



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

**Rural Economic Transformation Project
RETRAP (P175263)**

Terms of Reference (TOR)

For County Level Facilitators

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A. Introduction

Agriculture is the mainstay of Liberia's economy and the key driver of food and nutrition security: The agriculture sector still dominates the non-oil sectors, consistently accounting for 75 percent of non-oil exports. Due to the increasing contribution of the Service Sector and continuous diversification of Liberia's economy, the agriculture sector's contribution to national GDP began to dwindle. Although 70 percent of Liberia's population, most of whom lived in the rural areas are poor but continue to engage in some aspect of agricultural production, their contribution to GDP declined from 38.8 percent in 2010 to 27.3 percent in 2019. The total volume of employment in agriculture has declined from 57.44 percent in 1995 to 43.27 percent in 2019 even though most Liberians are still proportionately engaged in agriculture... In a country where more than 70% of the population involved in farming, are using outdated technology and techniques. Based on the foregoing, the development of the country's agricultural sector requires a continuous infusion of modern agricultural-related bio technologies and evidence-based farming techniques to achieve recognizable economic growth.

1 Background of the Project

The Ministry, recently announced a three-year strategic plan for the Agriculture sector which includes updating the ministry's programs to meet current realities, operationalizing the sector's approved acts, including seeds, food safety, fertilizer, and validating the national rice development strategy. The Pro-poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development PAPP recognizes the need for increased production and processing diversification in agriculture, supported by large-scale public investment projects and higher private investment mobilization, encouraged by institutional realignment of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) on improving the ease of doing business in Liberia's agriculture space.

In the current COVID-19 pandemic context, agriculture is the only sector that is projected to grow in 2022, though in a much less than anticipated size and volume. Indeed, COVID-19 and its control measures are likely to severely affect Liberia's functioning and food systems, both on the producer and consumer sides of the economy. This is mainly due to COVID-19-induced temporary shut-down of markets, unavoidable shortage of workforce, the unprecedented disruption of transport systems, and an overwhelming halting and slowing-down of cross-border flows. Other measures such as mass quarantines, temporary isolations, restriction of movements, and social distancing will also affect the functioning of the food systems. The disruption of agri-food value chain operations is felt by producers, transformers, and consumers alike. The disruption or slowdown of economic activity is expected to affect incomes, especially for the poor who rely on labor and also for farmers and rural dwellers who have been previously cash-strapped. Price effects might be expected as a result of (a) farmers unable to sell produce because of a now sluggish supply chains and (b) consumers facing high prices correspondingly to the same supply chain problems. These new challenges will also result in massive disruption

in the supply chain, lack of production inputs, low price of agricultural produces, and lack of policy support to cope with loss and damages.

1.1 Project Context

RETRAP project is designed to create Agro-Poles (Growth-Poles) for the promotion of efficient and effective functioning of the (project targeted) agricultural value chains (Cassava, Rubber, Poultry and Piggery interspersed with vegetables). The establishment of agro-poles requires full knowledge of the value chain in terms of the following: high competitiveness, high economic values, high growth potential, zone of high growth and development potential, interest of community and people, improved accessibility (easy and free movement of goods and people), availability of the basic natural resources (land, water, energy, etc.) to support industrialization. An Agro-pole is industrialization of a unique environment or locality based on a specific value chain with the above attributes. It begins with a vibrant system of economic value-addition (for example, a factory) to the crop or livestock central to the Agro-pole. The presence and effectiveness of the processing facilities will attract related production and service providing agribusinesses to function around the main processor. Eventually they become the lifeline of the main processor.

RETRAP project addresses significant challenges to developing agri-food value chains within Liberia, including: (i) poor organization of smallholder farmers and support institutions; (ii) low productivity due to limited access to improved technologies, and modern inputs; (iii) weak access to markets due to inadequate post-harvest, transport, and market infrastructure; and (iv) limited processing capacity and value-added activities. The project's approach is based on three major considerations. (i)The first consideration is to target value chains with high growth potential in an integrated way. (ii)The second consideration is to concentrate investments in high-potential areas within the project zone to address binding constraints, achieve greater economies of scale, and eventually crowd-in economic activities. Considering the key role women and youth play in all segments of the value chains. (iii) the third principle ensures that the project addresses gender gaps.

The priority value chains to be supported under the project include cassava, rubber, and poultry/piggery: The Project will target three priority production systems considered strategic both for food security/national supply and for their comparative advantage on the regional markets. The targeted value chains will be those that maximize the economic returns of Project investments and their impact on rural incomes and job creation. These VCs are Rubber Cassava, and poultry (broilers and eggs)/piggery. Besides to create income-generating activities and improved nutrition at the household level, particularly geared towards women and youth, the home garden will also be supported. For each of these value chains, the Project will focus on the main production zones in each participating Counties. The value chains selected for support under the project are based on a sector scan that prioritized rice, oil palm, horticulture, cocoa, rubber, cassava, poultry

and pig husbandry on a range of development impact and investor potential criteria, including job and income opportunities. Rice, oil palm, and horticulture are currently supported ongoing World Bank funded Smallholder Agriculture Transformation and Agribusiness Revitalization Project (STAR-P) project. The government has provided guidance on the choice of Rubber Cassava, and poultry value chains under RETRAP based on demonstrated potential for development impact, ease of implementation, and attractiveness for private sector investment.

1.2 Project Description

The Project is expected to operate in 10 **out of the 15 Counties of Liberia**: (i) *Group 1*: covering Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Grand Bassa, Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh and Maryland with comparative advantage for the production of cassava; (ii) *Group 2*: covering the Counties of Montserrado, Nimba, Bong, Margibi, Bomi, Sinoe and Maryland for rubber production (iii) *Group 3*: covering the Regions of Grand Cape Mount, Bomi, Montserrado, Bong and Margibi for poultry/piggery production. All the counties will participate in the home gardening activities. These Counties are all important rubber-producing areas and the proposed project will provide diversification options for rubber-producing households. The final selection of the project's key consumption centers and supplying areas will be determined during detailed project preparation in consultation with key stakeholders. RETRAP intends to begin with support for the creation of agro-poles for the three (3) project targeted value chains. Two agro-poles will be created for cassava at strategic locations (cassava hubs) within the cassava zone or belt; two for rubber at strategic locations (rubber hubs) within the rubber zone or belt; and two for poultry & Piggery at strategic locations (poultry & piggery hubs) within the livestock zones or belt.

1.2.1 Proposed Project Development Objective(s)

The project development objective is to increase the income of rural poor households through sustainable agricultural livelihood enhancements and improved rural access and market linkages in selected counties of Liberia.

RETRAP focuses on addressing critical market failures limiting the development of the cassava, rubber, and poultry and piggery value chains. The project would reach its objectives of increasing the income of rural poor households through accelerated agribusiness promotion and development for sustainable agricultural livelihood enhancements and improved rural access and agricultural marketing infrastructure services through a business climate lens. Adaptation approaches and mitigation measures will be applied for cassava, rubber, and poultry/piggery production to enhance the climate resiliency of production and to minimize climate risks.

1.3 The PDO will be achieved through the following five components:

COMPONENT 1: IMPROVING THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR AGRIBUSINESS

The objective of Component 1 is to improve the enabling environment for agribusiness development in Liberia. This objective will be achieved through the following interventions: (i) building the capacity of public agribusiness services to deliver quality services to private investors, including smallholder farmers; (ii) enhancing value chain coordination and public-private dialogue; and (iii) supporting agricultural research and development (R&D) and extension. This component will finance specialized technical assistance, training, works, goods, consulting and non-consulting services, and operational expenses, as detailed below.

Improving public agribusiness services. This intervention aims at enhancing the capacity of selected public services that are critical for enabling agribusiness, principally within MoA and the Cooperative Development Agency (CDA). The project will undertake a functional review of these entities and recommend/implement appropriate solutions for improving the quality of their agribusiness services. The focus will be on strategies and solutions for: (i) enhancing entrepreneurship development in agribusiness and promoting private investments in the sector (with a focus on women and youth entrepreneurship); in particular the project will support key activities towards the functioning of an Agribusiness Growth Delivery Unit (AGDU) that is being established as an agribusiness strategy incubator and strategic advisory arm of MoA; (ii) improving governance and partnerships across the selected value chains, and collaboration among agribusiness development programs/projects in the country; and (iii) enhancing the resilience of the food system through the dissemination of climate-smart practices. In addition, MoA will receive support—technical assistance, training, and equipment—to operationalize approved national acts, regulations, and strategies related to seed, food safety, pesticides, fertilizer, and national rice development, and to update and enforce agri-food standards. In implementing these activities, the project will work closely with STAR-P to develop an agriculture database to support monitoring, research, policy making, and the allocation of resources by counties. The system will ensure that farmers, allied institutions of MoA—for instance, the Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI) and National Standards Laboratory (NSL)—and private sector partners have a shared platform for to access data, share knowledge, and to obtain advisory and financial services. This activity will also include the financing of a training program for MoA (and agencies associated in project implementation) on impacts of climate change, knowledge, and advisory support for adoption of climate smart agriculture practices and technologies.

Enhancing value chain coordination and public-private dialogue. For targeted value-chains, the Project will: (i) conduct a stakeholder mapping exercise as the basis to put in place a representative and inclusive Private Public Dialogue (PPD) mechanism; this mapping will also considers climate change actors/agencies which would benefit from a focused trained on impacts of climate change on value-changes and mitigation/adaptive

measures; (ii) support the establishment and operation of this mechanism, including training of main stakeholders on its effective use to improve the performance of the value-chains; and (iii) support increased consultations among the value chain stakeholders, through inter alia regular forums to discuss the various constraints of their sub-sectors, review and update the government strategies, develop a shared vision and harmonized approach to minimize potential conflict, devise mechanisms for coordinating donor assistance and creating an enabling environment for private and public investments. Under this intervention, the project will also finance capacity-building for FBOs involved in targeted value-chains. These organizations will receive general support regarding *inter alia* training in group dynamics to promote good governance (including women representation in FBOs management positions), assistance for strategic planning, business management and enterprise development, M&E and marketing intelligence. This will be achieved through provision of technical assistance (long term as well as short term specialized expertise), training support and organization of forums and exchange visits. Finally, for both the PPD and FBOs activities, training will be provided to mainstream climate change in FBOs development strategies; including on options to promote climate smart value chains through the assessment of major climate risks and their impacts on the selected value chains and the development of associated climate smart adaptation strategies.

Support to agricultural R&D and extension. The Project will strengthen the capacities of the Department of Regional Development, Research and Extension (DRDRE) of the MoA to carry out its mandates. Support will be provided to: (i) facilitate linkages between extension and research system through information sharing and production of joint periodic bulletin; a main focus would be on climate-smart practices and technologies; (ii) promote the use of e-extension services; (iii) integrate the delivery of nutritional information into the extension advice package; (iv) train County Level Facilitators (CLF) on extension guidelines; these guidelines will incorporate climate change related risks and impacts on agriculture and ways to address them; (v) develop or introduce and adapt climate-smart technologies and practices to enhance resilience at county level; and (vi) strengthen seed multiplication capacity (improved and drought-resistant seeds). In addition, the project will support the Central Agricultural Research Institute - Soil and Crop Laboratory (CARI), and National Standards Laboratory of Liberia (NSL) to identify and implement specific demand-driven knowledge and innovative research and testing equipment. CARI and other tertiary agriculture universities will be supported to develop and maintain linkages with regional agricultural innovation and R&D systems to benefit from technologies developed in countries with similar agro-ecological systems (i.e., Ghana and Nigeria) under regional and country programs. For the implementation of these activities, the project will finance: (a) contracting with third parties in providing specialized services; (b) minor civil works for CARI and NSL office renovations; (c) vehicles, goods, and equipment for the CARI, NSL and DRDRE to perform their project-related functions including external training; (d) logistics support to private advisory service providers and CLF; and (e) limited operating costs for the CARI, NSL and DRDRE.

COMPONENT 2: ENHANCING COMPETITIVENESS AND MARKET ACCESS THROUGH PRODUCTIVE ALLIANCES

The objective of Component 2 is to support smallholders and commercially oriented farmers to improve their capacity, operate competitively in the selected value chains, and establish more reliable linkages with buyers. In doing so, the project will adopt the Productive Alliance approach described previously (see also Annex 1 for further details). It will also emphasize the inclusion of women and the enhancement of their role throughout the targeted value-chains from production to processing and marketing (see Annex 5: Gender Action Plan). Emphasis will be placed on facilitating their access to appropriate training and finance.

Considering the capacity constraints of financial institutions and experience with credit lines in Liberia (for example, under STAR-P), the proposed project will use matching grants as the main financing instrument for productive investment subprojects. Best practices will be applied in managing the matching grant fund, including a staged selection process adhering to strict conditions and criteria, an independent investment committee, and use of a professional fund manager to manage operations.

COMPONENT 3: AGRICULTURE AND ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

The objective of this component is to improve access to markets through the rehabilitation of existing roads, construction of short-span critical cross-drainage structures, and modernization of selected agri-markets. The component is designed to improve infrastructure along a major corridor (Tappita–Zwedru road)¹ to unlock productivity in the agricultural sector and provide logistics support to the private sector. Component 3 is integrated with the government’s larger national road and transportation agenda, which is intended to reduce transportation costs, improve communications, and increase the commercial viability of agriculture. The expected outcomes of investments under Component 3 are reductions in post-harvest losses and marketing costs, closer links between producers and buyers, and increased competitiveness of domestic producers supplying food products to major consumption centers.

COMPONENT 4: PROJECT COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT AND CONTINGENCY EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The aim of this component is twofold: (i) establishing appropriate coordination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and communication regarding project implementation; and (ii) ensuring that GoL is better equipped to respond to crises and emergencies.

¹ The Ganta–Tappita road, extending almost halfway to Zwedru, is being financed under SECRAMP as follows: GoL is financing the 39-km Ganta–Saglepie stretch, and the World Bank and LRTF are financing the 61-km Saglepie–Tappita stretch. AfDB is financing the paving of the stretch from Zwedru to the southern border with Côte d’Ivoire. A gap of about 85 km is still under discussion for financing by donors in the next round of allocations.

1.4 Overview of this Requirement

The RETRAP will hire 30 county Facilitators for the 10 project counties. They will be given short-term training in and out of Liberia in various disciplines, and will assist in carrying out project activities in the field.

1.5 Scope of Work

The 30 Facilitators will perform the following tasks under the supervision of the Project Agronomist and Deputy Project Coordinator:

- a) Work directly with the FBOs and other potential beneficiaries in helping them overcome barriers deriving from lack of knowledge or insufficient cooperation among groups;
- b) Identify climate change related risks and impacts;
- c) Develop and implement climate change risks and impacts mitigation plan
- d) Support farmers to adapt climate-smart agriculture practices
- e) Sensitize farmers on the need for technical and extension advisory services
- f) Link farmers to improved farming technologies/techniques through collaboration with CARI
- g) Facilitate the preparation of Business Plans (BPs) for farmers' groups (FBOs)
- h) Facilitate the preparation of Subproject proposals for farmers' groups (FBOs) and their participating partners
- i) Train the FBOs in financial literacy, adoption of new technologies, managerial skills, and establishment of market linkages
- j) Perform feasibility studies on production/business development and provide technical supervision with the participation of the farmers' groups (FBOs)

1.6 Key Deliverables

- The county level facilitator will collect data on farmers field days, exchange visits, farmers field school, study tours, mass media and ICT-based outreach channels, information and knowledge sharing events, such as exhibitions, workshops, conferences, on-farm use of new technology. These include obtaining information on improved seeds, seedlings, livestock, poultry, fertilizer, agro-chemicals, agricultural equipment and farm machinery.
- They will also collect data on commercial facilities/markets constructed/rehabilitated, the number of PPD organizations and FBOs receiving technical assistance or training from the project
- They will make quarterly reports using the project templates to the Project Agronomist for onward submission to the Deputy Project Coordinator for review, acceptable and action.

1.7 Qualification and Experience

The County Level Facilitator must hold a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture Science Agribusiness, Economics, Business Administration or other related field from a recognized

institution of higher learning. He / She must have at least two (2) years of professional experience in business proposal development, strong organizational skill, entrepreneurship, an effective oral and written communication skills, able to lead and coordinate a diverse group of people. He/ She must be a Liberian citizen. The Candidate must be computer literate with proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Ability to ride a motorbike is an added advantage.

1.8 Reporting, Supervision and Performance Evaluation

- The Facilitator will report to their Supervisor with direct oversight by the head of the technical team.
- He/ She will work closely with the Deputy Project Coordinator with support from the Technical team;
- Performance will be evaluated by the Deputy Project Coordinator, in consultation with the National Program Coordinator

1.9 Facilities, Data and information to be provided by the Client

The RETRAP will provide offices for the Facilitators in their assigned project counties and provide communications (modems and scratch cards) for field work. Each Facilitator will be given a laptop for office use.

1.10 Duration of this assignment

The consultancy intended to hire 30 Facilitators who will be trained and later assigned in to within RETRAP project counties will have the duration of **two (2) years**.