>In partnership with the CBL Procurement team, LEPDA created technical review documents and validation workbook for new L\$100 banknotes, via Kroll.</p> <p>Via Kroll, LEPDA identified methods to accelerate and streamline validation and acceptance processes, including electronic processing tools.</p>	Mar-Jun 2021
C13a. Implementation	Completed	<p>Via Kroll, LEPDA conducted training sessions with the CBL Procurement team on validating the new L\$100 banknotes (using the validation workbook developed).</p> <p>LEPDA advised the CBL on how to work proactively with Crane (banknote vendor) to set out reporting requirements for replacement banknotes and to identify any additional fees for reporting.</p> <p>Via Kroll, LEPDA also provided technical advice to CBL Procurement team as they progress through the validation process for delivery of new L\$100 banknotes.</p>	July-August 2021
CSO/PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT STATUS		Completed	
NARRATIVE		LMDI support for public engagement on CBL printing and diffusion of \$L100 notes	

3. GRANTS

3.1 GRANTS TO SUPPORT POLICY REFORM

Table 3. Status of Grants Planned to Support Policy Reform Priorities

#	Grant Title	Recipient	Scope of work and inputs	Grant Budget	Grant Modality	Implementation Period	Status
1	Empowering Liberian Youth Development Institute (LIYODI) to Engage in Food Security Policy	Liberian Youth Development Institute (LIYODI)	To engage grassroots CSOs in food insecure areas in the GOL food security policy process to implement food security assessments in their communities that will generate updates on LEPDA’s 2022 Food Security Assessment for five of the most food insecure counties. It will also build overall capacities of grassroots CSOs in grant application preparation, grant implementation and in conducting food security assessments in the field that will support USAID’s long-term objective of continually broadening its partnership base.	8,757.10	FAA	4/27/23-6/26/23	Completed - Activity completed and grant has closed.
2	Empowering Grand Kru Intellectual Symposium (GKIS) to Engage in Food Security Policy	Grand Kru Intellectual Symposium (GKIS)	To engage grassroots CSOs in food insecure areas in the GOL food security policy process to implement food security assessments in their communities that will generate updates on LEPDA’s 2022 Food Security Assessment for five of the most food insecure counties. It will also build overall capacities of grassroots CSOs in grant application preparation, grant implementation and in conducting food security assessments in the field that will support USAID’s long-term objective of continually broadening its partnership base.	9,386.30	FAA	4/24/23-6/26/23	Completed - Activity completed and grant has closed.

3	Empowering Sinoe County Women's Platform (SICWOP) - SICWOP to Engage in Food Security Policy	Sinoe County Women's Platform (SICWOP)	To engage grassroots CSOs in food insecure areas in the GOL food security policy process to implement food security assessments in their communities that will generate updates on LEPDA's 2022 Food Security Assessment for five of the most food insecure counties. It will also build overall capacities of grassroots CSOs in grant application preparation, grant implementation and in conducting food security assessments in the field that will support USAID's long-term objective of continually broadening its partnership base.	8,707.60	FAA	4/24/23-6/26/23	Completed - Activity completed and grant has closed.
4	Empowering River Gee Cocoa Cash Crops Farmers Union (RIGCCU) to Engage in Food Security Policy	River Gee Cocoa Cash Crops Farmers Union (RIGCCU)	To engage grassroots CSOs in food insecure areas in the GOL food security policy process to implement food security assessments in their communities that will generate updates on LEPDA's 2022 Food Security Assessment for five of the most food insecure counties. It will also build overall capacities of grassroots CSOs in grant application preparation, grant implementation and in conducting food security assessments in the field that will support USAID's long-term objective of continually broadening its partnership base.	8,970.50	FAA	4/27/23-6/26/23	Completed - Activity completed and grant has closed.
5	Empowering Maryland Cassava and Vegetable Farmers' Cooperative (MACAVEFC) to Engage in Food Security Policy	Maryland Cassava and Vegetable Farmers' Cooperative (MACAVEFC)	To engage grassroots CSOs in food insecure areas in the GOL food security policy process to implement food security assessments in their communities that will generate updates on LEPDA's 2022 Food Security Assessment for five of the most food insecure counties. It will also build overall capacities of grassroots CSOs in grant application preparation, grant implementation and in conducting	9,361.00	FAA	4/27/23-6/26/23	Completed - Activity completed and grant has closed.

			food security assessments in the field that will support USAID's long-term objective of continually broadening its partnership base.				
6	Regional Collaboration on Overcoming Binding Constraints on the Growth of Liberian Cocoa Value Chain	African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET)	Provide support to a Think-Tank in Sub-Saharan Africa to fund collaborative research on Cocoa Value Chain with CePAR, IREDD, CDG and MOA. This activity will also include training/capacity development for local partners.	286,294.80	FAA	10/19/21-11/18/22	Completed - Activity completed and grant has closed.
7	Capacity Building for the Law Reform Commission, Ministry of Justice and Ministries, Agencies and Commissions (MACs)	Liberian Law Research Codification and Publications Center (LLRCPC)	Cost of hiring trainers, developing training material and delivering training to GOL officials on developing laws and regulations consistent with the principles of the National Law Reform Policy (NLRP)	44,340.80	FAA	6/1/22-4/30/23	Completed - Activity completed and awaiting Close - Out Checklist Approval.
8	Improving Equitable WASH Services for All Liberians	Community Health Education and Social Services (CHESS-Liberia)	Fund a program of outreach to engage with the public to identify issues in the WASH sector; follow-on advocacy with the Government to present results to Government.	82,550	FAA	8/30/21-8/30/22	Completed - Activity completed and final payment made
9	Engage Liberian Diaspora Investment Promotion Outreach and Advocacy in Collaboration with the Liberia Diaspora Engagement Program (LDEP) at the Ministry of State of Liberia	Ecocap Investment Group LLC (EIG)	Fund at least one Liberian Diaspora Group to engage with Liberian Diaspora to promote investment in Liberia, promote the SEZ initiative, and strengthen the relationship between LDEP and Diaspora Groups. Expected activities will include developing and distributing information products and holding conferences, meetings, and workshops.	60,038	FAA	12/1/22-9/30/23	Completed - Activity completed and processing Milestones 6 and 7 and Close -Out

3.2 GRANTS TO SUPPORT PUT ESTABLISHMENT

Table 4. Status of Grants Planned to Enable PUT Formation and Operation

#	Grant Title	Recipient	Scope of work and inputs	Grant Budget	Grant Modality	Implementation Period	Status
10	Provision of equipment to the MOS President's Delivery Unit (PDU)	Ministry of State without Portfolio (MOS)	Transfer ICT Equipment and Office Furniture previously provided by LEPDA on a temporary use basis to ownership of MOS.	32,682	In-kind	8/10/21-6/30/23	Completed activity, pending final disposition and close-out
11	Establishment of WASH Commission PUT	National WASH Commission (NWASHC)	ICT, office equipment, and other items needed to establish WASH Commission PUT.	40,670	In-kind	8/10/21-11/9/21	Completed activity, pending final disposition and close-out
12	Support for the formation of a PUT in MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP)	Laptops, software licenses, office equipment etc., to establish the PUT/conference room.	81,610	In-kind	8/17/21-11/15/21	Completed activity, pending final disposition and close-out
13	Support for the Law Reform Commission- advocacy for the Law Reform Policy	Law Reform Commission (LRC)	Cost to support in-kind grant to provide ICT, office equipment, etc. to facilitate the National Law Reform Policy process.	12,890	In-kind	8/10/21-11/9/21	Completed activity, pending final disposition and close-out
14	Support for Court Reporting Functions for the Judiciary	Judiciary Institute (JI)	In-kind grant to provide court reporting software and equipment.	17,360	In-Kind	6/4/22-1/6/23	Completed activity, pending final disposition and close-out

3.3 SUMMARY OF PIPELINE

Table 5. Status of LEPDA Grants Pipeline

Status	Number	Value (\$)
1. Conceptualization	0	-
2. Solicitation	0	-
3. Concept note	0	-
4. Full grant application	0	-
5. GRC review	0	-
6. Pre-award process	0	-
7. Home Office Review	0	-
8. Submitted, pending approval	0	-
9. Approved	0	-
10. Ongoing	1	7,038
11. Completed	8	1,303,998
12. On hold	0	-
13. Terminated	0	-
TOTAL	14	1,311,036

3.4 GENDER IN GRANT-MAKING

Table 6. The table below summarizes how gender has been mainstreamed into the grants pipeline:

#	Grant Title	Recipient	Scope of work and inputs	Status	Gender approach
1	Empowering Liberian Youth Development Institute (LIYODI) to Engage in Food Security Policy	Liberian Youth Development Institute (LIYODI)	To engage grassroots CSOs in food insecure areas in the GOL food security policy process to implement food security assessments in their communities that will generate updates on LEPDA’s 2022 Food Security Assessment for five of the most food insecure counties. It will also build overall capacities of grassroots CSOs in grant application preparation, grant implementation and in conducting food security assessments in the field that will support USAID’s long-term objective of continually broadening its partnership base.	Completed	LIYODI prioritized gender participation and social inclusion throughout the project implementation. The project activities were designed to ensure gender equality and social inclusion. A total of 60 people (30 females, and 30 males) participated in all activities. The beneficiaries of the project included women, girls, boys, traditional chiefs and elders, youths, community-based organizations, and people with disabilities.
2	Empowering Grand Kru Intellectual Symposium (GKIS) to Engage in Food Security Policy	Grand Kru Intellectual Symposium (GKIS)	To engage grassroots CSOs in food insecure areas in the GOL food security policy process to implement food security assessments in their communities that will generate updates on LEPDA’s 2022 Food Security Assessment for five of the most food insecure counties. It will also build overall capacities of grassroots CSOs in grant application preparation, grant implementation and in conducting food security assessments in the field that will support USAID’s long-term objective of continually broadening its partnership base.	Completed	GKIS prioritized gender participation and social inclusion throughout the project implementation. The project activities were designed to ensure gender equality and social inclusion. A total of 60 people (30 females, and 30 males) participated in all activities. The beneficiaries of the project included women, girls, boys, traditional chiefs and elders, youths, community-based organizations, and people with disabilities.
3	Empowering Sinoe County Women’s Platform (SICWOP) - SICWOP to Engage in Food Security Policy	Sinoe County Women’s Platform (SICWOP)	To engage grassroots CSOs in food insecure areas in the GOL food security policy process to implement food security assessments in their communities that will generate updates on LEPDA’s 2022 Food Security Assessment for five of the most food insecure counties. It will also build	Completed	SICWOP prioritized gender participation and social inclusion throughout the project implementation. The project activities were designed to ensure gender equality and social inclusion. A total of 60 people (30 females, and 30 males) participated in all activities. The beneficiaries of the project included women, girls, boys, traditional chiefs and elders, youths,

			overall capacities of grassroots CSOs in grant application preparation, grant implementation and in conducting food security assessments in the field that will support USAID’s long-term objective of continually broadening its partnership base.		community-based organizations, and people with disabilities.
4	Empowering River Gee Cocoa Cash Crops Farmers Union (RIGCCU) to Engage in Food Security Policy	River Gee Cocoa Cash Crops Farmers Union (RIGCCU)	To engage grassroots CSOs in food insecure areas in the GOL food security policy process to implement food security assessments in their communities that will generate updates on LEPDA’s 2022 Food Security Assessment for five of the most food insecure counties. It will also build overall capacities of grassroots CSOs in grant application preparation, grant implementation and in conducting food security assessments in the field that will support USAID’s long-term objective of continually broadening its partnership base.	Completed	RIGCCU prioritized gender participation and social inclusion throughout the project implementation. The project activities were designed to ensure gender equality and social inclusion. A total of 60 people (30 females, and 30 males) participated in all activities. The beneficiaries of the project included women, girls, boys, traditional chiefs and elders, youths, community-based organizations, and people with disabilities.
5	Empowering Maryland Cassava and Vegetable Farmers’ Cooperative (MACAVEFC) to Engage in Food Security Policy	Maryland Cassava and Vegetable Farmers’ Cooperative (MACAVEFC)	To engage grassroot CSOs in food insecure areas in the GOL food security policy process to implement food security assessments in their communities that will generate updates on LEPDA’s 2022 Food Security Assessment for five of the most food insecure counties. It will also build overall capacities of grassroot CSOs in grant application preparation, grant implementation and in conducting food security assessments in the field that will support USAID’s long-term objective of continually broadening its partnership base.	Completed	MACAVEFC prioritized gender participation and social inclusion throughout the project implementation. The project activities were designed to ensure gender equality and social inclusion. A total of 60 people (30 females, and 30 males) participated in all activities. The beneficiaries of the project included women, girls, boys, traditional chiefs and elders, youths, community-based organizations, and people with disabilities.

6	Regional Collaboration on Overcoming Binding Constraints on the Growth of Liberian Cocoa Value Chain	African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET)	Provide support to a Think-Tank in Sub-Saharan Africa to fund collaborative research on Cocoa Value Chain with CePAR, IREDD, CDG and MOA. This activity will also include training/capacity development for local partners.	Completed	The implementation of Liberia Diaspora Exchange (LDX) will have a clear goal to promote the active participation of various communities, with dedicated roles for women and youth. LDX partnership with Liberian United Women in Progress (LUWIP) and the Liberian Associations of the Diaspora and home (LIBA USA, LIBA Liberia) aims to facilitate the active participation of women and youth in the various events as key stakeholders in the success of LDX. Gender equality and women's empowerment has also been considered in the establishment of the LDX team.
7	Capacity Building for the Law Reform Commission, Ministry of Justice and Ministries, Agencies and Commissions (MACs)	Liberian Law Research Codification and Publications Center (LLRCPC)	Cost of hiring trainers, developing training material and delivering training to GOL officials on developing laws and regulations consistent with the principles of the National Law Reform Policy (NLRP)	Ongoing- Equipment provided on 12/20/2022	The court reporter training team consists of two women. This grant request for equipment is gender neutral although gender balance will be taken into consideration for users of the equipment and will inform selection and training of new court reporters.
8	Improving Equitable WASH Services for All Liberians	Community Health Education and Social Services (CHESS-Liberia)	Fund a program of outreach to engage with the public to identify issues in the WASH sector; follow-on advocacy with the Government to present results to Government.	Completed	LLRCPC has worked closely with LRC and stakeholders to ensure that gender mainstreaming is integrated into its proposal for training and consideration of gender issues in the process of legal and regulatory drafting.
9	Engage Liberian Diaspora Investment Promotion Outreach and Advocacy in Collaboration with the Liberia Diaspora Engagement Program (LDEP) at the Ministry of State of Liberia	Ecocap Investment Group LLC (EIG)	Fund at least one Liberian Diaspora Group to engage with Liberian Diaspora to promote investment in Liberia, promote the SEZ initiative, and strengthen the relationship between LDEP and Diaspora Groups. Expected activities will include developing and distributing information products and holding conferences, meetings, and workshops.	Completed	Ensured that value chain analysis mainstreamed gender; conducted gender disaggregation of data; promoted women's participation in design and delivery; examined differential gender impact of research and addressed how gender will be addressed in recommendations and implementation modalities.

4. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING

4.1 ACTIVITY MONITORING EVALUATION AND LEARNING PLAN (AMELP)

LEPDA continued to track the progress of its activities against the performance indicators contained in the Activity Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan (AMELP). Specifically, data was collected, analyzed, and reported against the performance indicators. The detailed reporting against each performance indicator against set targets is contained in the LEPDA performance indicator database attached to this report. The data generated is indicative of the different LEPDA activities implemented during this reporting period. Additionally, for this reporting period, the implemented MEL activities included:

- **LEPDA AMELP and USAID DIS Review and Update** – PERT Consultancy, Inc., the contracted MEL service provider, undertook a revision of the LEPDA AMELP. Additionally, LEPDA updated information against most of LEPDA performance indicators within the USAID’s Development Information System (DIS). The revision of the AMELP and update of the DIS was informed by a comprehensive analysis of LEPDA AMELP, LEPDA internal performance indicator database, and the USAID DIS. The objective of the analysis was to detect discrepancies in indicator codes, indicator titles, baselines, and targets among the various documents/database and to assess the level of data entry for LEPDA in the USAID DIS.
- **LEPDA Supported Institutions Capacity Assessment**- LEPDA conducted an institutional capacity assessment of NWASHC and separate assessments of the Policy Unit Teams (PUTs) of NWASHC, MFDP, and MOA. The capacity assessment also included three CSOs – Center for Policy Action and Research (CePAR), Center for Democratic Governance (CDG), and Institute for Research and Democratic Development (IREDD). The findings of the capacity assessments were used to calculate the values of LEPDA performance indicators related to the capacity development of the targeted institutions.
- **LEPDA Evidence File Directory** – LEPDA set up an online evidence file directory for completed activities, using its Microsoft Team platform. The platform establishes a connection between the records in LEPDA's Internal Performance Indicator Database and events/activities trackers and their corresponding evidence documents in the online directory.
- **LEPDA Y4 Data Entry in the DIS** – LEPDA entered verified data for Year 4 in the USAID's DIS from its internal performance indicator database. The data were entered against LEPDA’s quarterly and annual performance indicators.

4.2 POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS FRAMEWORK TRACKING

LEPDA’s Policy Development Process Framework (PDPF) is intended to serve as the basis for defining and tracking the policy processes that LEPDA supports. Table 7 below provides a snapshot summary of PDPF steps Completed (Marked ‘X’); Ongoing (‘O’); and Pending (‘P’) for each of the policy engagements undertaken by LEPDA. The final column shows whether CSO or private sector engagement with the policy process has been achieved,

with 'X' indicating it has been achieved and 'P' indicating that it is pending. Table 8 organizes the list of policy engagements completed according to the total number of steps of the PDPF completed under that engagement.

Table 7. PDPF Policy Progress as of September 2023

Policy Effort	Lead MAC	PDPF Step																		Completed	CSO/PS
		A1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	D13a	D13b	D13c	D13d	D13e	D13f		
1. Food Security Policy	MOA	X	X	X	X			X	X											6	X
2. Economic Shocks	MFDP	X	X	X	X				X											5	X
3. GOL Macro-Fiscal Framework	MFDP	X	X	X				X	X											5	X
4. SME Access to Finance	MFDP		X		X				X										X	4	X
5. Agribusiness Testing and Certification	MOA	X	X	P	P				P											2	X
6. Outgrower Schemes - Agro-Financial Framework	MOA	X	X	X	X			P												4	X
7. Outgrower Schemes - Legal Framework	MOA	X	X	X				P	P											3	X
8. Commercial Code Training	Commercial Court/JI	X	X	X															X	4	X
9. Commercial Court Rules of Procedure	Commercial Court/JI	X		X				X		X	X								X	6	X

Policy Effort	Lead MAC	PDPF Step																		Completed	CSO/PS
		A1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	D13a	D13b	D13c	D13d	D13e	D13f		
10. Law Reform Policy	LRC	X						X	X		P									3	X
11. WASH Private Sector Enabling Environment	NWASHC	X	X	X	X				P											4	X
12. WASH Sector Decentralization Policy	NWASHC	X	X	X	X				P											4	P
13. WASH Sector Governance Reform Plan	NWASHC	X	X		X	X	X													5	X
14. WASH Sector Regulatory Fee Structure	NWASHC	X	X		X	X	X	X					P						X	7	X
15. Diaspora Engagement Policy	MOS	X						X	X									X	X	5	X
16. Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation Cost and Revenue	LWSC		X	X	X	X		X												5	X
17. Governance of Liberia Special Economic Zones	MFDP		X	X	X			X												4	X
18. Value Added Tax	MFDP	X	X					X	X											4	X
19. National Rice Development Strategy 2	MOA		X	X	X		X	X												5	X

Policy Effort	Lead MAC	PDPF Step																		Completed	CSO/PS	
		A1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	C7	C8	C9	C10	C11	C12	D13a	D13b	D13c	D13d	D13e	D13f			
20. National Single Window	MOCI	X	X	X	X		X													5	X	
21. Capacity for Logistics and Security for Printing of New Bank Notes	CBL	X	X	X										X						4	X	
22. Capacity for Validation and Acceptance of New Bank Notes	CBL	X	X	X										X						4	X	
X = Complete; O = Ongoing; P = Pending (not yet begun)																						

Table 8. LEPDA policy efforts and number of PDPF steps completed through September 2023

Policy Effort	No. Completed PDPF steps	CSO/Public Sector Engagement
Agribusiness Testing and Certification	2	Yes
Outgrower Schemes - Legal Framework	3	Yes
Law Reform Policy	3	Yes
SME Access to Finance	4	Yes
Outgrower Schemes - Agro-Financial Framework	4	Yes
Commercial Code Training	4	Yes
WASH Private Sector Enabling Environment	4	Yes
WASH Sector Decentralization Policy	4	Pending
Governance of Liberia Special Economic Zones	4	Yes
Value Added Tax	4	Yes
Capacity for Logistics and Security for Printing New Bank Notes	4	Yes
Capacity for Validation and Acceptance of New Bank Notes	4	Yes
Economic Shocks	5	Yes
GOL Macro-Fiscal Framework	5	Yes
WASH Sector Governance Reform Plan	5	Yes
Diaspora Engagement Policy	5	Yes
Liberia Water and Sewer Corporation Cost and Revenue	5	Yes
National Rice Development Strategy 2	5	Yes
National Single Window	5	Yes
Food Security Policy	6	Yes
Commercial Court Rules of Procedure	6	Yes
WASH Sector Regulatory Fee Structure	7	Yes

4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE

According to the approved EMMP, LEPDA is obliged to report on agreed indicators for the five activities under Objective 1: SEZ Study; Concessions; Financial Markets; Import Policies; and Trade Facilitation. The indicators required under the EMMP are as follows:

- Inclusion of Environmental Impact Assessment in activity actions;
- Involvement of GOL and USAID environmental professionals in discussions of potential environmental impact of policy recommendations; and
- Review of policy recommendations to ensure compliance with GOL and USAID environmental laws and guidelines.

Table 9, below, summarizes LEPDA's main policy efforts from Y4Q2 with respect to these requirements.

In addition, LEPDA is required to (a) address the issue of waste management in all policy reform engagements and (b) make feasible efforts to assure that the analysis and recommendations of the Policy Unit Teams of GOL ministries and agencies and commissions assess whether there are environmental impact issues to be considered in the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies addressing private sector development and economic management. The EMMP also requires LEPDA to make all feasible efforts to ensure that, prior to providing assistance to commercial enterprises, such enterprises complete an Environmental Review form; however, this was not relevant to the Y4 work plan.

Table 10, below, summarizes the current status of these indicators with respect to the main areas of substantive policy advice provided to GOL during Y4.

Activity	Inclusion of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in activity actions	Involvement of GOL and USAID environmental professionals in discussions of potential environmental impact of policy recommendations	Review of policy recommendations to ensure compliance with GOL and USAID environmental laws and guidelines
SEZ Study	N/A - workstream complete.	N/A - workstream complete.	N/A - workstream complete.
Concessions	EIAs have been included in the design of the outgrower framework	EPA has been engaged in process of developing framework for outgrower schemes.	Environmental considerations have been mainstreamed into the proposals for outgrower schemes developed with LPEDA support.
Financial Markets	N/A - not included in LEPDA work plans to date.	N/A - not included in LEPDA work plans to date.	N/A - not included in Y4 workplan.
Import Policies	N/A - not included in LEPDA work plans to date.	N/A - not included in LEPDA work plans to date.	N/A - not included in Y4 workplan.
Trade Facilitation	N/A - workstream complete.	N/A - workstream complete.	N/A - workstream complete.

Areas of substantive advice or technical assistance	Addressing waste management	Highlighting environmental impact
Food Security	Not planned	Environmental considerations to be included in discussion paper
Fuel Prices	Not planned	Environmental considerations to be included in discussion paper
Rice Prices	Not planned	Environmental considerations to be included in discussion paper
Social Safety Nets	Not planned	N/A
Macro-Fiscal Framework	Not planned	N/A
Access to Finance	Not planned	N/A
Agribusiness Market Linkages	Not planned	N/A
Outgrower Schemes	Not planned	Environmental considerations are included in specific outgrower scheme design
Commercial Courts	Not planned	N/A
Law Reform	Not planned	N/A
WASH Sector Governance	Not planned	Environmental considerations were included in Sector Reform Plan
WASH Sector Regulations	Not planned	Not planned
WASH Private Sector Enabling Environment	Not planned	Not planned

5. PROBLEMS, ISSUES, AND BEST PRACTICES

5.1 Engagement with GOL partners

Problem Description: Throughout Y4, engagement with GOL partners continued to be a challenge. Considering the main partners, some of the challenges included:

- **MFDP.** MFDP engagement during Y4 was somewhat improved as a result of LEPDA's efforts during Y3. However, MFDP continued to be slow to take decisive action with respect to LEPDA workstreams and required extensive encouragement and follow-up. The long-term pattern of lack of engagement from the highest level of MFDP continued. In addition to the disconnect between technicians and the top level, over the course of Y4 LEPDA observed an increasing disconnect with Deputy Ministerial level, seemingly caused by international travel and political activities.
- **MOCI.** The long-term pattern of refusal to engage with LEPDA at the Ministerial level continued. As a result of LEPDA efforts in Y3, LEPDA was able to build a relationship at the level of the Deputy Minister for Trade, who cooperated in LEPDA's food security and economic shocks work. However, LEPDA remained unable to launch any dedicated support for MOCI during this year due to refusal of the Minister to engage with LEPDA or approve any activity.
- **MOA.** Engagement with MOA was strong this year, as a result of the efforts made in Y3 and the Minister of Agriculture's strong interest in LEPDA support. However, cooperation with MOA remained somewhat challenging throughout the year due to the Ministry's limited absorptive capacity. This was caused by the fact that the Minister worked only with a small team based in her office, and that the team was and is overburdened by the demands of supporting donor-funded projects. Due to the high level of interest of the Minister in LEPDA support the overall level of cooperation is good, but key activities were often delayed- in the case of one activity (the Rice Symposium) the event took place a full five months later than originally envisaged due to delays on the Ministry side.
- **NWASHC.** Engagement with NWASHC was very strong at the technical level, with the NWASHC PUT particularly responsive and willing to engage (see the NWASHC PUT Success Story in section 6.2 for more details). However, LEPDA did observe some disconnection between NWASHC leadership and the PUT, partly caused by the CEO's international travel program.

Status: Partially resolved

Approaches to Management and Best Practices: LEPDA adapted to this challenge in several ways. A basic management practice LEPDA followed was to be persistent in engagement and follow-up, and to assign sufficient resources for beneficiary engagement. During this year, LEPDA mobilized international and national advisors to work with two of its main counterparts, MFDP and MOA, to maintain strong communication and carry out needed follow-up. This level of resourcing and engagement allowed LEPDA to achieve its objectives with respect to these beneficiaries. At the same time, it was often necessary to show flexibility and to push back deadlines, reflecting delays and limited bandwidth of the beneficiary entities. LEPDA also approached this challenge by adapting its work planning and overall level of engagement to match the level of engagement and responsiveness of the GOL partner. Therefore, during Y4 there was more focus on entities with expected or proven responsiveness, such as the commercial court, WASH Commission and the

Ministry of Agriculture. Focusing support on responsive beneficiaries is clearly a best practice that can be brought to scale.

5.2 Pre-Election Slowdowns

Problem Description: As LEPDA progressed further through Y4, it observed that availability of the leadership of some of its GOL partners became increasingly inconsistent due to election-related factors, such as commitments to election campaigning or positioning for employment post-election. This has impacted scheduling and a general lack of consistent leadership on various activities. This has been particularly the case with respect to the NWASHC and MFDP,

Status: Partially resolved.

Approaches to Management and Best Practices: The pre-election slowdown was largely anticipated by LEPDA. LEPDA adjusted its programming to account for this by focusing more on beneficiaries and sectors not involved in the election cycle, such as the private sector and the judiciary. While working with GOL entities, LEPDA allowed sufficient time for its Y4 activities to account for these delays.

6. SUCCESS STORIES

6.1 POLICY RESPONSE TO ECONOMIC SHOCKS FOOD SECURITY

Background:

In the summer of 2022, the global economy was experiencing severe inflation. This inflation was the result of a chain of events. It started with fiscal and monetary stimulus policies put in place by developed countries in response to COVID-19. This created a boom in global demand, creating logjams in global distribution networks, which themselves caused further increases in prices. Finally, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in April 2022 caused further increases the prices of gas, oil, grain and fertilizers. This increased fuel and commodity prices, which affected the poorest around the world and in Liberia. Liberia's policy of trying to control prices and keep them as low as possible effectively prevented importers from acquiring supply at the market price causing frequent shortages. As a result, USAID directed LEPDA to determine whether GOL would like to receive technical assistance to formulate its policy response, and if so, to provide it. LEPDA's engagement with MFDP and MOA showed that these Ministries were already starting to work on the problem and were very keen to receive USAID assistance.

In the summer of 2022, LEPDA deployed a small team of embedded advisors in MFDP and MOA- a former Minister of Fiscal Affairs and Central Bank Governor from Sierra Leone to work with MFDP, supported by a local consultant, and international agricultural expert with experience of over a dozen countries in Africa wok with MOA. Both teams were supported by LEPDA and the Nathan Home Office. In MFDP, the team immediately got to work, helping MFDP to convene an inter-agency working group on economic policy to work on the policy, the group included MFDP, CBL, MOA, MOCI, LRA, MGCSP and the Liberian Petroleum Regulator. The MFDP team also started to work with MFDP to collect relevant information and statistics from different Government agencies and conduct some initial analysis. The MOA team started to review the overall portfolio of food security activities and to work with senior technicians and the Minister of Agriculture to capture their thinking on food security. LEPDA also designed and commissioned a rapid assessment of agricultural markets and food security, conducted in 24 communities in 12 counties around the country. Both teams worked towards a four-day retreat for the GOL technicians, which was held in the

first quarter of Y4. The participating agencies presented analysis and recommendations in own sectors. Clear recommendations that emerged, including rationalizing and liberalizing the regulation of imported commodities, will ultimately get out of expensive subsidy and tax expenditure programs, stimulate domestic rice industry through grants, and provide more assistance to farms and mills that attract large investors.

At end of first quarter of Y4, the policy direction was clear but there were still many questions on detail. On the fiscal side, it was not clear what would be the impact of withdrawing subsidies and tax expenditures in fiscal and welfare terms. On agricultural side, it was not clear whether grants to farmers and mills would be effective. It was also possible that they might be too effective- that growth could be stimulated with smaller grants. There were major questions about the total cost- if the rice sector grew in line with government vision and every new farm or mill receive a grant, it was important to know what total value of grants would be disbursed. To answer these questions, LEPDA developed two linked economic models. First, it developed a model of the domestic rice industry. This comprised smaller firm-level models of individual rice farms of different sizes and a rice mill, decomposing the profit of each actor into various value drivers. This allowed LEPDA and the Government to conduct sensitivity analysis, showing how the profitability of the rice sector varies depending on changed prices, yields, transportation costs and different grant values. Second, it developed a commodity model. This comprised medium-term price forecasts for fuel and rice, combining international price forecasts with estimates of local importation costs, allowing user-adjustable tariff and subsidy levels. The model allowed user to estimate the revenue impact of continuing to import rice and fuel, after taking into account expected subsidies and tariffs. The model also included data on household income, consumption and expenditure and so allowed users to estimate change in household spending based on changes to commodity prices, disaggregated by income group and geography.

LEPDA worked with technicians from MFDP and MOA to complete and validate the models. Then, using the model, LEPDA was able to work with both agencies to analyze and elaborate the policy proposals made by GOL technicians in the Ganta retreat. The results of the model were striking. On the food security side, the model showed that a program of properly designed grants for farms and mills would transform industry profitability and that the total cost of such grants would be affordable for GOL and its partners. On the fiscal side, the model showed that removing subsidies and tax expenditures from critical commodities would not cause noticeable changes for any Liberian consumers other than the poorest, and that the revenue created by removing this spending would be much greater than the cost of providing transfer payments for the people who truly were affected.

Based on this analysis, LEPDA assisted MFDP to finalize its policy discussion paper on the fiscal response to economic shocks, and MOA to draft its policy on the development of the Liberian rice industry. The rice policy was presented at a national Rice Symposium at the end of year four, which was broadcast on national television. By the end of the process, the inter-governmental working group on economic policy had met to work on the policy process eight times, with meetings ranging from half a day to four days.

LEPDA's assistance on to GOL on economic shocks and food security was one of the highlights of Y4 and indeed the program to. The policy effort involved a high-level of Government engagement and ownership, with MFDP clearly driving the intergovernmental working group and the Minister of Agriculture and her team engaging very closely in the food security policy. LEPDA supported the policy process with first class technical assistance and analytical support, with its economic modelling being particularly innovative and effective.

6.2 NATIONAL WASH COMMISSION (NWASHC) POLICY UNIT TEAM (PUT)

The concept of the Policy Unit Team (PUT) is a key part of the design of LEPDA. A PUT is informal policy working group set up in a Ministry, Agency or Commission (MAC) which is intended to coordinate the policy efforts of the MAC and work as LEPDA's primary counterpart.

When LEPDA started working on the WASH sector in Y2, it determined that its primary counterpart would be the National WASH Commission (NWASHC). Among its policy areas, the Commission is responsible for formulating and institutionalizing WASH standards and regulations to strengthen WASH sector governance through the coordination, development and planning of sector policies and reforms; reviewing, and recommending course of actions that are aligned with national government development policies, plans and programs; undertaking research and policy analysis on the WASH sector; and providing oversight for monitoring and evaluation of sector progress. Therefore, one of LEPDA's first activities with NWASHC was to establish a PUT in NWASHC. The goals of the PUT were to coordinate the process of policy development within the mandate of the Commission including the analysis of policy proposals through research and development of policy papers to inform various reforms; to promote sustainable sector growth and a robust regulatory framework; to promote effective coordination of WASH sector partners within government, civil society, and private sector; and to promote gender equality and female empowerment in all policy development processes. The PUT team was led by the Executive Director with representation from all relevant NWASHC departments including Human Resources, Compliance, WASH Specialist, Sanitation Manager, Inspectorate, Gender, Communications and Awareness, Decentralization, Tariff Setting, and Chief of Staff of the CEO. PUT meetings generally had 9-15 personnel, and included three women. LEPDA's initial support to the PUT included an in-kind grant to provide the requisite technology to allow the PUT members to operate effectively including computers, printers, and internet capability.

With assistance from LEPDA, the PUT made significant strides in addressing WASH Governance reforms and demonstrated leadership in moving governance reform processes forward through the following initiatives:

1. **WASH Sector Governance Reform Plan.** Formation of a WASH Bottleneck Analysis Tool (WASHBAT) Steering Committee to assume leadership for SIWI support through Engagement in a 3-day WASH BAT workshop that resulted development of WASH Sector Governance Reform Plan to identify key priority areas for action within the sector. Along with PUT members the Steering Committee was comprised of other GOL WASH sector partners, development partners, and civil society actors involved in WASH activities. PUT members also participated in a Training of Trainers Workshop in preparation for the WASHBAT during which members served as facilitators and rapporteurs for the workshop and follow-up actions.
2. **WASH Legal and Regulatory Framework.** Participation in an 8-day WASH Regulation training development as well as development of the key implementation tools and processes needed to support implementation of the NWASHC regulation developed in collaboration with SIWI. The PUT was also provided with an in-depth legal analysis of the current legislative mandates of WASH sector actors to better understand the need for reforms and to more effectively advocate with the WASH Legislative Caucus to effect the reforms needed.
3. **WASH Decentralization Policy Paper Development.** LEPDA held a series of sessions with the PUT to review the Local Government Act (LGA) and the LGA 10-year Implementation Plan to discuss the policy issues related to WASH decentralization and the role of the NWASHC in

promoting effective WASH decentralization efforts. PUT members participated actively in these sessions and engaged in fruitful discussions on how best to inform WASH decentralization policy. The input from the PUT has been incorporated into the draft Policy Paper and will be presented to WASH sector partners by PUT members for review and finalization during the next quarter.

4. **Coordination and Partnership with Civil Society Organizations.** The PUT strengthened the convenor role of the NWASHC through partnership and engagement with civil society organizations to improve coordination and to form a more united front in advocating for reforms including increased and uniform budgetary support, legal reforms for streamlined mandates in government, and regulation/enforcement.
5. **Private Sector Engagement.** The PUT explored ways in which to engage the private sector more actively in WASH service delivery. LEPDA has recently supported research in how a more effective enabling environment can be developed to encourage the private sector to become more engaged. The PUT recently hosted private sector and partners to participate in a validation session on the findings of the research once the policy paper findings are released.

The PUT is now asserting its leadership with other WASH sector initiatives and has engaged with the two new USAID-supported WASH projects to move forward with policy recommendations, particularly regarding the County-Wide Sanitation Activity (CWSA) and Safe Drinking Water Initiatives. PUT members played a key role in the conduct of the WASH Joint Sector Review (funded by UNICEF) process that had not taken place for the last five years. The PUT has exerted leadership in finalizing the Joint Sector Review report and recently held a session with partners to validate the draft report which is now being finalized for release during the next quarter. This report will inform WASH sector engagement over the next few years.

The PUT members have developed technical skills and confidence in their leadership ability to take these processes forward. With additional technical support for implementation of the WASH Regulatory framework, the PUT is on track for continued success.

7. FINANCIALS

7.1. Y4Q4 FINANCIAL REPORT

NOTE: The financials are provided in the table below and may differ from actual invoicing, as the LEPDA September 2023 is still an estimate, and a final invoice will be shared shortly.

CATEGORY	AMOUNT	NOTES
Total funds awarded to date	\$16,294,999.00	
Total funds previously reported as expended (by main line items)	\$15,064,262.01	Actuals of July and August, and an estimate of September 2023. Does not reflect fee accrual due to deliverables-based fee payment mechanism
Consultant Labor	\$748,859.95	
Direct Labor - Class A	\$264,571.36	
Direct Labor - Class A Off	\$702,282.92	
Direct Labor - Class D	\$2417.10	
Direct Labor - Class D Off	\$1,164,096.37	
Subcontract Labor	\$2,092,546.33	
Allowances	\$324,656.47	
Communication and Reports	\$34,947.45	
Equipment and Supplies	\$142,937.68	
Grants	\$1,276,113.63	
Other Direct Costs	\$625,964.81	
Local Office Costs	\$1,128,965.12	
Salary Paid Allowances	\$533,528.14	
Subcontract ODCs	\$1,209,053.91	
Training	\$206,816.15	
Travel/Transport	\$396,958.39	
Fringe Cost Pool	\$369,513.91	
Overhead Cost Pool	\$1,363,089.83	
G&A	\$1,863,977.12	
Fee	\$612,966.37	

Total funds expended in the current quarter	\$488,082.50	Does not reflect fee accrual due to deliverables-based fee payment mechanism
Consultant Labor	\$53,823.75	
Direct Labor - Class A	\$13,078.87	
Direct Labor - Class A Off	\$36,171.19	
Direct Labor - Class D	\$0	
Direct Labor - Class D Off	\$56,892.89	
Subcontract Labor	\$18,154.10	
Allowances	\$0	
Communication and Reports	\$5,014.80	
Equipment and Supplies	\$4,108.54	
Grants	\$36,847.80	
Other Direct Costs	\$72,035.16	
Local Office Costs	\$93,717.53	
Salary Paid Allowances	\$38,305.26	
Subcontract ODCs	\$22,847.20	
Training	\$22,341.00	
Travel/Transport	\$14,744.41	
Fringe Cost Pool	\$18,276.69	
Overhead Cost Pool	\$62,831.93	
G&A	\$78,168.28	
Fee	\$0	
Total un-liquidated obligations (by main line items)	\$141,752.83	Estimated costs incurred but not reflected on invoices to USAID through September 2023.
Consultant Labor	\$3,498	Includes estimate for STTA fees incurred in field through September 2023. To be invoiced to USAID in October 2023.
Direct Labor - Class A	\$0	
Direct Labor - Class A Off	\$6,484	
Direct Labor - Class D Off	\$0	
Allowances	\$0	
Communication and Reports	\$0	

Equipment and Supplies	\$0	
Grants	\$0	
Subcontractors	\$108,516.45	
Other Direct Costs	\$0	
Local Office Costs	\$2,845	
Salary Paid Allowances	\$0	
Travel/Transport	\$0	
Fringe Cost Pool	\$0	
Overhead Cost Pool	\$3,274.42	Associated OH on Direct Class A OFF costs.
G&A	\$17,134.96	Associated G&A on all costs above.
List of the significant expenses incurred during the period		
African Center for Economic Transformation	\$13,294.80	Milestone Payment No.7
ICRPSD	\$7,483.33	Milestone 1 Legal Analysis Report
Heritage Partners & Associates LLC	\$18,000.00	Milestone 7 of 7: Commercial Code
Heritage Partners & Associates LLC	\$5,000	Milestone 5: Rules of Procedure
Ecocap Investment Group	\$21,500	Milestone 5
Office Rent	\$8,599.86	
Severance got G Kelvin	\$13,652.97	To be expected in September 2023 invoice.
Severance for A Dennis	\$6,019.27	To be expected in September 2023 invoice.

7.2. Y4Q4 ACCRUAL REPORT

CATEGORY	AMOUNT	NOTES
Total estimated ceiling remaining	\$16,294,999	
Total remaining (contract ceiling)	\$1,088,984.16	Total Contract Value less Cumulative Invoiced to Date (including estimate from September 2023 invoice) less Unliquidated Obligations

Total remaining (current obligation)	\$1,088,983.16	Total Obligated to Date less Cumulative Invoiced to Date (including estimate from September 2023 invoice) less Unliquidated Obligations
Unliquidated balance in the contract		
Unliquidated balance (contract ceiling)	\$1,604,280.30	Total Contract less July 2023 Cumulative Invoiced to Date, as August and September 2023 invoices has not been paid yet.
Unliquidated balance (current obligation)	\$1,604,279.30	Total Obligation less July 2023 Cumulative Invoiced to Date, as August and September 2023 invoices has not been paid yet.
Accrual amount	\$515,296	Total Unliquidated Obligations plus August and September 2023 invoice yet to be invoiced and paid.
Estimated pipeline amount	\$1,088,983.16	Unliquidated (obligated) balance less the Accrual

7.3. LEVEL OF EFFORT EXPENDED

Reflects all invoiced hours worked and charged to LEPDA during Y4. Note that hours worked by administrative CCN staff are not reflected as they are billed as ODCs.

CATEGORY	AMOUNT	NOTES
Consultant Labor	1491 hours / 186.38 days	
Direct Labor - Class A	262 hours / 32.75 days	
Direct Labor - Class A Off	401 hours / 50.13 days	
Director Labor - Class D	0 hours / 0 days	
Direct Labor - Class D Off	968 hours / 121 days	
Subcontract Labor	720 hours / 90 days	Does not include hours yet to be billed by subcontractors.
Total	3,842.00 hours / 480.25 days	

ANNEXES:

I. Dates of Upcoming Events

The following events are scheduled for Y5Q1:

UPCOMING EVENTS	
EVENT	EST. TIMING
Outgrower Schemes Legal Framework Dialogue	October 2023
WASH Decentralization Policy Discussion Paper Dialogue PUT Review	October 2023
WASH Decentralization Policy Discussion Paper Stakeholder Dialogue	November 2023
NWASHC Board Meeting	November 2023
Agribusiness Testing and Certification Policy Dialogue Event	November 2023
Commercial Court Rules of Procedure Dissemination Session (pending Supreme Court Approval of the Rules)	October-November 2023
LEPDA briefing for the President Elect's Transition Team	November-December 2023