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LIBERIA FINAL REPORT

INTEGRATED LAND AND RESOURCE GOVERNANCE TASK ORDER UNDER THE STRENGTHENING TENURE AND RESOURCE RIGHTS II (STARR II) IDIQ

Contract Number: 7200AA18D00003/7200AA18F00015

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
CEL	Communications, Evidence and Learning
CLDMC	Community Land Development and Management Committee
CLIMT	Community Land Intervention Monitoring Tool
CLRF	Customary Land Rights Formalization
CSI	Community Self-Identification
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FCI	Foundation for Community Initiatives
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FY	Fiscal Year
GAI	Green Advocates International
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GOL	Government of Liberia
GPS	Global Positioning System
ICC	Interim Coordinating Committee
IDIQ	Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity
ILRG	Integrated Land and Resource Governance
LCRP	Land Conflict Resolution Program
LGSA	Land Governance Support Activity
LLA	Liberia Land Authority
LMA	Land Management Activity
LPIS	Land Policy and Institutional Support
LRA	Land Right Act
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PRRGP	Property Rights and Resource Governance Program
SDI	Sustainable Development Institute
STARR II	Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights II
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I.0 INTRODUCTION

The passage of the Land Rights Act (LRA) in 2018 was hailed by Liberian civil society as one of the most progressive land reform laws in Africa. Based on the LRA, Liberia now recognizes the legal rights of communities – and equal rights of individuals within the communities – to their ancestral lands, and to own and apply for deeds for their ancestral lands. The LRA includes provisions for establishing Community Land Development and Management Committees (CLDMCs), bodies which are charged with communal land decisions, and the development of land use plans. The Liberia Land Authority (LLA) adopted regulations for the registration and governance of customary land in November 2022.

While the LRA took longer than expected to pass, stakeholders remain committed to it and see its importance for the empowerment of Liberian communities. A number of civil society organizations (CSOs) support LRA implementation with the aim to help secure land rights for communities and, in doing so, help those communities harness the economic potential of their land and protect it. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other donors have invested in pilot efforts in more than 150 communities to help test the initial steps of the six-step process required to obtain a deed. These efforts have generated important lessons learned about implementation and streamlined processes and templates adopted by the LLA as National Guidelines. To-date an estimated 12 communities have received a customary deed with the remaining still engaging in the process at some stage.

The LLA receives or has recently received technical assistance from USAID, the Swedish Government, the Tenure Facility, United Nations Development Programme, the European Union, the World Bank, and others. USAID has been a leading funder and proponent of land reform for more than a decade, providing support to the Government of Liberia (GOL) to develop a strong Land Rights Policy, which was adopted in 2013. USAID has supported the land sector in Liberia via the Land Policy and Institutional Support (LPIS) activity under the Property Rights and Resource Governance Program (PRRGP) (2010 – 2015), the Land Conflict Resolution Program (LCRP) (2013 – 2016), the Land Governance Support Activity (LGSA) (2015 – 2020), and most recently the Land Management Activity (LMA) (2021 – 2025).

The global Integrated Land and Resource Governance (ILRG) project, funded via USAID's Land and Resource Governance Division in Washington, DC, supported the customary land rights formalization process via three grants between 2020 and 2023. The objective of ILRG's Liberia activity was to complete the Community Land Protection Program (CLPP), the name attributed to the customary land rights formalization process by Namati and the Liberian non-governmental organization (NGO) the Sustainable Development Institute (SDI). The CLPP approach empowered communities via legal education and support for community self-identification (CSI), and provided support to communities to develop land and resource bylaws, choose their own representation in CLDMCs, and harmonize boundaries with neighboring communities. The governance support, the key component of CLPP, aimed to help communities to resolve land conflicts, ensure intra-community equity, and strengthen mechanisms for accountable and participatory management of land and natural resources. The premise of CLPP is that formal recognition of customary tenure must first involve extensive governance strengthening, with formal recognition as the last step in the process. Only in this way will communities be sufficiently empowered to enjoy the full potential of their newly obtained formal legal rights to their lands and resources.

Recognizing the importance of customary land rights formalization for national level reform in Liberia and USAID land programming, in 2014 the USAID Land and Resource Governance Division, through its Evaluation, Research, and Communication task order, began an impact evaluation of a CLPP intervention implemented by SDI. The project was originally funded by non-USAID sources. The project was

intended as a 12-to-18-month activity with 45 treatment communities and 45 controls, in Lofa, Maryland, and River Gee Counties. However, the outbreak of Ebola in 2014 delayed implementation until the beginning of 2016. In addition, budget constraints by SDI mean that as of October 2017, the intervention was only partially completed in 23 treatment communities.

Despite the challenges with implementation of the underlying CLPP activity, the programmatic and policy-oriented learning opportunity was significant enough that continued funding to complete the activity was merited. In 2019 ILRG engaged SDI to continue work in 31 of its CLPP communities and Green Advocates International to support five additional communities. These communities were to undergo an endline evaluation through USAID's Communications, Evaluation and Learning (CEL) Project, which evaluated the development impacts of formal recognition of customary tenure, which would in turn inform USAID program design, and the development of LRA regulations and standard operating procedures. Ultimately only SDI's 31 communities were treatment communities in CEL's endline evaluation.

A third grantee, Foundation for Community Initiatives (FCI), was engaged in 2021 to work with eight additional communities. While FCI's eight communities did not take part in the evaluation completed by the CEL project, the intervention provided invaluable learning to the GOL and USAID for broader implementation of the LRA at scale.

Now that some initial gains have been made, stakeholders agree that efforts must ramp up to provide support closer to the community level. The LLA has plans to expand its presence beyond the capital, though its resources and capacity to do so are limited. As CSOs and the LLA help move more communities through the initial stages of the process to obtain communal land deeds, work is needed to: 1) ensure that women and youth are full participants and beneficiaries of the process despite inclusiveness that is legislated in the CLDMCs; 2) help resolve inter- and intra-community disputes satisfactorily; and 3) make sure communities can access the resources and services needed to obtain deeds and take advantage of the benefits of land tenure security. As the initial stages of community self-identification, adoption of bylaws, CLDMC formation, boundary harmonization, and mapping are increasingly understood, continued investments will be needed in discussions around later stages of the process. Namely, donors should invest in testing and documenting lessons related to confirmatory survey, deed registration and the requirements for identifying tribal certificates and other land claims, as well as the provisions that state that up to 10 percent of unused community land is to be reserved as public land, which has not been explored thoroughly to date.

This report provides an overview of the process of supporting 44 communities to undergo the customary land rights formalization (CLRF) process with support from ILRG grantees SDI, GAI, and FCI in Lofa, Maryland, River Gee, Nimba, Bong, and Grand Bassa Counties with an eye on how the cost effectiveness varied by geography and approach, amongst other factors.

2.0 OVERVIEW OF CUSTOMARY LAND RIGHTS FORMALIZATION PROCESS

The CLRF process follows the mandate of the LRA through the six phases outlined below, ending with a community receiving a customary deed in its name. As the LLA, donors, and CSOs have supported communities through this process over the last five years, lessons have been learned, templates developed, and the process streamlined. Even over the course of the three years of ILRG grantee implementation, the process has become more efficient.

The steps required for CLRF are linear; however, there are steps that can be conducted concurrently, such as boundary harmonization and confirmatory survey. Some steps must be completed sequentially, i.e., a community must determine its level of self-identification before a community harmonizes or maps its boundaries. For updated details on the steps, please see the Field Manual produced with the LLA under the World Bank Liberia Land Administration Project.

Before beginning the community self-identification (CSI) process, the LLA County Land Office, county, district, and local government officials and traditional leaders should be informed of the intention to conduct CLRF. Introductions should also be made to the self-identifying communities and neighboring communities, and community mobilizers and local extension team should be identified and trained in each community.

Phase 1: Community Self-Identification. CSI is the first phase in the systematic customary land formalization process and is comprised of the following steps:

- Community application for self-identification;
- Community profiling;
- Community awareness;
- Community CSI preparatory meetings to introduce the CLRF process to the community as a whole (including women, youth, and minority groups), discuss community roles, and prepare members of each sub-unit (i.e., each village, town within the community) to decide how or on what level they wish to self-identify;
- Community land declaration meeting to discuss and decide on the level of self-identification; and
- Identification of land area via a sketch map of the community's customary land.



Bassa Village community meeting to discuss level of self-identification. Photo Credit: GAI

Phase 2: Establishment of Community Governance Structure. Communities develop community land and resource bylaws and set up their Customary Land Development and Management Committee (CLDMC) for proper collective governance and management of their customary land. Per Article 36: Governance and Management of the LRA, membership of the CLDMC shall consist of equal representation of men, women and youth and be democratically elected. Article 16.4 of the LRA regulations further call for not less than 40 percent of men or women on the committee.

Phase 3: Boundary Harmonization. Over the course of ILRG the CLRF process has adapted to combining the boundary harmonization and confirmatory survey steps (Phases 3 and 4) whenever feasible, creating efficiency to the process. ILRG grantees were unable to combine the steps as there was insufficient agreement on the boundaries to include the confirmatory survey. While boundary

harmonization and confirmatory survey are two separate requirements, in practice they should be combined for expediency and accuracy. Specifically, the LLA, preferably from the County Land Office, should join the team supporting the community to collect boundary data during the boundary walk. This occurred in some cases with ILRG communities, depending on the availability of the LLA and the readiness of the community. Ideally, the LLA should be represented in all steps of this phase so that they understand the emerging issues and can help resolve any conflicts that arise.

The following steps make up the boundary harmonization phase:

- Hold community meeting to identify and discuss community boundaries;
- Establish joint boundary committee comprising equal members of the boundary communities (i.e., representatives of members of the CSI community and the other adjacent communities/towns who share the same boundary);
- Hold joint boundary harmonization meetings between the neighboring communities to discuss, identify, and agree on what constitutes their boundary points; and
- Sign a boundary memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the agreed boundary, thereby officially establishing the joint boundary.

ILRG's support to communities and CSO's conducting the CLRF process did not progress beyond the mapping of community boundaries, as is typically the case for any donor supported effort due to time and financial constraints. The process for resolving community boundary conflicts, including the involvement of the LLA for entrenched disputes, is time and resource intensive. Until the LLA establishes a protocol to resolve lasting disputes, the process will continue to drag on, thereby delaying the receipt of community land deeds.

ILRG partnered with the Cadasta Foundation (Cadasta), who had previously provided boundary data collection and management training to SDI, GAI, and FCI, to support ILRG's data collection and storage since the LLA does not currently have a database for customary land information.

CLDMC Composition and Roles

The Community Members of each community establish a CLDMC in its bylaws, including the composition, eligibility and tenure of office of the Committee, provided that the composition consists of representation of men, women, youth and other marginalized groups democratically elected, chiefs as *ex-officio* members, and of not less than forty percent of each gender. The functions of the Committee include:

- a) land use planning;
- b) managing and administering Community Lands;
- c) granting interests in lands on behalf of the community;
- d) allocating land for various uses;
- e) negotiating with concessionaires;
- f) retaining inventory and records of land and land transactions;
- g) determining reasonable fees to be charged for land services;
- h) liaising with the relevant County Land Board, government ministries, departments and agencies to ensure that all processes and procedures relating to Community Lands are complied with;
- i) representing the community in all community land matters and transactions;
- j) taking decisions in respect of the Community Land in accordance with the customs, traditions and practices of the community, which are consistent with the Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, the Act, these Regulations and any Guidelines that may be issued by the Authority;
- k) undertaking community education and capacity building on land matters;
- l) establishing subcommittees to better implement any of the above functions, ensuring that each subcommittee reflects the diversity of the community, particularly concerning women, youth, persons with disability and other marginalized groups, and has appropriate Terms of Reference;
- m) accounting to the community for their stewardship of Community Lands; and
- n) land dispute resolution.

Phase 4. Confirmatory Survey. The confirmatory survey is a step undertaken by government officials to formalize the boundary harmonization process. As stated above, it is ideal if Phases 3 and 4 can be combined to make the process more efficient. As the LLA documentation still separates the phases, and in some cases the steps will need to be conducted separately, the standalone steps for confirmatory survey are listed here. They may need to be separate steps if the LLA is unable to join to community in its boundary harmonization process, or if there are boundary conflicts that may take additional time to work through.

The following steps make up the confirmatory survey phase:

- Share survey notice to provide public awareness to all boundary communities concerned;
- Joint boundary clearing team to make boundary points accessible to the survey team; and
- Conduct boundary walk and confirmatory survey once communities agree on their boundaries and sign the boundary MOU to walk and mark the communities' agreed boundaries. The LLA, via the Resident County Land Surveyor, should be included in this boundary walk step so as to combine it with the confirmatory survey.

According to the LLA, a confirmatory survey confirms the general boundary of the community customary land first, and then a confirmatory survey of other land claims, such as tribal certificates, public and government land.

Article 37.3 of the LRA states that “Depending on the amount of available Customary Land, during the Confirmatory Survey, a maximum of ten (10%) percent of Customary Land in each Community, or an amount of Customary Land at the discretion of the Community, shall be set aside and allocated as Public Land.” The LRA Regulations of 2022, Article 18, provides the process for the CLDMC to reach consensus on the community lands to be reserved as public land stating that the community must identify the public land before the confirmatory survey and mapping can begin and include it in said survey/maps.

Donors and CSOs are still in discussion with the LLA as to whether all land claims, including tribal certificates, must be identified and documented before a community can receive its customary deed. While the LLA has at times insisted that these steps occur before registration, they have not provided clear guidance. The LLA has stated that they have granted at least 12 communities customary deeds. As not all of these communities are made public, it is unclear if the communities identified land claims and tribal certificates, or set aside a portion of their land to be designated as public, before receiving the deed.

ILRG did not progress to the confirmatory survey stage for multiple reasons, most notably delays caused by COVID and ongoing boundary disputes. A majority of the communities have boundary conflicts that require the LLA or outside parties to assist in resolving. In many cases these disputes over boundaries are entrenched and require administrative intervention as traditional authorities and CSOs have been unable to negotiate an agreement. In addition, ILRG did not have the resources (time and funding) to continue the work to resolve the disputes or come to an agreement with the LLA whether tribal certificates and other private land claims needed to be identified and surveyed before proceeding to a confirmatory survey. When SDI was ending their work in 31 communities, the LLA was also just developing awareness of their role in the confirmatory survey. In the beginning (and even as late as 2022) many in the LLA contended that they had to do a formal survey, not using mobile devices, so it has taken time to get them on board with a cost and time effective approach.

Phase 5. Land Use and Management Plan. Land use planning is a more technical activity that requires professional experts; therefore, it is not a pre-condition for confirmatory survey of community customary land. ILRG did not incorporate it into their support of the CLRF process as the process is not community led. For further information, see the LLA's *Guidelines for Participatory Community Land Use*

Planning, Management and Administration in Liberia: Procedures for the Preparation, Management and Administration of Community Land Use and Management Plans. USAID's LMA is piloting the implementation of simplified land use planning with communities and lessons should be drawn from this experience.

Phase 6. Probation and Registration of Land Documents. Deeds and a map of the community customary land shall be prepared by the LLA after the community has completed the steps required by the LRA. ILRG did not advance to this phase. As stated above, none of the ILRG supported communities advanced to this stage due to delays caused by ongoing boundary conflicts, among other reasons (COVID, delays due to elections, death of key representatives, weather, etc., and availability of the LLA to participate in verification activities).

The three grantees submitted all documentation to the LLA and the communities for their records. This included MOUs for CSI, adopted community bylaws, records of elected CLDMC officers and members, MOUs between neighboring communities on agreed upon boundaries, draft and/or final boundary maps (shapefiles), and records of community meetings and attempts to resolve ongoing land disputes. Despite not obtaining confirmatory surveys or community deeds, the communities meet the criteria as set out in the LRA for the acknowledgement of their customary land. As self-identified communities with draft maps of their boundaries (even sketch maps are sufficient), they are in a better position to negotiate with the private sector and government on the use and access to community land. The elected CLDMCs are also established to represent the communities in land and resource use and allocation decisions.

3.0 ILRG ACHIEVEMENTS

Through grants to SDI, GAI, and FCI between March 2020 and October 2023, ILRG supported 44 communities in Bong, Grand Bassa, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, and River Gee Counties (see Annex I for the full list of communities) to self-identify, including drafting community profiles and producing sketch maps, adopting community land and resource bylaws, electing gender equitable CLDMCs, and harmonizing boundaries.

As a strategy to effectively execute project activities, SDI grouped the communities into clusters based on their proximity. Two clusters were formed in Lofa (Zone II and Zone III, Wonegizi and Via-wulu), three in River Gee (Potupo, Gbeapo, and Nyawriliken), and three in Maryland (Whojah, Gwelepoken, and Nyonken). The communities in River Gee self-identified on a clan level, unlike Maryland which was done on sectional level (i.e., portion of a clan), which means the land space for River Gee community was larger.

GAI originally worked with seven communities and their neighbors around the Blei community forest in Nimba County to follow the methodology for the recognition of customary tenure. The seven communities, Gbapa, Bassa Village, Zolowee, Yolowee, Zortapa, Gbobayee and Suakarzue and their neighbors (Boapea, Bonla, Ganaglay, Geipa, Gorpa, Leagbala, Mankinto, Sehyi-Geh, Sehyikimpa, Zorgowee and Zualay) became five communities after the CSI process, with Yolowee changing its name to Zor-Yolowee; Gbobayee and Suakarzue joining and self-identifying as “Gbosua Gbeleyee Blein,” and Gbapa and Bassa Village self-identifying together as “Gbassa.”

FCI originally proposed to work with eight communities in Lofa County, but after review of potential communities, ILRG and FCI collectively decided to work in Bong and Grand Bassa Counties since Lofa has received an abundance of support via various donors in the CLRF process. FCI worked with the LLA to select four communities each in Bong and Grand Bassa.

Population estimates were gathered using a variety of sources including community health clinics and by overlaying rough community boundaries with GRID3 gridded population estimates at 100x100m. For more information, visit; <https://grid3.org/solution/high-resolution-population-estimates>.

TABLE I. ESTIMATED POPULATION AND HECTARES PER COUNTY SUPPORTED BY ILRG’S CUSTOMARY LAND FORMALIZATION WORK

County	Estimated population	Approximate hectares
River Gee	83,121	172,957
Maryland	39,998	61,462
Lofa	44,500	130,256
Nimba	19,676	7,035
Bong	6,440	78,300
Grand Bassa	1,566	51,600
Total	195,301	501,610

3.1 GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

All three ILRG grantees raised awareness within their supported communities on the importance of community participation, including women, men, youth, elders, and minority groups, in the development of land and resource bylaws and the election of and representation within CLDMCs.

3.1.1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

SDI held meetings with community stakeholders and distributed information via local radio stations on both the bylaws and the governance structure. Project team members explained the CLDMC formation process on a radio talk show and encouraged women to participate. The talk show also provided information to communities that were not selected as project communities.

To increase community participation and ensure inclusive governance processes, the SDI team organized 72 sub-unit-level (i.e., villages and towns) community meetings. People from the various sub-units participated in an interactive way and SDI encouraged them to also create awareness within their sub-units.

Subsequently, eight cluster-level technical training sessions took place with community leaders and women, youth, and minority groups on the bylaws and the governance structure. In women-only strategic sessions, women were trained in identifying strategies that could help them achieve their quest of being elected for positions of their choice.

The first drafts of the bylaws were produced in 31 technical work sessions. SDI made sure that they were aligned to the bylaws template developed jointly by the LLA and civil society with support from the USAID-funded Land Governance Support Activity. The bylaws were then discussed and adopted in community-wide meetings with 50 participants on average. Women participated actively and made sure that women's and youth quotas for the CLDMC were codified (The LRA regulations mandates that at least 40% of CLDMC members be women). Before adopting the bylaws, they were read in Liberian English, and key components were translated into the local vernacular.

In parallel to the development of the bylaws, SDI supported the communities in establishing a governance structure as mandated by the LRA. Eight cluster-level training sessions were held on the following topics: the roles and responsibilities of Interim Coordinating Committee (ICC), animators (i.e., community-based liaison between the grantee and community to assist with the organization of meetings and relay information) and local and traditional leaders. The animators and ICCs – which took a central role in the customary land formalization prior to the election of a CLDMC – were trained to see themselves as the first point of contact between their communities and the project. Local and traditional leaders were educated on the significant roles they had to play to ensure that the process was successfully completed within their community. SDI organized training for community leaders, the ICC members, women, and youth leaders on the implementation of the bylaws and the election of the CLDMCs.

SDI organized sessions in clusters of about 50 women each in each county for women to strengthen their capacity to fully participate in the governance process and to identify campaign strategies for women to be elected on key CLDMC positions in their communities. These sessions provided spaces where women could freely interact without an elder or chiefs dictating or suppressing their views and intimidating them. The women-only session contributed to the election of women for those strategic positions.

Once adopted and elected, the bylaws and the CLDMC membership list were forwarded to the LLA, and the CLDMC members were introduced to local official and customary leaders in eight cluster-level meetings. The elections and terms of the CLDMC members and officers are decided within each community's bylaws.

3.1.2 GREEN ADVOCATES INTERNATIONAL

As part of GAI's awareness strategy they conducted training on alternative dispute resolution (ADR) to their communities, including representatives from various sub-units and neighboring communities (see textbox).

Over the course of five days, GAI supported bylaw development and CLDMC elections in the five self-identified communities. On day one, GAI projected the LLA bylaw template on a screen and allowed community members to make inputs to the document. Each of the communities provided information to be inserted into the document based on their cultural practices, common norms and traditional beliefs.

On day two, community members were informed on the eligibility criteria of the CLDMC members and the functions of the CLDMC officials per the LRA. After the presentation, copies of Article 5 of the bylaws (functions and officers of the CLDMC) were printed out for use by community members, animators, and ICC

Nimba County CLDMC Elections

Yolowee presented eight people (four male and four female) as CLDMC members with two men elected as Chairman and Secretary, and two women elected as Vice Chairman and Treasurer.

Zortapa selected a total of fourteen people for their CLDMC (seven men and seven women) with two men as Chairman and Secretary and two women as Vice Chairman and Treasurer.

Gbosua Gbeleyee Blein selected a total of twenty-five people to the CLDMC (18 men and seven women) with three men serving as Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary and one woman as Treasurer.

Gbassa has a total of twenty-five people on the CLDMC (thirteen men and twelve women) with two men as Chairman and Secretary and two women as Vice Chairman and Treasurer.

Zolowee selected twenty-five people on the CLDMC (thirteen men and twelve women) with three men as Chairman, Treasurer and Vice Chairman and one woman as Secretary.

The CLDMC members from each community convened at a special meeting amongst themselves and elected their officials with representations of women and men.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)

Training was provided to seventeen communities in Nimba County by the Director of Alternative Dispute Resolution from the Ministry of Justice to provide tools to resolve land issues at the community level in place of filing cases at the court whenever feasible. Advantages and disadvantages of the ADR process, land disputes and mitigation, and the Liberian National ADR Policy were explained. All the communities that participated in the ADR training worked in focus groups divided into women, men, youth, and elders. Community leaders agreed on a combined resolution as their method for making peace with their neighbor in case of any confusion during the boundary harmonization step of the CLRF.

members to take home and discuss. Each community and sub-unit were instructed to explain the document to other community members that were not present in the meeting and use the criteria to select their CLDMC members. Town criers made announcements in the communities for two days to have every community member informed on the selection process of the CLDMC members.

On day three, community members continued writing their common norms on land governance and management, land conflict, land use planning, benefit sharing percentages, non-compliance, and pollution on customary land (sawing, mining, logging, etc.). At the end of the day, copies of the full draft bylaws were printed and given to the community members to take home to review and make additional input as well as share with other community members who did not attend the meeting for their feedback. During the evenings, consultations were also held by community members interested in running for the CLDMC.

On day four, presentations were made in the five communities on understanding women rights to land and governance. Topics discussed included: the four categories of land, factors or barriers to women's rights to land, legal frameworks on women land rights including inheritance, spouses as community members, and women's co-ownership of private land. Attendees were informed that the CLDMC should have equal representations of women, youth and men.

In the afternoon, the five Nimba communities held meetings and elected members of their CLDMCs in a transparent process to manage their customary land. ICC members, elders and Town Chiefs facilitated the CLDMC election meetings after being reminded of the criteria and functions, as well as the requirement for equal representation of men, women and youth. The chiefs and elders presented names that were proposed to the communities. People were also nominated during that meeting and community members vetted the individuals listed. Names were removed because of failing the minimum age requirement or because the individuals did not attend the meeting and community members argued that such absence without excuse should not be tolerated because those persons would take similar behavior to the CLDMC. Others were denied by communities for not being resident in the community while some community members were rejected owing to their alleged criminal records.

There were 43 women elected by the five communities out of 99 persons. These women hold Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer positions in the various CLDMCs. These 99 persons and community leaders were trained on the roles and responsibilities of the CLDMC and other leadership topics such as bookkeeping and financial management, land use planning, gender empowerment, Land Rights Law, CLDMC registration process, business planning, etc.

On day five, bylaw validation meetings were held in the five communities. GAI's facilitator projected the drafted bylaws on a screen and community members were chosen to read and explain the laws. Community members offered additional suggestions to make changes to clauses where necessary and feedback was incorporated through a simple majority consensus or vote.

The CLDMC members and officials were then presented in the meetings by the elders and community Town Chiefs. The communities voted to endorse the members of the CLDMC presented to them by the chiefs and elders. Each Chairman of the CLDMC elected in the five Blei communities spoke to their community members on behalf of their respective CLDMCs promising to work for the development of their community. After the presentation of the CLDMC members and officials, the bylaws were printed and signed by three of the CLDMC officials (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary) for each community.

3.1.3 FOUNDATION FOR COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

FCI held several consultative meetings with the communities that led to the development of the community bylaws in the eight communities in Grand Bassa and Bong Counties. The LLA template was used to solicit input from community members in each community.

After the drafting of the bylaws, copies were then submitted to the sub-units in each self-identified community for their further input. After the sub-units had several consultations and provided feedback, mass community meetings were held in order to review and consolidate the inputs from all sub-units.

Another mass meeting was held in each community that brought together stakeholders, traditional leaders, local authorities, women and youth from those communities to validate the bylaws. During these meetings, additional inputs were made to finalize/validate the development of the bylaws. At the end of the validation of the bylaws in each community, the bylaws were then adopted and signed by the community assembly including customary leaders, and women, men and youth representatives from the sub-units.

Copies of the signed bylaws were distributed to the various sub-units in the communities and FCI followed up with training and awareness so as to enable community members to understand the bylaws.

Prior to the elections of CLDMC members in the eight FCI communities, the community assembly was first established in each of the communities. The community assembly serves as the highest decision-

making body of the community with respect to the customary land and is comprised of community members who are at least 18 years old regardless of age, sex, gender, religion and ethnicity.

Several awareness meetings were held in the communities on the election process of CLDMC members as well as some of the roles and responsibilities of the CLDMC. During these awareness meetings, the sub-units in each community were told to elect or select members that will represent them on the CLDMC. After these awareness meetings, the community assembly in each community convened at a general assembly meeting to elect members of the CLDMCs.

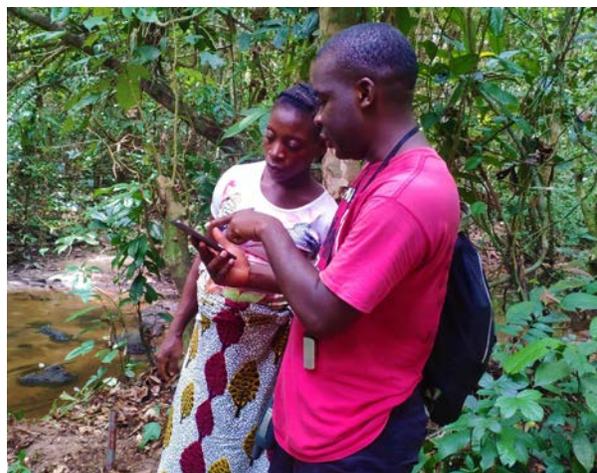
The elections were facilitated in each community by FCI with the community leaders present. The method of head counts was used as a means of transparency and the entire process was free and fair in all of the communities. A woman was elected as the CLDMC Chair for the Boinwein Community and women won the CLDMC Vice Chair position in all of the eight project communities.

TABLE 2. MALE AND FEMALE CLDMC OFFICERS AND MEMBERS FOR 44 COMMUNITIES SUPPORTED UNDER ILRG

Total, ILRG (SDI, GAI, FCI) for 44 Communities	Female CLDMC Officers		Male CLDMC Officers		Total CLDMC Officers	Female CLDMC Members		Male CLDMC Members		Total CLDMC Members
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count
	80	45.5%	96	54.5%	176	340	43.5%	442	56.5%	782

3.2 BOUNDARY DATA COLLECTION TRAINING AND SUPPORT

SDI, GAI, and FCI’s geographic information systems (GIS) technical teams, along with community data collectors, were trained by Cadasta on mobile technology for project-adapted data collection, GIS technology, and community engagement. The training mainly targeted the community data collectors and, to a lesser extent, community leaders and would-be data users. Along with training on the use of Garmin GPSMAP 64X handheld global positioning system (GPS) units for boundary point collection, the team was also trained on how to use mobile phones to collect additional data using ESRI’s Survey 123 application. The application was used to collect GPS coordinates and descriptions and general community information such as storing signatures from witnesses, images of the boundary marker, and witnesses at the boundary point within the application. An interactive dashboard for the project was also created on Cadasta’s ArcGIS online platform at the end of the training; this dashboard displays all the boundary data collected in the project communities.



Dwejah CLDMC co-chair learning how to capture boundary data. Photo Credit: SDI

3.3 FINAL BOUNDARIES



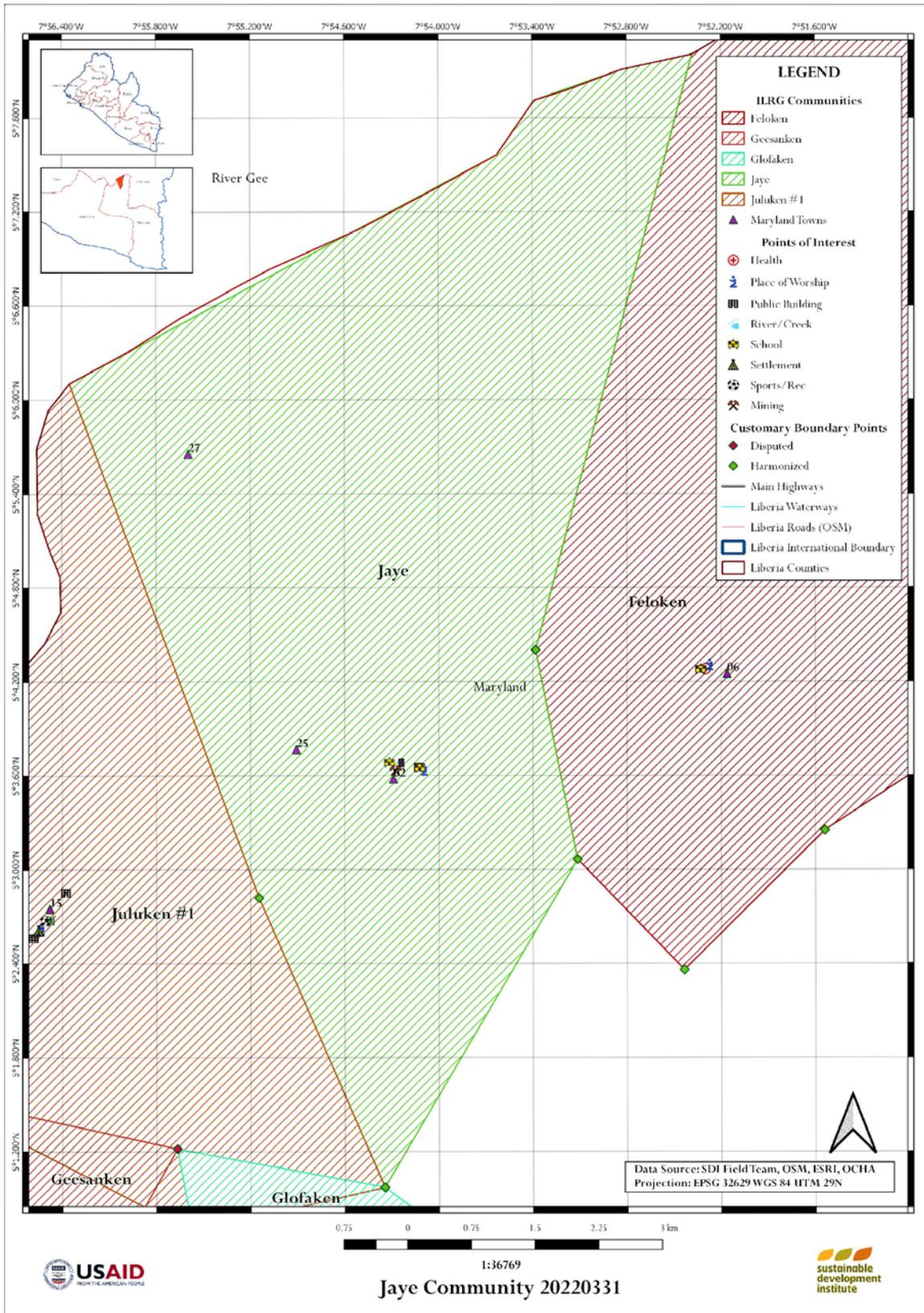
Handshaking to agree on boundary points between Wessanen and Gortuken joint boundary. Photo Credit: SDI

In fiscal year (FY) 2022, SDI boundary harmonization teams, together with representatives from neighboring communities, mapped boundary points using GPS and displayed through a GIS. These points were then validated in community-wide meetings. SDI produced a map for each of the 31 communities; maps were thoroughly validated both within the community and with neighboring communities via 56 boundary MOUs. As the LLA did not join SDI in the collection of boundary data, they will still need to validate the maps through a confirmatory survey. Through SDI's mediation team, communities were able to settle many major long standing disputes (Glofaken and Big Jaye, Jargleoken and Sargleoken, Sargleoken and Sawtoken #2, and Juluken #1, and Gortiken community in Maryland County), although a few disputes remain and will require further input from local authorities and the LLA.

SDI's team supported the 27 communities in River Gee and Maryland Counties to hold large and small meetings to initiate negotiation and sign MOUs between boundary towns and their neighboring towns/communities. As a result of these meetings, 11 out of the 13 communities in River Gee successfully completed their boundary harmonization with neighboring communities, with two communities left with almost all their boundaries unsettled due to ongoing disputes. In Maryland, the 14 communities completed 98% of their boundary harmonization, with three disputed boundaries unsettled. Annex 3 provides additional detail on the status of each community's boundaries.

Out of the four communities in Lofa County that SDI supported under ILRG, three have successfully completed every step that LRA requires for the community to enable them to go through the confirmatory survey by the LLA. The fourth community (Via-wulu) has settled boundary disputes, and harmonized and collected 14 boundary points with neighboring sub-units and communities with support of SDI's GIS team in six of the seven sub-units. The last Via-wulu sub-unit (Wozi Town) has long standing land and natural resources related conflicts with neighboring towns which requires the mediation of the LLA.

FIGURE I. MAP OF JAYE COMMUNITY



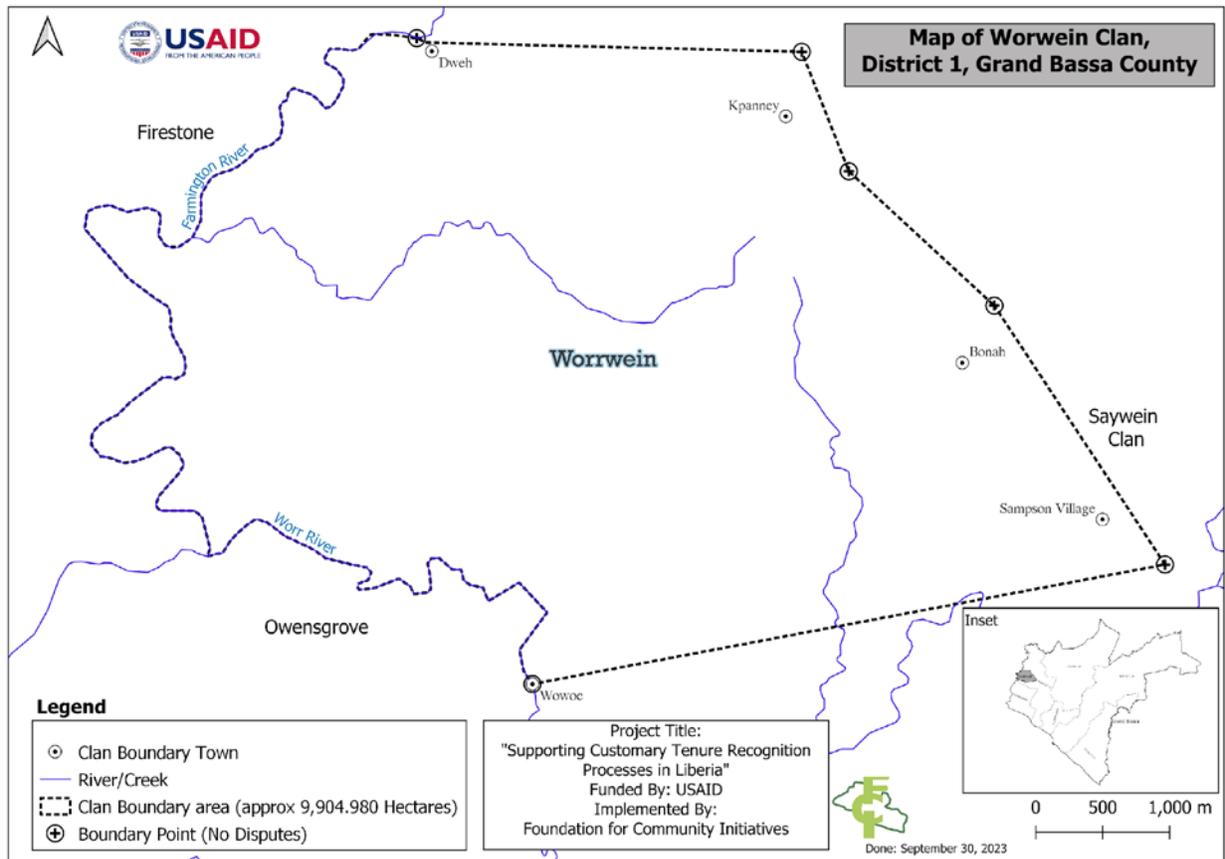
Following the training of the boundary team members, the FCI team together with the boundary team members, CLDMCs, and community leaders conducted the collection of community boundary data and mapping. Boundary harmonization meetings were held for towns that had no disputes with their neighbors and during these meetings, boundary harmonization MOUs were signed by representatives from those towns as well as community leaders, local authorities and the Land



Bong County Land Administrator facilitating the boundary committee training in Bong County, Photo Credit: FCI

Administrators of both Bong and Grand Bassa Counties. FCI facilitated the signing of 15 boundary MOUs There remain boundary disputes in seven of the eight communities (Worrwein in Grand Bassa County has no disputes). Annex 3 has additional details on the disputes.

FIGURE 3. MAP OF WORWEIN COMMUNITY



3.4 THE ROLE OF THE LLA

The LLA played an active role in the SDI, GAI, and FCI CLRF support in 44 communities. The LLA verified and validated the various steps of the CSI and the governance formation and assisted in the GIS and boundary harmonization process. GAI's seven communities (later self-identified as five) met in

November 2020 in Sanniquelle to formalize arrangements to work together with their neighbors to identify and secure their lands by signing a MOU in the presence of the LLA and local officials.

A CSI certification ceremony was conducted during the National Land Conference in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County in February 2022, involving 49 selected representatives from all 31 SDI-supported communities along with their county and district leaders present.

As mentioned above, none of the 44 communities obtained a confirmatory survey, despite working with the LLA throughout the CLRF process. This was a result of resources, timing, and lack of guidance or knowledge by the LLA themselves. Had ILRG been able to extend the Liberia activity indefinitely and add funds to support the LLA presence in the communities, it is possible that the communities with agreed upon boundaries may have been able to achieve the confirmatory survey. To date, no USAID-supported community has been able to receive a community deed, while the UNDP, World Bank and others have been able to push through the process. It is difficult to know why these communities have been able to succeed where most have not; however, the deep involvement of the LLA and ownership of each step throughout the CLRF process is a likely measure of success. Further research into the readiness of those communities and the reasons behind their success would be interesting.

Even with the passage of the LRA regulations in November 2022, the LLA lacks guidance on steps for a community to receive a customary land deed. The LLA has been dependent on multiple donors to produce guidance documents and guiding principles; however, few within the agency have the ability to provide straightforward instructions or political power to get the communities to the deed stage. A coordinated donor and Liberian CSO approach to pressure the LLA to make a transparent consistent process available for discussion may be the best way to advance the process as each entity has its separate dialogue with the LLA.

4.0 WHAT STEPS REMAIN AND HOW TO GET THERE

None of the 44 ILRG-supported communities has received its customary land deed in large part due to ongoing boundary conflicts, lack of resources to continue with mediation or LLA led confirmatory survey, or guidance on next steps from the LLA. While it was not anticipated that we would get all, or any, community deeds, lessons were learned in steps for further guidance from the LLA and how to potentially consolidate the process. The following steps are required for the ILRG-supported communities to complete the CLRF process and receive their deed.

- The communities that do not have MOUs signed with their neighboring towns/villages need to agree upon the common boundaries. As some of these boundary disputes are entrenched, further support and guidance from the LLA will be needed. Once boundaries are agreed upon, MOUs should be signed, and the boundary can be mapped, ideally jointly with the confirmatory survey.
- As SDI, GAI, and FCI were not able to negotiate with LLA to conduct the confirmatory survey at the same time as boundaries were harmonized, this step remains for all communities. It is likely that communities will need to pay the County Land Surveyor and staff for their time and travel costs to the community and walk the boundaries once agreed upon with neighbors. With a harmonized daily subsistence allowance now negotiated amongst donors and the government of Liberia, the cost should be more straightforward when discussing the budget for the LLA's participation. The cost will depend on the size of the community and its boundaries, as well as the distance of the community from the LLA office but would be no more than \$70 per day per person in addition to the cost of transportation and fuel.
- The recently adopted (November 2022) regulations state that up to 10 percent of community land must be identified as public before the LLA is willing to provide a deed for customary land, as feasible. This step has not yet occurred in any of the 44 communities as there is not yet guidance from the LLA. Under the World Bank Land Administration Project, Tetra Tech helped develop guidance in the Field Manual for communities to identify government and public land within their community in collaboration with the LLA. Public land is defined as any land that is not considered government, private or customary land, with government land consisting of any government buildings, activities or protected areas.
- Clarification is required from the LLA on whether tribal certificates, private and other land claims, need to be identified and mapped before the LLA is willing to provide a deed for customary land. A tribal certificate is defined as a permit or paper signed and issued by elders or chiefs of a town/village to express their consent in order for the government to sell a particular parcel of land within their village or town's control. It is the role of the CLDMC to identify and record all tribal certificates within their community using a template that has been approved by the LLA. The LLA will then work with the community to vet and validate the tribal certificates along with the community for conversion into a public land sale deed. A community's customary land would exclude any private (or government or public) land; therefore, private deeds can be either retroactively excised in the community survey, or be held separately with the knowledge that private lands deeds are interspersed in the customary deed.

USAID Liberia has approved a grant package for GAI to continue work on the five Nimba County communities under the LMA. Work is beginning once again to resolve remaining boundary conflicts and collect data on boundaries that had previously been blocked. It is likely that the LLA will need to

continue to provide assistance in the resolution of some of the entrenched boundary disputes. The LLA has successfully negotiated boundary disputes and continues to strengthen and clarify their role in ADR via LMA.

LMA is also supporting SDI to continue the CLRF process in the four ILRG-supported communities in Lofa County, Wonegizi, Via-wulu, Zone II and Zone III. With additional time, the communities should be able to receive a confirmatory survey and hopefully deeds. Landesa Waytuh Clan in Bong County is also receiving support from Landesa and DEN-L.

With the exception of these communities, the other ILRG communities in Bong, Grand Bassa, Maryland, and River Gee have no active interventions from any donor or implementing partner. With luck a donor will have the funds to work with these 34 communities to finish the CLRF process so that they can receive a community land deed.

5.0 CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Conflict over land and natural resources is a serious challenge in Liberia. Large portions of land area are under commercial concessions and community forests are subject to manipulation by commercial logging interests and mining activities (ILRG supported communities share borders with community forests, ongoing logging interests, protected areas, and mining – both formal and informal). In addition, wealthy Liberians are seeking to acquire individual ownership over customary lands.

The challenges listed below were documented by the three grantees (SDI, GAI, and FCI) throughout the ILRG project and are consolidated under the sub-headings of land governance, boundary harmonization, government support and COVID-19.

5.1 LAND GOVERNANCE

- In some communities, influential persons attempted to purchase land without consulting with the communities or the CLDMCs. This may be due to a lack of knowledge about the new law or an attempt to take advantage of new local governance institutions. Local authorities and CLDMCs will need to be educated on their roles and work together to raise awareness on the steps required for the purchase or identification of private land and build effective working relationships (per Article 21 of the LRA, portions of customary land cannot be purchased, held or permanently alienated for 50 years after the passage of the LRA – October 2068).
- Some local and traditional leaders felt that their power and authority over land decision-making was being taken from them and given to ordinary people through the CLDMCs. With continuous engagement with leaders and informing them on what the LRA mandates, most traditional leaders were able to understand the importance of participation and inclusion of everyone in the process.
- Some CLDMC members remain cautious about making decisions on land matters because of traditional authority and community elders' influence. They are afraid of threats from the elders and some still believe that the elders have the final decision on the land. This requires more awareness raising on their respective roles and responsibilities.
- The CLDMCs regularly struggled to have their authority recognized by the community. Local authorities and some influential community members – sometimes with the help of local authorities – continue to interfere in the administration of land. CLDMC membership is porous and fragile and can easily fall apart with monetary influence from external actors. In addition, a lack of livelihood alternatives makes communities prone to infiltration of elites. As the CLDMCs are still new examples of well-functioning CLDMCs are not yet available.
- Community members are concerned about the sustainability of the various governance structures in the communities. Sustaining the CLDMCs to effectively carry on their duties regularly will require financial support and additional training. The costs to provide skill building should be minimal.
- ADR training is essential for the CLRF process. GAI communities appreciated the ADR process and felt it was better than using the court system to adjudicate disputes. The draft national ADR policy, supported by USAID's LMA, needs to be finalized and disseminated throughout the country so that communities can use the ADR process instead of going to court for anything that happens in the community.

5.2 BOUNDARY HARMONIZATION

- Consultations on resolving boundary disputes promised by the community with their neighbors were never carried out as promised as community representatives would frequently not show up, they would send people who were unable to make a decision, or they would turn contentious. Partners asked community leaders to hold ongoing meetings in their absence to maintain momentum, and those meetings rarely occurred.
- Communities identified boundary disputes during the CSI stage, yet often these issues were not addressed until the boundary harmonization meetings. As the resolution of boundary conflicts can take a long time, and some have existed for decades, initiating mediation or negotiations for conflicts early in the process is key. Many communities are unable to settle disputes amongst themselves due to long standing rivalries and require support of civil society or even the LLA.
- The boundaries between project towns and their neighbors hit clan boundaries and open long standing traditional disputes which have gone unresolved for decades and require the Ministry of Internal Affairs to resolve.
- Road conditions to communities can make it difficult to travel to the community, either by vehicle or by foot. Damaged bridges, muddy roads, and floods resulted in delayed meetings, community members unable to attend meetings, inability to access some sub-units, and travel at night.
- Difficult terrain while doing the boundary walks in the forests, rivers and swamps requires personal protective equipment and tools. The long distances to arrive at boundary points may require crossing swamps, creating roads in the dense forests and crossing running creeks, as well as risking encounters with snakes.
- Community participation varied and selection for boundary harmonization committees and boundary walks was not always ideal, leading to disagreements on boundary points. In some communities, people selected to attend the meetings changed every meeting, causing delays and allegations from community members that those in the meetings were “friends” of the Town Chief and did not represent the cross-section of the town as requested.
- Boundary harmonization meetings should involve the people who live and farm at the boundaries of the communities. There is a risk that leaders may pick people who do not know the boundaries to attend meetings and make agreements that will later be rejected by their own community members and the neighboring towns because the information provided were inaccurate.
- Some community members who lived at the boundary refused to participate in the walk because influential relatives from Monrovia and other places told them not to take part leading to delays in order to convince them. External influence by powerful community members and elders who



Rainy season wreaking havoc on the roads in Nimba County, causing delays in CLRF implementation. Photo Credit: GAI

live outside the community by way of phone calls disrupted some boundary walks and MOU signing meetings.

- The frequent occurrence of death and traditional ceremonies in the project communities resulted in community members missing meetings and activities.

5.3 GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

- There is little baseline data on towns, clans and districts demographics available from the LLA and relevant government agencies to inform the community self-identification process.
- The LLA lacks proper land tenure documentation (policies, guidelines, and templates) to support the CLRf process other than the bylaws template and donor drafted guidelines. This leads to CSOs and other land actors “doing their own thing” in the field based on their understanding of the CLRf process.
- The LLA still depends on centralized services and decision-making as opposed to relying on decentralized County Land Offices which could provide logistics and staff to operate effectively to support boundary harmonization, boundary walks, and final MOU signing to avoid additional cost for a confirmatory survey.
- The LLA is dependent on donors to pay for their travel and daily subsistence allowance in order for them to participate in the CLRf process (CSI verification, community MOU signing of CSI process, CSI certification ceremony, validation of the governance structure, confirmatory survey). They do not have adequate funding to finance direct support to communities as is mandated by the LRA. Communities are therefore held back from progressing through the CLRf process in a timing fashion until or unless donors can fund the participation of the LLA, or they get sponsorship from a community member.
- The LLA’s delay in validating the different steps remained a challenge. However, during the project, the working relationship with the LLA improved and all three grantees noted a stronger presence of county-level LLA staff within the project communities in all counties. This is likely a result with the LLA’s own increased comfort level and understanding of the CLRf process and the roles they have identified for themselves.
- The LLA’s “top down” approach to demarcate clans instead of allowing communities to decide on their level of self-identification as enshrined in the Land Rights Act of 2018 could cause future conflicts. In the words of the Paramount Chief of Zor Chiefdom, Hon. Joseph Y. Yormie to the LLA during a visit: “There are numerous boundary disputes that exist between towns in the Zor Chiefdom and demarcating clans’ boundaries for the purpose of acquiring deed for the clans cannot resolve these internal boundary disputes with the towns.” The Paramount Chief lamented that, “The paramount concerns for us are that towns should demarcate their boundaries and acquire deeds for their lands in keeping with the Land Rights Act of 2018.”
- The lack of a central database that can house the community boundary data and track which communities are undergoing the CLRf process can lead to potential overlapping support and confusion to communities. CSOs, donors, and the LLA themselves would benefit from an accessible database to check what communities are in the process, the level of self-identification, what stage they are in, and what organizations, if any, are supporting them.

5.4 COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

Between March and August in 2020, SDI and GAI were restricted from traveling to the communities. This therefore delayed the implementation of the CLRF process. Once in-person meetings were authorized again, participants, trainees, observers and facilitators were asked to adhere to COVID-19 restrictions like social distancing, washing hands, refraining from shaking hands, and compulsory mask wearing during meetings. Team members were required to help participants to enforce social distancing, compulsory mask wearing, etc. which often delayed meeting times. Some towns had very small meeting venues making social distancing difficult and with poor weather and rain it was difficult to get the message across to community members about the need for social distancing. No incidences of COVID-19 were reported during USAID's CLRF support.

5.5 COST EFFECTIVENESS

The high costs for the CLRF process is unsustainable for communities in the absence of donor support and often the donor support is limited in time and resources to cover the full process from CSI to receipt of community deed.

It is difficult to compare the cost per parcel or community in Liberia to other countries as the CLRF process is unique to Liberia. While many countries have predetermined steps required before issuance of a title or deed, Liberia's process is very community consultation focused and dependent on the availability of the LLA. CSOs also vary in their approach to implementing the CLRF process based on their own strengths (i.e., training on women's land rights, ADR, community forestry, or land governance), their relationship with the LLA and what involvement they have negotiated with them as required in-person events (i.e., validation after each step or combining steps), and the geographic area of the community, and whether that may involve more resources (i.e., forests, mines, agricultural products) that may trigger additional conflicts.

For example, SDI's grant was \$446,383 to support a total of 31 communities in the CLRF process, GAI's grant was \$326,165 to support five communities, and FCI's grant was \$155,635 to support eight communities, for an average of \$14,399, \$65,233, and \$19,454 per community. Several reasons account for this difference:

- SDI communities had received support in the CLRF process previous to ILRG's grant and were at various stages of CSI and governance; therefore, SDI did not need to replicate initial community entry and CSI steps.
- SDI clustered their work into eight groups (two in Lofa, three each in Maryland and River Gee), thereby consolidating meetings and travel.
- As Maryland and River Gee are more difficult to travel to from Monrovia, SDI staff based themselves in the region, cutting back on long travel. SDI also worked heavily through community animators who were able to check in on the status of activities without sending staff.
- GAI started with seven communities who decided to self-identify as five different communities, resulting in additional meetings at the community self-identification stage. While USAID had previously supported these communities with mapping their community forests, the make-up of the community sub-units and therefore the community boundaries themselves had not been addressed.
- As GAI's communities border the East Nimba Nature Reserve as well as the Blei community forest, it took a long time for communities to decide on their level of governance, and then even longer to agree on boundaries (over 43 percent boundaries remained in dispute at the time of the ILRG grant completion).

- FCI clustered their support to four neighboring communities each in Bong and Grand Bassa Counties, thereby benefiting from combined travel and implementation of each step of the CLRF at the same time in each community.

The most cost-effective approach is one where communities can be clustered (i.e., not too large to have joint meetings), communities share boundaries so that there are fewer boundaries to agree upon and map, and where there are fewer incidences of disputes.

6.0 GENDER STRATEGY

SDI and GAI received training from ILRG's Global Gender Advisor on gender norms and land governance, gender-based violence, best practices for women's meaningful participation, budget considerations for gender equality and women's empowerment, and the legal framework on women's land rights in Liberia. All three grantees ensured that women, youth, people with disabilities, the elderly, and other marginalized members of the community were invited to and participated in meetings. Both SDI and GAI developed a gender strategy as an early milestone. FCI was on a shortened timeframe and have historically incorporated women's land rights awareness into their approach; therefore, they were not provided with training, nor were they required to draft a separate gender strategy.

Grantees informed community members that ILRG's project implementation required gender balance and that both men and women were encouraged to take part throughout the project duration, including having both men and women as animators, ICC members and CLDMC members. Community members were required to include women, youth and people with disabilities in all aspects of decision making. SDI mandated that for a meeting of 25 persons, it was compulsory for five women from the women's group, three young women from the youth group and two older women from the elder group to attend.

SDI held women-only sessions to provide spaces where women could freely interact without the elders or chiefs interfering with their freedom of opinion. Discussions held at these sessions helped facilitate the interest of women to run for CLDMC election. In River Gee, three communities elected women as chairpersons on the CLDMCs and 10 communities elected women to serve as co-chairpersons of the CLDMC. In Maryland, a community (Jargleoken community) selected a woman as its chairperson of the CLDMC, and 13 women were also elected as co-chairpersons. SDI noted that the inclusion of women in the training sessions on boundary harmonization and mapping also enabled their active participation.



Zortapa CLDMC member taking part in bookkeeping exercise during CLDMC training. Photo credit: GAI

In GAI supported communities, women also actively participated as animators, ICC members and in the leadership of the CLDMCs in the capacity of Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. CLDMC statistics showed a total of 43 women out of 99 elected CLDMC members in the five Blei primary communities.

Women in the FCI supported communities celebrated the LRA and the freedom that the knowledge of women's rights to land brought. They appreciated the confirmation that women too have the responsibility to discuss and make decisions about land and other things in the community. Previously it had been reinforced that women were only there to go to the farm and take care of the children in the home. Community leaders encouraged women and youth to see the project as their own as "the land belongs to everybody in the community once you are a Liberian regardless of where you come from."

"I knew nothing about the land and only use the forest to make my farm. The land meetings have educated me to know my rights. For example, in the past, the women never had rights to their fathers' property, but now the law has changed. I also know about the Land Rights Law and the four types of land in Liberia. When I hear about meetings these days, I am anxious to take part and give my views. My job on the CLDMC is to help the Chairman and take over when he is not here. The CLDMC training on how to manage our land will enable me explain to my community about using the land in good way. We will 'eat some and keep some' of our resources for the future generation to enjoy too." - **Patricia Geh, Vice Chair, Zor Yolowee CLDMC**

“I feel very proud to be elected as Secretary of the Zolowee CLDMC. We are 12 women and 13 men on the CLDMC of Zolowee and that make me very happy that the committee is gender balanced. We will work hard in the community to mobilize more women to join the CLDMC for the next election so that women can be in the majority. Women were not taken seriously in the community and most time, we are not called to participate in the decision making of our town. Through this USAID project, women know their rights to land and are active in the meetings and making decisions along with the men and elders. I will make sure that all our records are kept in correct manner and ensure that we have regular meetings as written in the Constitution of our town.”
- Theresa Delee, Secretary, Zolowee CLDMC

6.1 SUCCESSES IN WOMEN’S ENGAGEMENT

ILRG raised the confidence level of women in the project communities. Women are often excluded from participating in crucial land governance community matters, but grantees reported that with support of ILRG, women were encouraged to make presentations, ask questions and make comments in all meetings that were held in awareness raising and information sharing sessions. More men also embraced the idea of women’s rights to land in the project communities and encouraged women’s participation in decision making.

FCI reported that prior to the inception of this project, most of the communities did not see women and youth as key actors in the community land governance structures. The elders and traditional leaders felt that women and youth should not make decisions on land matters. This led to the perception that land matters should only be discussed and decided upon by the elders and traditional leaders. FCI conducted several awareness events through town hall meetings, developing awareness messages in simple English, printing and distributing them in the communities. They also identified influential men in the communities who were in support of women’s right to land to help carry the message of the importance of women and youth around the discussion and decision on land related issues in the communities.

Anecdotally, all three grantees reported that traditional authorities and community leaders have a greater understanding that everyone has equal rights to use and own land in the community. With the assistance of awareness materials and training provided, they understood the need to accept the mandates of the LRA. The training and awareness materials included the LRA, information specific to women’s land rights, and the awareness messages that were developed by the Land Authority, CSOs and partners, etc. shared via local radio, community meetings, and town criers. Women and youth can now sit around the table with men and traditional leaders to discuss land related matters, and women and youth’s voices can now be heard due to their inclusion in the governance structures.

6.2 CHALLENGES IN WOMEN’S ENGAGEMENT

Despite gains in land governance representation, there were several challenges in the meaningful participation of women throughout the CLRF process. Many women in the project communities do not understand or speak Liberian English, which made it difficult for most of them to actively participate in the meetings. An interpreter was used in all SDI, GAI, and FCI meetings to translate Liberian English to the local language and vice versa for the better participation and understanding of everyone in the meetings.



Gbobayee Town Chief, Felecial Lablah making remarks at the CSI MOU signing ceremony in Saniquellie. Photo credit: GAI

It was still difficult to get women to actively participate in some of the community meetings (i.e., in Nimba County) due to traditional practices and cultural norms around women speaking out. While some men embraced women's participation in decision making in the communities, others still found gender equality and women's rights to the land difficult to accept.

Competing time demands was one of the major challenges that hindered the active participation of women. This led to an unequal representation and participation of women in the CLDMC and as well as the boundary walk in Nimba County (i.e., the selection of seven women and 18 men on the Gbosua Gbeleyee Blein CLDMC). Many women were involved with farming activities during harvest season at the times selected for the boundary walk, which were hard to reschedule due to needing to travel long hours during daylight. Some women also were not interested in the boundary walk as it required walking eight to ten hours daily, often through forests, swamps, across rivers, etc.

While ILRG helped advance the understanding and acceptance of women's land rights, and the inclusion of youth, the disabled, and other minority groups, meaningful change takes time.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations emerging from the opportunities and challenges documented during the ILRG Liberia activity. Additional useful recommendations can be found in the World Bank Liberia Land Administration Project's Field Manual and Scale-Up Strategy. In addition, USAID's Endline Impact Evaluation of the Community Land Protection Program (CLPP) in Liberia provides additional recommendations which are in line with the findings of ILRG (see textbox below).

7.1 PROCESS

While much progress has been made on the steps involved in the CLRF process, the LLA needs to be transparent with communities and all implementers on the expectations of their participation throughout the process and the cost of their involvement. It appears that each organization supporting a community through the CLRF process has been provided slightly different guidance from the government, impacting their ability to proceed. When unexpected costs or delays occur, implementing partners may incur expenses not originally in their budgets or extend project timelines beyond the original scope of the work. This may mean that the work is not completed within the set activity/project timeframe and the community receives incomplete support.

The CLRF process does not require a linear approach. There should be room for flexibility, negotiation and changes made to the process because the situation in every town varies and brings its own challenges – no one solution will fit all communities. For instance, while every community should be encouraged to conduct the boundary walk and confirmatory survey simultaneously to promote efficiency, some communities may need separate steps to allow them additional time to agree on boundaries. In some cases, the initial community entry meetings can be combined with awareness raising on the Land Rights Act and CLRF process itself. Other larger communities may take additional time to introduce the process and figure out the community engagement and political economy. Some communities may wish to start the boundary harmonization process earlier to allow time to engage more actors, i.e., neighboring landholders, elders, members who reside outside of the community. Early engagement also provides the traditional authorities, community leaders, and the LLA with more time to identify and help resolve any boundary disputes, as well as socialize the CLRF process with neighbors who may not receive the same level of outreach.

While the recently adopted LRA Regulations lay out a process for the community to identify up to 10 percent of community land to be designated as public land, no mention is made of a process for accounting for tribal certificates, private and other land claims during the CLRF process. The LLA needs to provide clarity on whether the portions of land that qualify as tribal certificates or private or other land claims can be identified and mapped after the community receives its deed.

As disputes over internal community boundaries (i.e., between towns or villages) and external boundaries (i.e., with the self-identified community neighbors) are prevalent in each community to various extents, it is essential that an organization supporting a community through the CLRF process provide training in land dispute resolution, specifically ADR. ADR training should be given at the beginning of the CLRF process so that community members are aware of what to do when disputes are identified with neighboring communities. Disputes will only be exacerbated during the boundary harmonization step if not already mediated or resolved, which can stall the entire process.

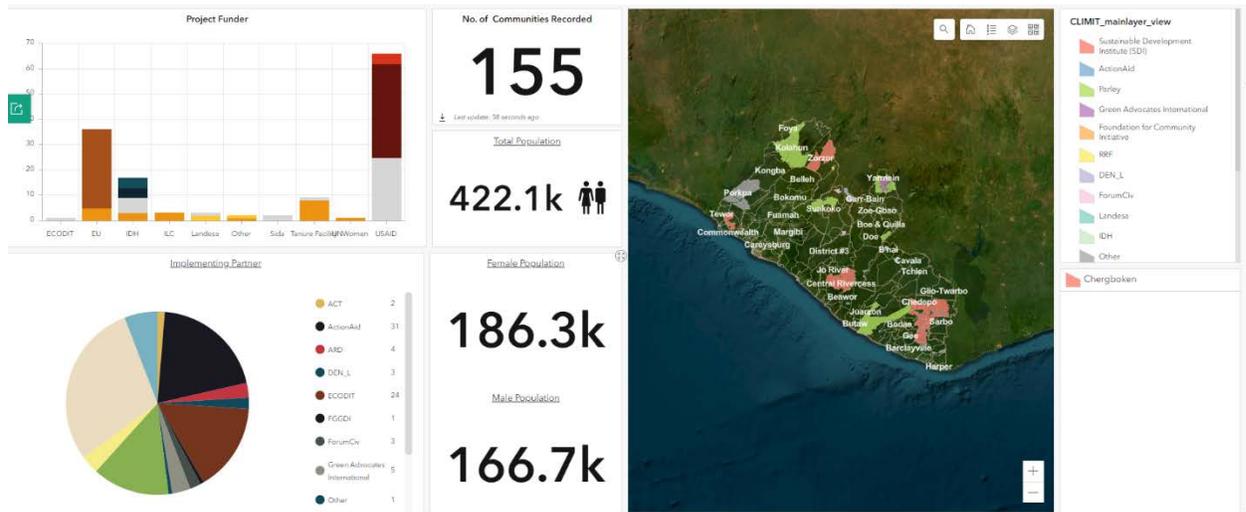
7.2 LLA

As the process currently stands, the formalization of customary boundaries cannot occur without the full participation of the LLA. ILRG engaged with the LLA at the onset of each grant, and grantees liaised regularly to keep them updated and involved as needed. Via the Civil Society Organization Working Group on Land Reform, CSOs may be kept up to date or consulted on changes to the CLRF process and draft legal reforms. Donors also engage via the donor working group on land; however, it is not clear how often they meet. Donors have also expressed frustration with the speed at which the LLA adopts recommended changes and the level of bureaucracy to accomplish any task. Better communication amongst all partners is still needed to better streamline the process.

Communities have the legal right for their boundaries to be acknowledged without a formal title; however, for those rights to be more secure a formal acknowledgement of the community make-up at a minimum should occur. Many steps, including those below, need to be improved for a cost-effective and streamlined (time-sensitive) customary land rights formalization process.

1. A shared understanding and capability of LLA staff to support the CLRF process needs to be in place so that implementing partners are not given opposing information and can plan out a schedule for LLA input. The LLA relies on its Customary Land Rights Division, and specific people within the Land Administration Department and the monitoring and evaluation department to liaise with civil society partners in the implementation of the CLRF process. The Customary Land Rights Division is not empowered to lead the support to communities; rather, the LLA leadership often hand picks the people who will work with CSOs and be allowed to travel. The mindset of working on donor supported projects is prevalent and should change to a more self-sufficient, locally led mindset that is accountable and transparent.
2. Agreement on a fit-for-purpose data collection technology is essential in order to streamline the tools and forms used throughout the CLRF process. Training LLA staff on the use of handheld GPS units and/or mobile phones for measuring community boundary points and mapping boundaries can destigmatize their use and ensure a more cost-effective approach. While ILRG did not encounter resistance in their use, more understanding of mobile data collection tools is warranted.
3. Much of the input from the LLA is still coming from the Monrovia-based office as opposed to the County Land Office where the project-supported communities are based. The LLA needs to further decentralize its decision-making and technical assistance approach and build skills in the steps required for a community to receive its deed, including land dispute resolution, community engagement, boundary harmonization, and community governance. The County Land Offices should also be equipped with computers, motorbikes, GPS units and/or mobile phones, and other equipment necessary to fully assist communities.
4. Lantmäteriet's ILAMP project created the [Community Land Intervention Monitoring Tool](#) (CLIMT) in collaboration with the LLA in 2021 as a database for CSOs to store data on customary community boundaries. The tool is available for the public to view high-level information on what communities are currently or have previously gone through the CLRF process (see below for a snapshot of their main project dashboard). The tool is, however, only as good as the information provided to the LLA and Lantmäteriet, via Cadasta. Whether it is the CLIMT or another database, the LLA needs to track which communities are going through the CLRF process, including the specific sub-units, so as to avoid overlap. The LLA should also have copies of all documentation created in the CLRF process to track the status of support and reference as needed (i.e., CSI agreement, bylaws, CLDMC election summary, boundary data, confirmatory survey). A public facing version should also be available for CSOs engaging with

communities and for community members themselves. The LLA has received all of ILRG's data and it is included in the CLIMIT.



- In addition to a shared understanding of the CLRF process within the LLA, there needs to be increased transparency across donors, CSOs, implementing partners, and communities so that there is shared agreement on the CLRF steps, and the costs embedded. The lack of transparency invites corruption, a deprioritization of communities without influence, or disagreements between government, civil society, donor and community actors.
- The LLA needs to make itself available within an agreed timeline for confirmation of CSI, confirmatory survey, any other steps that are agreed upon, and dispute resolution as needed. Whether or not a donor or partner can facilitate the payment for LLA attendance in the community, the LLA needs to be consistent with its commitment to designated steps within the CLRF process. This may include a ceremony once a community has self-identified, involvement in awareness building around the LRA, participation or leadership in the joint boundary harmonization and confirmatory survey, or presence at the boundary MOU signing between neighboring communities.

7.3 GOVERNANCE

During the project, it became evident that the sub-units (i.e., villages and towns) were usually the key community unit for land governance. During the CLRF process at the sub-units, there was more representation of marginalized people, including women, youth, and people with disabilities, when meetings were more conveniently located, and people were actively encouraged to attend and participate. When the awareness activities targeted the sub-units, transparency and meaningful participation in decision-making processes resulted and conflicts were easier to resolve. Often informal agreements with neighboring communities were already in place that could be built upon.

The grantees noted that land governance gets more challenging in larger communities. Logically, this means that larger sized communities and/or those with more sub-units, require more representation in the CLDMC and the more neighbors and boundaries to harmonize. This creates more space for potential conflicts. For example, the ILRG CLDMCs ranged from four to 25 members, not inclusive of the four additional CLDMC officers.

While ensuring that each sub-unit is equally and fully represented in the CLDMC, having large committees makes it difficult to operate effectively. Communities can explore ways to have joint

representation amongst sub-units to reduce the size of the committee. While ILRG grantees provided some training to the CLDMCs, additional training would be helpful to operationalize the committees.

One area of recommended training for CLDMCs is in representing and negotiating on behalf of the community for potential private sector investment, including carbon credit deals. Historically community land has been put under agricultural (i.e., palm oil, rubber), forestry, and mining concessions in Liberia without full community consent. Strengthening the CLDMC understanding of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and their role in representing the community will be essential for communities to negotiate and receive benefits for use of their land and resources. FPIC is required in the Community Rights Law of 2009 which governs forestry, as well as the LRA Regulations of 2022. By understanding their rights, CLDMCs and community members can hold the government and the private sector accountable.

7.4 WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

While SDI, GAI, and FCI engaged with the communities to reinforce the importance of the participation of women through each CLRF step, more attention is needed for lasting change to occur. Training was provided on the LRA, stating that women have equal rights to land as men, and women were encouraged to attend and engage in meetings, and in some cases grantees held women-only meetings to encourage them to voice their opinions and strategize for CLDMC elections. Women's empowerment activities were incorporated into the larger process as side events or meetings and not as a stand-alone activity which may have further solidified gains. Funding is often limited, but reserving resources to increase awareness of women of the LRA and CLRF process as well as additional outreach to men and traditional authorities as gender champions will help solidify the change in norms.

7.5 OUTREACH

Starting with community entry, it is essential to have a communications strategy to reach all members of the self-identified community. Community members need to be consulted and then updated on the CLRF progress to build trust and respect in the entire CLRF process in order to reduce or mitigate tension and avoid disputes, and even violence.

Community-based animators were important to the project to get the messages out to community members who were not able to attend meetings, including women, people with disabilities, and community members living in harder to reach sub-units. The use of local radio and town criers in local languages were also effective means of reaching the entire community on different schedules.

While efforts should be made to have broad participation in the development of community land and resource bylaws, the provision of awareness of the community bylaws once adopted is crucial. There is a need to print and widely publicize the bylaws across the communities so that everybody has access to the governance rules and processes and can understand the role of the CLDMCs and the community.

7.6 ADMINISTRATION

The following are recommendations from SDI, GAI, and FCI regarding the higher-level implementation of the CLRF process.

- Keep records (meeting minutes, video recordings if used, photographs, etc.) of every meeting because community members can deny comments made in previous meetings.
- Give copies of the minutes to the communities and encourage the community secretary to document the meeting for their own records.

- A skilled and experienced team is needed for the CLRF process across key stages of the process: the bylaws, CLDMC election, ADR training, boundary harmonization, boundary walks, map corrections and validation and final MOU signing ceremonies. A high level of professionalism and delicacy are needed in these meetings that can make or break the success of the project.
- More localized community-based organizations with relevant skills and trained staff can collaborate with more established CSOs or government to implement the beginning stages of the CLRF process (community entry stage, awareness meetings and the CSI stage) because they are not as technical and prone to conflict.

Recommendations from USAID’s Endline Impact Evaluation of the Community Land Protection Program (CLPP) in Liberia*

Women’s Empowerment: Prioritize a more holistic strategy to address gendered dimensions of customary land formalization. Current focus on women’s legal land rights knowledge and leadership positions are important but not sufficient on their own. Consider bundled strategies across multiple levels to address structural barriers and strengthen women’s participation in community land governance, including:

Targeted sensitization / messaging across customary, local government and land administration authorities to encourage changes to persisting patriarchal norms on women’s land rights and governance participation.

Community agreement on gender quotas for CLDMCs, land-use planning and bylaws development.

Cross-sectoral linkages between women’s groups empowerment trainings and land governance participation, decision-making, and leadership interventions; including engaging men as allies.

Tenure Security: Manage expectations on the multi-year time frame and continued community and non-governmental organization (NGO) / CSO engagement required to complete boundary harmonization, ensure participatory implementation of the formalization process and achieve impacts within communities.

To avoid or mitigate erosion of community confidence and potential reversal of governance gains, support LLA capacity to complete the final steps in the formalization process (confirmatory survey, title deeds). In the interim, ensure systems are in place for communities to liaise with LLA after program conclusion and maintain access to services as needed.

Forest Conservation: Build community capacity to plan and manage forest resources for longer term sustainability in the context of extractive forest enterprises and larger-scale outsider investor presence. Aim to strengthen and mutually reinforce linkages between and local institutions for communal land governance, livelihoods and sustainable forest use and conservation.

CLDMC and community trainings on: FPIC rights; sustainable forest management; negotiating contracts and social agreements with companies and smaller artisanal groups; setting fees/payments/in-kind contributions; benefit-sharing transparency and managing community funds; grievance systems and dispute resolution processes via the FDA and other channels.

Strengthening systems for monitoring and enforcement, information-sharing and community-wide participation in forest decisions.

* Persha, L., G. Haugan, X. Liu, N. Taha, and R. Wendt. 2023. *Endline Impact Evaluation of the Community Land Protection Project in Liberia: Final Report*. Washington, DC: USAID Communications, Evidence and Learning (CEL) Project.

7.7 COLLABORATION

There are multiple donors, CSOs, government entities, and other implementing partners involved in the CLRF process at any given time. USAID has always tried to learn from other funded programs via the

Land Donor Working Group, CSO Working Group on Land Reform, and one-on-one meetings; however, an experience sharing event in collaboration with USAID and other donors where all actors in the land sector would be invited to discuss the challenges, successes and changes being proposed to the CLRf methodology would ensure that everyone is on the same page. Doing so would force accountability and transparency from the government, and lessen the burden on implementers to reinvent training, communications, forms, etc. While the LLA holds ad-hoc meetings with donors and CSOs, the format is not set up for such experience sharing and strategizing on a sustainable way forward.

7.8 CONCLUSION

ILRG's support to 44 communities in six different counties helped to strengthen each community's understanding of their rights as a community and individuals, including women, youth, disabled and other marginalized groups, as well as established a community governance structure for future decision-making on land and resource use and allocation. Despite many communities having outstanding boundary disputes, each community has a stronger understanding of their boundaries with their neighbors and are on the path to receiving a customary land deed.

The awareness built and training provided have strengthened the communities' ability to respond to private sector and government interest in land as well as the steps needed for purchase of private land.

Further direction is still required from the government of Liberia, specifically the LLA, on the recognition of surveying of tribal certificates and other land claims, and the identification of up to ten percent of a community's land to be classified as public land. The LLA also needs to be more transparent on the costs and requirements for their involvement throughout the CLRf process, laying out clearly for all interested communities, CSOs, donors or other stakeholders the same process to follow to obtain a customary land deed. The LLA risks further donor support if they cannot enact change to address these ongoing challenges.

ILRG's involvement in the CLRf process has helped progress the learning between CSOs and partners in Liberia as the activity shared knowledge on its approaches, templates and understanding of the implementation of the LRA. Much has been learned and documented since the original CLPP activity, especially with the passage of the LRA in 2018 and the regulations in 2022. The responsibilities for community land governance have been delineated and a process for identification and confirmation of community boundaries have progressed. Further work in-country is needed for continued information sharing between the LLA, donors, and CSOs so that a transparent CLRf process is implementable and understood.

ANNEX I: ILRG COMMUNITIES

#	County	District	Community	Est. Population			Est. Hectares	Status
				Women	Men	Total		
1	River Gee	Nyeawliken	Gedeken	3,975	6,125	10,100	9,731	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
2			Jargeloken	2,155	3,745	5,900	4,590	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
3			Nyantuken	718	547	1,265	3,393	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
4			Martuaken	3,225	2,675	5,900	9,780	Ready for confirmatory survey
5		Gbeapo	Saywriken	15,170	12,475	27,645	2,571	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
6			Geeken	585	525	1,110	4,389	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
7			Weleboken	1823	1,178	3,001	3,380	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
8			Podroken	821	759	1,580	3,723	Ready for confirmatory survey
9		Potupo	Jayto	1,875	1,625	3,500	22,907	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
10			Katoken	1,659	1,561	3,220	13,335	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
11			Mimuken	889	1511	2,400	75,406	Ready for confirmatory survey
12			Kayken	8,123	6,777	14,900	14,474	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
13			Gmatu	1,405	1,195	2,600	5,278	Ready for confirmatory survey
14	Maryland	Gwelekpoken	Big Jaye	3,500	5,500	9,000	4,735	Ready for confirmatory survey
15			Soloken	735	765	1,500	2,514	Ready for confirmatory survey
16			Glofarken	2,200	2,300	4,500	4,729	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)

#	County	District	Community	Est. Population			Est. Hectares	Status
				Women	Men	Total		
17			Newaken	900	1400	2,300	4,645	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
18			Jargeloken	500	700	1,200	6,101	Ready for confirmatory survey
19			Dugboken	4231	5239	9,470	10,810	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
20			Gortuken	500	700	1,200	5,054	Ready for confirmatory survey
21		Nyonken	Feloken	1,350	1,800	3,150	5,586	Ready for confirmatory survey
22		Whoja	Juluken #1	915	1,093	2,008	2,781	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
23			Geeseeken	370	430	800	1,643	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
24			Juluken #2	109	110	219	1,063	Ready for confirmatory survey
25			Martuken	275	325	600	1,766	Ready for confirmatory survey
26			Sawtoken #2	1000	1,500	2,500	9,276	Ready for confirmatory survey
27			Dwejah	571	980	1,551	759	Ready for confirmatory survey
28	Lofa	Zorzor	Bluyema Zone II	1,200	1,800	3,000	31,661	Ready for confirmatory survey; LMA supporting
29			Bluyema Zone III	1,000	1,500	2,500	21,389	Ready for confirmatory survey; LMA supporting
30			Via-wulu	14,000	12,000	26,000	26,876	Unresolved boundary dispute(s); LMA supporting
31			Wongegizi	6,000	7,000	13,000	50,330	Ready for confirmatory survey; LMA supporting
32	Nimba	Sanniquellie Mahn	Zolowee	-	-	3,374	Incomplete	Ready for confirmatory

#	County	District	Community	Est. Population			Est. Hectares	Status
				Women	Men	Total		
								survey; LMA supporting
33		Gbehlay-Geh	Zor - Yelowee	-	-	447	1,226	Ready for confirmatory survey; LMA supporting
34		Yarmein	Gbassa	-	-	12,100	Incomplete	Ready for confirmatory survey; LMA supporting
35		Gbehlay-Geh	Zortapa	-	-	1,125	3,125	Ready for confirmatory survey; LMA supporting
36		Sanniquellie Mahn	Gbosua-Gbeleyee Blein	-	-	2,630	2,684	Ready for confirmatory survey; LMA supporting
37	Bong	Kpaai	Waytuah	2,300	2,100	4,400	42,000	Unresolved boundary dispute(s); Landesa/DEN-L supporting
38		Kpaai	Wolota	100	80	180	16,100	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
39		Boinsen	Boinwein	624	551	1,175	7,100	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
40		Boinsen	Senwein	310	375	685	13,100	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
41	Grand Bassa	Yeablo	Zuzohn	95	84	179	11,100	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
42		Kporkon	Sonniewein	530	455	985	5,400	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
43		Worr	Worwein	186	192	378	9,900	Ready for confirmatory survey
44		Glacon	Gogowein	18	6	24	25,200	Unresolved boundary dispute(s)
Total				195,195			501,410	

ANNEX 2: DETAILED CLRF PROCESS AND TIMELINE BY STEP

Task	What will be done?	Duration
1.1 Introduce program to pilot county, district government, County Land Commissioner, County Land Surveyor, traditional leaders, courts, county gender office, etc. 1.2 Hold introduction meeting to private sector active in pilot area (concessionaires, private land/farms)	1 day meeting stating the project aim and objectives as well as the Gender strategy	1 day
1.3 Introduce program to pilot communities and neighboring communities 1.4 Identify community mobilizers and animators in each community	Meeting stating the project aim and objectives as well as the Gender strategy Community picks the animators	Varies on # of neighbors (4 neighbors = ~ 3 days)
4 Days		
2.1 Complete community profile	Full day meeting to complete the profile and validate the profile.	1/3 day
2.2 Community awareness		1 day
2.2a Information of legal framework, recognition of customary land process	Meeting with project communities from 8am – 12pm	
2.2b Information regarding gender-related issues in process and importance of gender-responsive community approach	Meeting with project communities from 2pm - 4pm	
2.2c Nominate and elect/select members of Interim Coordinating Committee	Meeting with project communities from 5pm – 6pm	
2.2d ICC training on function /role / responsibilities of committee; train community mobilizers and animators in each community	1 day training for all the animators and ICC Members	1/2 day
2.3 Community determines level of community self-identification 2.3a Meeting for verification of each self-identified community	1-day meeting explaining level of self-identification. Read letter to communities and make final edits and get signatures	1 day
2.3b Submit application of Expression of Interest to LLA	Community and sub-units sign the EOI letters and give to NGO to bring to County Land Office	1 day
2.4 Identification of community land area	1-day meeting to verify data and maps already available.	1½ day
2.4a Collect deeds, tribal certificates, information on concessions, private land and community forests, etc. (if they exist)	Task 2.4a and 2.4b will be done same day with task 2.4	
2.4b Produce sketch map with the community	Include men, women and youth to draw entire land including sub-units, resources, town, etc.	
2.4c Engage neighbor(s) about potential dispute and seek ways to resolve issues Introduction to ADR	Include men, women and youth in the engagement meeting	
2.5 Review and verification of community self-identification process by the LLA Monitoring and Evaluation Department	1 full day meeting in community by the LLA to verify the CSI process	1 day

Task	What will be done?	Duration
2.6 Signing of CSI MOU by Community, County Officials	1 day program preferably in provincial capital or District headquarters to officially sign the MOU closing the CSI process	1 day
7 days		
3.1a Using the draft model by-law developed in collaboration with the LLA, support the community to draft gender sensitive bylaws; ensure bylaws/rules are not discriminatory (i.e., gender responsive, address rights of strangers); hold community meeting(s) to review and adopt them	3 days in community to complete the process	3 days
3 days		
4.1 Conduct legal training and collaborate with ILRG staff on training on women's land rights and women's participation in community land governance	1-day training workshop in each community	½ day
4.2 Using the community bylaws, set up CLMDC through an open and fair election process, ensuring those elected are representative of the community (men, women, youth, ethnicity, etc.) (through an assembly or congress of applicant community representation)	1-day community led event in each community	1.5 Days
4.2a CLDMC training	Roles and responsibilities of CLDMC in conjunction with local leaders	1 day
4.3 LLA verification of the bylaws and CLDMC	LLA field visit	1 day
4 days		
5.1 Awareness on the next step of the process (boundary harmonization and others)	Half-day meeting in the main project community and four neighboring communities (50 participants per meeting)	3 days
5.2 Mediation and ADR training	1 day meeting in the community 1 day meeting in each neighboring	5 days
5.3 Boundary identification and harmonization	1 day meeting in the community with each neighboring community sending 5 representatives in the harmonization process LLA presence is needed	4 days
5.3a ILRG provides training on use of mobile technology and community engagement for partners' staff as needed		1 day
5.3b Community members orientation to GPS mapping exercise	Mapping training for communities (2 participants)	3 days
5.3c Conduct boundary walk alongside GPS mapping with self-identified community members and neighboring communities	Mapping exercise, (at most two walks) The number of walk may vary depending on the nature of dispute LLA presence is needed	8 days
5.3d Develop a draft community boundary map. Print map and share with the community and neighboring communities. Over a period of time (30 days) objections and corrections to the boundary can be made	1 day meeting in the community 1 day meeting with each neighboring LLA Presence is needed	5 days
5.4 Documentation of Agreed Boundaries. Communities hold ceremonies to draft and sign "Memoranda of Understanding" (MOU) with their neighbors to formally document all boundary	1-day meeting in each community with invited neighbors LLA presence is needed	4 days

Task	What will be done?	Duration
agreements. In addition to the MOU and a map showing the boundary, they may also plant boundary trees or lay down other locally accepted markers to indicate the limits of their lands		
5.5 Community Land Identification and Mapping Report. Communities, with support of facilitator, draft a community land identification and mapping report consisting of the final maps of the community boundaries, and submits it to the LLA for review and approval	1-day meeting in the community	1 day
		34 days
6.1 Following the review of the draft community land identification and mapping report, the LLA conducts a confirmatory survey	Confirmatory surveys by LLA and community. This task is embedded in the boundary harmonization and mapping	0 days
		0 days
7.1 The organization will assist the LLA and the community during this final step as needed	NGO will work with the LLA, the Probate Court, and Office of Records, Documentation and Archives to get all the deeds and documents for the communities	14 days
		14 days
Final project closing program	Communities receive their deeds from LLA at an elaborate event District Headquarters or in town	3 days
		3 days
		69 days

Activity	Estimated Workdays
Community Entry Process	4
CSI Process	7
Bylaws	3
CLDMC	4
Land Identification & Mapping	34
Register Deed	14
Closing	3
TOTAL	69

ANNEX 3: STATUS OF BOUNDARY HARMONIZATION

SDI was unable to settle some disputes attributed to long standing land and natural resources related conflicts between the following communities during the ILRG grant.

SDI LOFA, MARYLAND, AND RIVER GEE COUNTY BOUNDARY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING STATUS

County	CSI Community	Status of Boundary Disputes
River Gee	Gedeken	Kleaken Town in Gedeken and Warpluken Town in Nyantuken were both ILRG project communities. Community boundaries could not be agreed upon in part as farmland is designated randomly between the two communities.
	Jargeloken	Kanweaken is a sub-unit in Saykliken and Sweaken is a sub-unit in Jarboken. Both communities share a boundary on the main highway from Grand Gedeh to Fish Town. They are selling customary land to Kanweaken community members as there is growing demand; however, this is resulting in disagreement on the shifting community boundaries. Sweaken, a sub-unit in Jarboken and Paroken a sub-unit in Nyantuken, has a land dispute that the two communities are claiming two different boundary points.
	Nyantuken	Country Town is a sub-unit in Saykliken while Paroken is a sub-unit in Nyantuken. The land dispute is the result of the growing population and demand for land with involvement from local elite in Country Town/Kanweaken. See Jargeloken.
	Martuaken	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Saywriken	See Jargeloken. Kanweaken Town, a sub-unit in Saykliken and Chergboken Town in Timbo District has a long-standing dispute over land situated between the two communities. Both communities are claiming ownership of the area because of the mining activities that are ongoing in the forest.
	Geeken	Flewroken (Weleboken Clan) and Dweaken (Geeken Clan) communities were both project communities. Weleboken and Geeken share the boundary Kanweaken which is the commercial city of River Gee with a fast-growing population. With the increase in population in Kanweaken, community members from Kanweaken City are pushing into Geeken and Weleboken land to settle and carry out mining and farming activities. This appears to be one of the major reasons both communities are trying to protect unoccupied land for both sides. There are claims and counterclaims from both parties, which has left the two communities with major land disputes.
	Weleboken	See Geeken. Flewroken Town in Weleboken and Warliken Town in Jaytoken have disputed boundaries for over twenty years as the result of gold mining on the land that is situated between the two communities. Both communities refuse to go into the forest to locate any point.
	Podroken	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Jayto	See Weleboken.
	Katoken	Gbaquiah a sub-unit in Kartoken, an ILRG project community, and Geeken a sub-unit of Wropaken, an adjacent community that is not part of ILRG, have

County	CSI Community	Status of Boundary Disputes
		a disputed boundary that started over thirty years ago. Both towns consider a hill with mineral deposits as their own. The community of Gbaquiah gave the disputed land to a local elite for farming. The Internal Affairs Minister intervened two years ago and established a buffer zone that is yet to be respected. Both towns refused to show their boundary point to be captured.
	Mimuken	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Kayken	Konken Town is a sub-unit under Kayken Clan, an ILRG community, and Maaken is a sub-unit under Saykliken, which is not an ILRG community, have outstanding boundary disagreements. Konkon community members narrated that Maaken gave a huge portion of their land to a company called Cavalla Rubber Corporation (CRC) to plant rubber, leaving them with less land for their farming activities. As a result, Maaken community members decided to push the traditional boundary marker (Chean tree) to a new boundary marker (Putuway tree) to get more farming land. Pronoken Town in Partaken and Teajailken Town in Kayken community have a boundary dispute at the result of where Teajailken first settled and have farmland. Boundary meetings ended in a deadlock.
	Gmatu	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
Maryland	Big Jaye	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Soloken	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Glofarken	Glofarken is the administrative headquarter for Barrobo District of which Juluken #1 is part of as one of the towns. Stakeholders within Glofarken are claiming Jinaual Creek on the main road, established in 1968 as the traditional boundary with Juluken #1. Stakeholders from Juluken #1 are refusing boundary markers mentioned as the boundary between them and Glofarken.
	Newaken	Durobo is an adjacent community to Newaken and as they were not directly part of the project, felt left out. As a result, they have refused to harmonize their boundary with Newaken after several attempts to resolve the issues.
	Jargeloken	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Dugboken	Gortiken is a sub-unit under Geesanken, while Geaken is a sub-unit under Dugboken. Both communities were once under Geesanken as sub-units, but Gbeaken left due to political reasons to join Dugboken as a sub-unit. Most of these claims and counterclaims are because of natural resources. The two communities in question are located in the middle of the rest of the communities, and neither of them have enough farmland to survive. They cannot come to an agreement.
	Gortuken	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Feloken	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Juluken #1	See Glofarken.
	Geeseeken	See Dugboken.
	Juluken #2	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Martuken	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Sawtoken #2	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Dwejah	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
Lofa	Bluyema Zone II	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Bluyema Zone III	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Via-wulu	There remain long standing land and natural resources related conflicts between Wozi Town, which is centrally situated, and neighbors including

County	CSI Community	Status of Boundary Disputes
		Kalemai, and Malawuo Towns and Zolowuo Township located in Gissima Clan (none of which were part of ILRG). According to community leaders and residents of Wozi Town, it is considered as the supreme land-owning town of Zorzor District and residents see themselves as original landlords who should agree on a parcel of land before it is given out to a neighbor or another town or clan like in the case with Zolowuo Township, Malawuo, and Kalemai Towns. The areas being claimed are also said to have vast forest reserves and huge gold deposits. These conflicts led to Via-wulu not completing their boundary process under the project, and the disputes rest with the LLA.
	Wongegizi	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.

GAI was also unable to settle disputes attributed to long standing land and natural resources related conflicts between the following communities during the ILRG grant.

GAI NIMBA COUNTY BOUNDARY MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING STATUS

No.	Signatory (A)	Signatory (B)
MOU signed by both communities and attested by local authorities		
1	Zortapa	Yolowee
2	Yolowee	Zortapa
3	Zortapa	Gbosua
4	Zortapa	Zualay
5	Zortapa	Zorgowee
6	Zortapa	Ganaglay
7	Gbosua	Zortapa
8	Gbosua	Sehiyikimpa
9	Gbosua	Boapea
10	Gbassa	Liagbala
11	Gbassa	Sehy-Geh
12	Gbassa	Bonla
Incomplete MOU, signed by communities awaiting neighboring communities to sign after further consultations		
1	Gbosua	Zolowee
2	Zolowee	Gbosua
3	Zortapa	Gorpa
4	Zolowee	Sehyi-Geh
5	Zolowee	Sehyikimpa
Disputed MOU, both communities have not settled their dispute		
1	Zolowee	Gbassa
2	Gbassa	Zolowee
3	Zolowee	Mankinto
4	Yolowee	Zualay
5	Yolowee	Geipa

FCI was unable to settle boundary disputes between the following communities during the ILRG grant.

FCI BONG AND GRAND BASSA COUNTY OUTSTANDING DISPUTES

County	CSI Community	Status of Boundary Disputes
Bong	Waytuh	<p>The boundary between Nyawolo in Waytuh Clan and Mineeta in Wolota Clan is disputed. According to the Clan Chief of Wolota, the matter was taken to his office but could not be resolved. It was later taken to the chiefs and elders but was not resolved.</p> <p>The boundary between Gbeneta in Waytuh Clan and Gbona in Mbelequelleh Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Gbeneta in Waytuh Clan and Kulah Village in Mbelequelleh Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Gaytaye in Waytuh Clan and Leleh in Gbanseah Clan is disputed. The Paramount Chief of Kpaai District said that he is aware of the dispute between Gaytaye and Leleh and he has investigated the matter and will decide on the matter soon.</p> <p>The boundary between Seketa in Waytuh Clan and Monta in District #2 is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Seketa and Kpellakpai in Gbanseah is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Baila in Waytuh Clan and Nummen in Panta Clan is disputed. Both towns are claiming a portion of the road along the boundary. According to the community members, Landesa is working with Panta Clan and is working to settle the dispute.</p> <p>The boundary between Baima in Waytuh Clan and Kpoo in Panta Clan is disputed. According to the community members of Waytuh Clan, DEN-L is working with both towns to settle the dispute.</p> <p>The boundary between Telta in Waytuh Clan and Monta in District #2 is disputed. There is no clear information about the dispute.</p> <p>The boundary between Beyeama in Waytuh Clan and Jennepleta in Mbelequelleh Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Sarwolor in Waytuh Clan and Foequelleh in Panta Clan is disputed. According to the chief, DEN-L, LLA and the local authority were all present during the meeting to settle the dispute but could not resolve the issue.</p>
	Wolota	<p>The boundary between Belekpalah in Wolota Clan and Seansue Town in Seansue Clan is disputed. Both towns are claiming different areas as their boundaries and the Paramount has intervened in the matter but was not settled.</p> <p>The boundary between Zorwah in Wolota and Camp 2 in Boinwein is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Belekpalah in Wolota Clan and Dawarta in Seansue Clan is disputed. Both towns are claiming different areas as their boundary and there has been no official intervention from anyone.</p> <p>The boundary between Saye Town in Wolota Clan and Kpanquoi in Boinwein Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Lorta in Wolota Clan and Camp 2 in Boinwein Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Zorwa in Wolota Clan and Kpanquoi in Boinwein is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Danyee in Wolota Clan and Quoikakpor in Senwein Clan is disputed.</p>
	Senwein	<p>The boundary between Belwee in Senwein Clan and Kpanquoi in Boinwein Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Garr Town in Senwein Clan and U-Lah in Boinwein Clan has dispute.</p>

County	CSI Community	Status of Boundary Disputes
Grand Bassa		<p>The boundary between Garr Town in Senwein Clan and New Town in Boinwein Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Vah Village in Senwein Clan and Dolo Town in Boinwein Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between David Dean Town in Senwein Clan and Dolo town in Boinwein Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Yolo Town in Senwein and U-Lah in Boinwein Clan is disputed.</p>
	Bonwein	<p>The boundary between Gboela in Boinwein Clan and Jarkpala in Siensue is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Dahn Town in Boinwein Clan and Money Sweet in Siensue is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Maah Town in Boinwein Clan and Money Sweet in Siensue is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Maah Town in Boinwein Clan and Matthew Town in Siensue Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Borbor Fire Town in Boinwein Clan and Matthew Town in Siensue Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Borbor Fire Town in Boinwein and Money Sweet in Siensue is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Tarpeh Town in Boinwein Clan and Gotoback in Siensue Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Dolo Town in Boinwein Clan and Manyoun in Senwein Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Dorbor Town in Boinwein Clan and Bohn in Senwein Clan is disputed. There are no details about the dispute.</p> <p>The boundary between Soclo in Boinwein and Matthew Town in Seansue is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Dolo Town in Boinwein and Bahn Town in Senwein is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Shamu in Boinwein and Gotoback in Seansue is disputed.</p>
	Sonniewein	<p>The boundary between Gorr's Town in Sonniewein Clan and Kro's Town in Whenzohn Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Yanwein in Sonniewein and Zinneh Town in Doe Clan has dispute.</p> <p>The boundary between Yanwein in Sonniewein Clan and San Town in Doe Clan is disputed.</p> <p>Sonniewein Clan and Whenzohn Clan are claiming Jozohn Town which is between the two clans.</p> <p>The boundary between Nyuanh Town in Sonniewein Clan and Wracon in Lloydsville is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Tarpeh Town in Sonniewein Clan and Wracon in Lloydsville is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Conflin Town in Sonniewein Clan and Kallor Cardor in Lloydsville Township is disputed.</p>
	Worrwein	No disputes; MOUs with all neighboring communities.
	Zuzohn	The boundary between Joe Mason Village in Zuzohn Clan and Sellodyu in Doe Clan is disputed. According to the CFMB Chief Officer of Zuzohn Clan, Sellodyu Town, located in Doe Clan, had a meeting with Zuzohn Clan and claimed that a portion of Sellodyu Town is inside Zuzohn Clan on the map and that issue was not settled. Also, the people of Sellodyu surveyed their section in the absence of Zuzohn, therefore the dispute was not settled.

County	CSI Community	Status of Boundary Disputes
		<p>The boundary between Dyuwolo Town in Zuzohn Clan and New Town in Doe Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Baryo Village in Zuzohn Clan and Zaye Town in Doe Clan has dispute.</p> <p>The boundary between Gboneesuah in Zuzohn Clan and Kpenyan Town in Blalah Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Gboneesuah in Zuzohn Clan and Jawo Town in Blalah Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Baryo Village in Zuzohn Clan and Zaye Town in Doe Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Sawkpo Town in Zuzohn Clan and Paywein in Gee Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Sawkpo in Zuzohn Clan and Bon Town in Gee Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Sawkpo Town in Zuzohn Clan and File Town in Gee Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Gaybeon Village in Zuzohn Clan and Mat House has dispute.</p> <p>The boundary between Luther Village in Zuzohn Clan and Gbue Town in Lloydsville is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Behzohn in Zuzohn Clan and Buawein in Marblee Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Gborgar Town in Zuzohn Clan and Whoegahn Town in Champ Clan is disputed.</p>
	Gogowein	<p>The boundary between Jerome Town in Gogowein Clan and Vogar Town in Marblee Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Kaiyuway in Gogowein Clan and Jozohn in Marblee Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Kaiyuway in Gogowein Clan and Sipaylay is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Tomkpalay in Gogowein Clan and Keh Town in Karblee Clan is disputed.</p> <p>The boundary between Sawbee in Gogowein Clan and Gbongwlee in Marblee Clan is disputed.</p>

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