



**New Partnership for
Africa's Development (NEPAD)
Comprehensive Africa Agriculture
Development Programme (CAADP)**



**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations
Investment Centre Division**

GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

SUPPORT TO NEPAD–CAADP IMPLEMENTATION

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Volume I of IV

**NATIONAL MEDIUM TERM INVESTMENT PROGRAMME
(NMTIP)**

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LIBERIA: Support to NEPAD–CAADP Implementation

Volume I: National Medium–Term Investment Programme (NMTIP)

Bankable Investment Project Profiles (BIPPs)

Volume II: Project for Inland Swamp Rehabilitation and Development

Volume III: Project for Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Development

**Volume IV: Project for Market–oriented Agroforestry and Tree Crops
Production Systems**

LIBERIA

NEPAD–CAADP National Medium–Term Investment Programme (NMTIP)

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Currency Equivalents

(September 2006)

Local Currency	=	Liberian dollar (L\$)
US\$1.00	=	L\$59.50
L\$100	=	US\$1.68

Abbreviations

ACDB	Agricultural Cooperative and Development Bank
ADB	African Development Bank
ARGM	African Rice Gall Midge
AU	African Union
BADEA	Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa
BIPP	Bankable Investment Project Profile
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CARI	Central Agricultural Research Institute
CDA	Cooperative Development Agency
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDA	Forestry Development Authority
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GEMAP	Governance Economic Management Action Plan
GOL	Government of Liberia
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ICRAF	World Agroforestry Centre
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LCCC	Liberian Cocoa and Coffee Corporation
LPMC	Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation
LPPC	Liberian Palm Products Corporation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOCI	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MORD	Ministry of Rural Development
MTEF	Medium–Term Economic Framework
NARD	National Agenda for Reconstruction and Development
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa’s Development
NGO	Non–governmental Organizations
NMTIP	National Medium–Term Investment Programme
NTGL	National Transitional Government of Liberia
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RFTF	Results Focused Transitional Framework
TCP	FAO Technical Cooperation Programme

ULCAF	University of Liberia, College of Agriculture and Forestry
UNCCA	United Nations Common Country Assessment
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WARDA	Africa Rice Center
WB	World Bank

Preface

*In an effort to halt and reverse the decline of the agricultural sector in the continent, the African ministers for agriculture unanimously adopted, at the 22nd FAO Regional Conference for Africa, held on 8 February 2002 in Cairo, a resolution laying down key steps to be taken in relation to agriculture in the framework of the **New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)**. As a follow–up to this resolution, they endorsed, on 9 June, 2002, the **NEPAD Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)**. The recent **Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa**, ratified by the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government during its Second Ordinary Session, held in Maputo between 10 and 11 July 2003, provided strong political support to the CAADP. During this session, the Heads of State and Government agreed to adopt sound policies for agricultural and rural development, and committed themselves to allocating at least 10 percent of national budgetary resources for their implementation within five years.*

*The CAADP provides an integrated framework of development priorities aimed at restoring agricultural growth, rural development and food security in the African region. In its very essence, it seeks to implement the key recommendations on food security, poverty reduction and sustainable use of natural resources, made at recent global conferences. The CAADP comprises **five pillars**:¹*

- 1. Expansion of the area under sustainable land management and reliable water control systems.*
- 2. Improvement of rural infrastructure and trade–related capacities for improved market access.*
- 3. Enhancement of food supply and reduction of hunger.*
- 4. Development of agricultural research, technological dissemination and adoption to sustain long–term productivity growth.*
- 5. Sustainable development of livestock, fisheries and forestry resources.*

As an immediate follow–up to the Maputo Declaration, representatives of 18 African ministries for agriculture from member countries of the NEPAD Implementation Committee, the NEPAD Steering Committee, the African Development Bank, the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Food Programme, FAO and civil society, participated in a meeting held in Rome on 17 September 2003, in order to discuss the implementation of the CAADP, and more specifically the:

- Methodology for the review/update of the **national long–term food security and agricultural development strategies**.*
- Preparation of **National Medium–Term Investment Programmes (NMTIPs)**.*
- Formulation of the related “**Bankable Investment Project Profiles**” (**BIPPs**).*

*It is within this context that the Government of Liberia, in an effort to reinforce its interventions aimed at fighting poverty and food insecurity, has requested FAO to assist in preparing a **NMTIP** and a **portfolio of BIPPs**, with the aim to:*

- create an environment favourable to improved competitiveness of the agricultural and rural sector;*

¹ Pillar 5 was initially not part of CAADP, but has been added in recognition of the importance of the sub–sectors.

- *achieve quantitative objectives and mobilize resources to the extent needed for the associated investment in agriculture;*
- *achieve the targeted allocation of national budgetary resources to this area, reflecting the commitment made in the Maputo Declaration; and*
- *create a framework for coordinated bilateral and multilateral financing of the sector.*

*Liberia's development policy on the rural sector in general and the agricultural sector in particular is still under formulation. Hence the present NMTIP is based on consultation with the government, particularly the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and on initial policy statements. In its Statement of Policy Intent for Agriculture, the government has unambiguously indicated its commitment to poverty reduction and rural development. Such policy orientation is expected to direct the formulation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) whose preparation is just starting. The overall goal of the PRSP will be the achievement of a sustainable poverty reduction through empowerment of the poor. The strategy is expected to focus on: (i) sustainable pro-poor economic growth; (ii) human capital development; (iii) improving the quality of life for the most vulnerable; and (iv) good governance. The NMTIP is intended to contribute to the poverty reduction strategy, and was prepared by a team of consultants², under the overall supervision of the National Project Coordinator/NEPAD focal point in MOA. The team was assisted by experts from the FAO Investment Centre Division³ while the Office of the FAO Representative provided crucial administrative support. In the process of preparing this document, participation was sought from major stakeholders from government, development partners, farmer's organisations, private sector and civil society. Key to the finalization of the NMTIP was the **National Stakeholder Workshop**⁴ held on 18 May 2006, during which a draft of this document was discussed and validated, and project ideas for the BIPPs prioritized, based on agreed-upon selection criteria. Three of these were further developed into BIPPs that are presented in a separate document.⁵ Lastly, the NMTIP and the BIPPs were reviewed by an FAO Virtual Task Force of technical experts.*

This document starts with a brief description of Liberia's agricultural sector in the context of the country's economy and poverty and food security situation. This is followed by a review of national and development partner strategies and programmes, lessons learned, and an analysis of the principal constraints to, as well as opportunities for, the development of the sector. Based on this analysis and taking into account existing government strategies and the five pillars of CAADP, priority areas for investment have been identified. Finally, an attempt has been made to estimate the financing gap in terms of additional resources that would be required to meet the target of allocating 10 percent of national budget to the sector within five years, and a proposal put forward for monitoring and evaluation of the NMTIP implementation.

² Consultants consisted of: Jallah M. Kennedy (Lead consultant, agricultural economist), Franklin A. Henries (Tree crops specialist), Yevewuo Subah (Fisheries specialist) and Paul Jallah (Agriculturalist).

³ FAO Investment Centre: Josep Gari, TCIW.

⁴ See Annex 3, Stakeholder Workshop on NMTIP.

⁵ For the purposes of the present exercise, "*Bankable Investment Project Profiles*" are defined as documents elaborated in a format and with the information that could make them favourably considered by the financial institutions, donors and private investors foreseen in the Maputo Declaration. These documents should enable cooperating partners to make preliminary indications of interest, and of approximate level of funding commitment. Further feasibility analysis and subsequent processing through the concerned partner(s) regular project formulation systems would follow to obtain a project/programme proposal elaborated to the feasibility study level.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Economy

I.1. Fourteen years of civil war, which ended in 2003, have seriously disrupted the Liberian economy leading to an overall impoverishment of the country. According to the United Nations Consolidated Appeal Process document for 2006, the number of people living on less than US\$1 per day amounted to 76 percent of the population, which is a significant increase from the 1997/98 estimates of 55 percent. The magnitude of this problem is further highlighted by the large number of people who survive on less than US\$2 per day — put at more than 90 percent of the population. Unemployment level in the formal sector is also excessive, estimated at about 85 percent. All these factors have resulted in a serious economic hardship. Malnutrition, high incidence of diseases and poor sanitation and hygiene has negatively affected the living conditions of the population in general, and that of the vulnerable groups in particular. The large majority of the poor are found in the rural areas, where basic services and infrastructure are limited, and the people are forced to rely primarily on subsistence agriculture. This means that a major impact on poverty reduction can only be made if problems affecting the rural areas are addressed as a matter of priority.

I.2. In the 1960s, the Liberian economy was at the level of many European and Asian countries, but is currently one of the poorest economies in the world. It presently operates at about one third of its pre-war level, with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$500m. The performance of key growth sectors is extremely low, reflecting the effect of the protracted war. Agricultural production had collapsed following the abandonment of farms due to the flight of tens of thousands of farm families. Other important economic sectors have also deteriorated markedly or reduced to nothing. For instance, the tertiary sector declined from about 50 percent share of GDP in 1988 to about 17 percent in 2004; and, over the same period, the mining sector simply shrunk from 12 percent to almost nothing, as it recorded only less than 0.01 percent of GDP. Owing to the increased humanitarian assistance, the economy has now witnessed a 20 percent growth since the end of the conflict in 2003, but the major economic sectors have yet to be revitalized in order to be able to contribute to the national economy.

I.3. The current account balance of payments is constrained by a huge negative trade. In 2005, exports accounted for only US\$110m, against total imports of about US\$295m (Annex 1, Table 1). Besides the war, the United Nations' bans on diamond and timber exports, as well as the low level of institutional and managerial capacity, were responsible for the economic collapse.

I.4. In spite of the economic decline and the civil war, however, inflation rates were relatively modest for a country that is just coming out of war, being around 12 percent for the years 2001–03. But, the exchange rate has experienced some volatility in 2003, reaching L\$73 to US\$1 in January, but falling to about L\$50 towards the end of the year. The exchange rate has fluctuated between L\$55 and L\$57 to US\$1 in the last few years. The decline of the economy has also exacerbated the public debt position of the country, now estimated at about US\$3.7 billion. Such state of indebtedness is by far beyond any sustainable management level particularly by a country that is saddled by major economic and social difficulties. Hence, the country is seriously in arrears with many lenders and development partners. Although future revenue collection is expected to be boosted once adequate institutional and administrative systems are put in place and the economy and trade improve, present collection levels are dismal, being estimated at about US\$80m per annum. This amount is only a small fraction of the resources required to jump-start the national economy, let alone to service public debt. The management of such debt will be a crucial issue for future investment levels in the economy.

B. The Agricultural and Rural Sector

(i) Contribution to the Economy

I.5. The agricultural sector, including forestry and fisheries, is the backbone of the national economy. In addition to supplying food to the people, agriculture has traditionally earned considerable foreign exchange resources through the exports of timber and commercial crops such as rubber, coffee and cocoa. Agriculture is also most important in terms of employment, rural livelihoods and food security. However, its contribution to national economic growth had been limited over the past years by structural constraints, inadequate policies and armed civil conflicts.

I.6. Prior to the civil war in 1987, the agriculture sector, contributed around 32.7 percent of GDP and provided employment for about 75 percent of the labour force. However, in the post-war period, the sector's share of GDP has risen, in spite of its overall deterioration. In fact, in 2004, total agricultural output (including fisheries and forestry) accounted for about 65 percent of GDP (Annex 1, Table 2). The reason for such anomaly is the drastic decline of other economic sectors, notably the mining and the tertiary sector. Otherwise, agriculture had continued to get worse during the war. For instance, the output of agriculture and forestry amounted to about US\$371m in 1987, but 10 years later in 1997 it dropped to about US\$228, in current price terms. The progression of agricultural and forestry GDP from 1987 to 1999 is shown in Annex 1, Table 3. Although there are no precise figures, the agricultural sector has started to grow in the last two years following the achievement of peace in the country.

(ii) Physical

I.7. Liberia has a total land area of approximately 9.8 million ha, of which 4.6 million ha is arable land (46 percent). Of the arable land, 4 million ha is upland while the remaining 600,000 ha is swampland. The country's pastureland is estimated at 182,000 ha. Before the civil conflict, some 634,000 ha (13.8% of total arable land) was cultivated, mainly under rice⁶ and cassava⁷, two main staple food crops. At present, it is estimated that annually cultivated is less than 5 percent of the arable land.

I.8. Liberia's agro-ecology contains four zones: the coastal plains, the hill zone, mountain and plateau regions, and the northern highland zone. The vegetation consists of forest and woodland (39%), arable land (about 36%) and pastures (2%). Due to increased farming and acceleration of timber exploitation, the forest vegetation is rapidly changing to savannah woodland.

I.9. The climate is of monsoon type humid tropical with two distinct seasons – a rainy season from mid April to late October and a dry season from mid November to mid April. Average annual rainfall along the coastal belt is about 5,000 mm and declines to 1,300 mm at the forest-savannah boundary in the north. Unpredictable flooding during the rainy season, as well as drought spells during the prolonged dry season pose some challenges for water management in the lowland and upland ecologies. Of the country's total surface irrigation potential, estimated at 600,000 ha, the area under controlled water management in 1978 was about 20,100 ha (3.3 percent). Relative humidity is high all year round, especially in the coastal areas where average humidity is about 90 percent. However, there is a wide variation in the interior, ranging from 20 percent during harmattan period, characterised by strong dust-laden winds, to over 90 percent during the rainy season.

⁶ Rice average production data for 2005: 0.4 tons/ha, 0.6 ha/family, 0.24 tons/family

⁷ Cassava average production data for 2005: 6 tons/ha, 0.3 ha/family, 1.8 tons/family (Source: Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission for Liberia, 2006)

(iii) Structure of Sector

I.10. Four production systems characterize Liberian agriculture: (i) foreign commercial plantations producing perennial export crops, mainly rubber and palm oil; (ii) state owned plantations run by the Liberian Palm Products Corporation (LPPC) and the Liberian Cocoa and Coffee Corporation (LCCC); (iii) domestically owned, medium–sized commercial farms producing industrial crops for export and livestock for the local market; (iv) and small household farms using traditional production techniques with extremely limited use of modern inputs.

I.11. Traditional household farm is the predominant production system, based on family labour with average holdings of 1.5 ha. Output is largely consumed by household members and consists of food crops (rice, roots, tubers, and legumes), small livestock (chickens, goats, sheep and pigs) and small plots of export crops, mainly coffee and cocoa. Because of poor rural infrastructure, lack of access to improved technology and markets, Liberia lacks a dynamic smallholder sector in which farm households manage an integrated and diversified cash and food crop production system. Shifting cultivation on the uplands is still the main technique practiced by small farmers. This practice is justified by the need to restore soil fertility in what are generally poor, acid, heavily leached soils, but they are suitable for continuous cultivation of annual crops. Land tenure arrangements are based on tribal traditions which are well adapted to the bush fallow cropping system. Under the customary arrangements, land is allocated to the people by the local authorities under use right, rather than free holding. Such arrangements do often discourage major investors who may require long–term tenure security.

I.12. Agricultural production was adversely affected by the civil war in the 1990's. Productivity has declined and agricultural systems have been disruption due to the displacement of farming communities, breakdown of marketing systems, deficiencies in transport and processing facilities, insecurity, lack of farming inputs in the areas of displacement and socio–economic dislocation.

I.13. The tree crops sector, which includes rubber, cocoa, coffee and oil palm, constitute the major export crops in Liberia. At present, yields are low due to lack of maintenance of the plantations, market access and marketing schemes. In addition, the forestry sector with its great potential and capacity to generate revenue is inactive due to the imposition of sanctions on log export by the United Nations.

I.14. The livestock industry (poultry, goats, sheep, pigs and cattle) was thriving at subsistence and commercial levels before the war and was producing about 60 percent of the country's meat requirements, mainly beef. The protracted civil war has almost wiped out the livestock industry, and the people are now dependant mainly on bush meat and highly priced imports. Beef cattle rearing are predominantly carried out by herders along the coastal regions, where some pastureland exists. However, in the northern and most central parts of the country, goats and sheep rearing is common.

I.15. Fisheries play an important role especially in the economic life of the coastal population, consisting of 15,000 to 20,000 families, who use approximately about 2,500 boats on a full–time basis. About 60 percent of the total domestic fish catch is produced by the artisan fishers, especially along the coast. The pre–war estimated sustainable yield of the continental shelf of Liberia was about 180,000 tonnes per year and 40,000 tonnes per year from freshwater. Annual catch between 1996 and 1999 ranged between 5,000 and 9,000 tonnes. A research survey in 1986 indicated a total biomass of about 800,000 tonnes of pelagic and demersal species.

(iv) *Institutions*

I.16. *The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)* is the central policy–making body of government, and is responsible for promoting agricultural development and regulating the sector. It proposes to achieve its development objectives by focusing on applied research and extension services. MOA headquarters is organized into four major departments; Planning and Development, Research and Extension, Technical Services and the Department of Administration. At the field level, it discharges its responsibilities through five Regional Agricultural Offices, each headed by a Coordinator, assisted by County Agricultural Coordinators and County and Districts Agricultural Officers and Extension technicians.

I.17. *Central Agricultural Research Institute (CARI)* is the only research organization in the country that has been carrying out applied and adaptive research, covering food and tree crops, livestock, aquaculture and related areas. One of its shortcomings has been its inability to transfer new and improved technologies to farmers. Support from the central government to strengthen its capacity is limited, making it heavily dependent on external sources. During the crisis period, most of its facilities were destroyed, thereby diminishing its ability to function as a research entity. In order to sustain applied and adaptive agricultural research in Liberia, there will be a need for CARI to establish strong linkages with international research institutions such as WARDA, IRRI, IITA, etc. Such an arrangement could facilitate expansion of its research activities.

I.18. *The Ministry of Rural Development (MORD)* is the government agency with responsibilities to provide basic social and physical services such as feeder roads, improved sanitation and pipe borne water as means to improve livelihood of rural settings. Before the war, this agency was actively involved in providing services to the rural areas with the support of donors. It now appears that this Ministry may be merged with the Ministry of Public Works.

I.19. *The University of Liberia, College of Agriculture and Forestry (ULCAF)* is responsible for training individuals in agriculture and related disciplines as means to compliment the manpower needs of the Ministry of Agriculture and the agricultural sector at large. After the war, the laboratory and field/farm activities of the College have been reduced to minimal for lack of funds and equipment.

I.20. *The Cooperative Development Agency (CDA)* is the government agency responsible for facilitating and strengthening the organizational set–ups of cooperative societies throughout the country. In 1985, the agency had 135 registered cooperatives of which 41 were active. Information on the number of active cooperatives is now not readily available, but it is believed to have declined significantly after the war. Initiatives to revive the cooperative system are now under way.

I.21. *The Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation (LPMC)* is an agency of government that was created by an act of legislation in 1961, to become responsible for marketing Liberian produce (cocoa, coffee, palm kernel and palm products) and piassava. The Corporation is a parastatal organization, and has a monopoly over the purchase and export of coffee and cocoa. It is estimated that LPMC has not paid farmers some US\$3.5m for the produce it purchased in the past years. The corporation also owes a much larger amount of money to foreign buyers for not delivering the produce for which advance was received. At present LPMC has no capacity to procure locally, thus it has resorted to private traders by transferring its statutory mandate of local procurement of these commodities to the latter. The monopoly status of LPMC and the issue related to its insolvency should be addressed as a matter of urgency as it has a major bearing on the future development of the export crops.

I.22. *The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA)* has the responsibility for handling the overall coordination of Local Government administration in the country. It also promotes and encourages communal farming, particularly seed production, as means of ensuring food security.

I.23. *The Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI)* has the mandate to formulate, implement and review policies and legislations for small and medium enterprises, including agricultural–based processing enterprises. The ministry also has the function of coordinating investment promotion and product development as well as monitoring the overall performance of small and medium enterprises.

I.24. *The Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank (ACDB)* was established in 1978 and created by GOL through an act of legislation. Its main functions and responsibilities were to make available loans to farmers and their organizations in order to increase agricultural production. However, farmers were unable to maximize benefits from the bank as it was characterized by costly and complex lending procedures and a rigid loan security requirement in the form of tangible collateral, which most small farmers lacked. Presently, it is largely inactive and its system needs to be reviewed.

(v) *Financing*

I.25. Tracking government expenditure on the agricultural sector has proven difficult mainly for lack of accurate data, particularly during the civil war. However, it is generally recognized in the country that government financing to agriculture has been traditionally modest, in spite of its important contribution to GDP. This may suggest that the sector was taken for granted or that it commanded low government priority. For instance, the national budget allocation to MOA by the government that was in power during 1997 to 2002 has never exceeded 1 percent. This is certainly one of the reasons for the declining trend of the agriculture sector during this period. It can be argued that some expenditures through other ministries and agencies, such as the MORD and MIA, do make their way into rural development, but the portion of national budget dedicated to agricultural activities by these ministries was still insignificant.

I.26. Even after the end of the war, the agricultural budget prepared by the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), under the donor assisted programme known as the Results Focused Transitional Framework (RFTF) was modest. In addition, implementation of the budget by the NTGL was not carried out as planned, making the precise assessment of expenditures in the agricultural sector difficult to estimate. But it is generally believed that it was probably lower than planned. In any case, during the transitional period, out of the total pledge of US\$522m under the RFTF, to be used during 2004–2006, agriculture was allocated about US\$22m, equivalent to some 4 percent of the total. So far, however, only half of the allocation or 2 percent of the RFTF pledge has been spent, implying a poor implementation performance, given that the RFTF is about to be completed.

I.27. At present, the new government is operating on the basis of a short–term plan, known as “*the First 150 Days Plan*” that aims at tackling urgent matters related to peace and security, revitalizing the economy, rebuilding infrastructure, provision of basic services and strengthening both governance and the rule of law. The budget related to the 150 Days plan is essentially a restructured expenditure plan drawn from the RFTF. Real national budget preparation exercise has just begun with the installation of the government, and is expected to be dominated by recurrent expenditure, at least in the immediate future.

C. The Strategic Framework

(i) Government Objectives and Strategy

I.28. Liberia is just emerging from a prolonged civil war, and the new GOL, with the assistance of development partners, is in the process of formulating its development policy objectives and strategies. In the meantime, GOL has endorsed the programme known as Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme (GEMAP), prepared with the help of a number of development partners, and signed by the NTGL in September 2005. GEMAP is essentially meant to promote good governance with the assistance of international supervisors by weeding out any form of misuse of resources in key ministries and lucrative public concerns in the country for three years. The endorsement of GEMAP by the new government is seen as a clear signal of change of direction towards the pursuit of good governance–led administration, which is welcomed with hope and admiration by many domestic and foreign observers.

I.29. Currently, GOL is engaged in drawing up a plan of action for the next two to three years. This exercise will entail the finalization of a National Agenda for Reconstruction and Development (NARD) by the end of June 2006, thereby substituting RFTF, which was an agenda for the transitional period. After the preparation of NARD, a Medium–Term Economic Framework (MTEF) that would detail NARD in terms of activities and costs for the next two to three years would be completed by the end of August 2006. These action orientated documents would lead into the development of a full–fledged Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) for the medium to long–term, under the framework of which development partners could define their assistance. The preparation of the PRSP, with the necessary policy reforms, could pave the way for Liberia to qualify for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) programme.

I.30. As far as agriculture is concerned, some preliminary indications suggest that the sector would play a key role in the overall development of the country. Initial policy guidelines, mentioned in speeches of the Head of the State and in discussions with other policy makers, have shown government’s strong support to agricultural development. This is captured in a recently prepared document, “Statement of Policy Intent for Agriculture”, in which it is affirmed that “over the next six years the government intends to pursue a truly integrated rural development strategy with agriculture as the leading sector”. Given the country’s economic and social setting, where the bulk of the population lives in the rural areas under poverty, and the availability of a rich natural resource base, it appears logical to channel important resources to achieve growth in the agricultural sector. This would simultaneously help in reducing poverty and creating wealth for future investment in the national economy.

I.31. Cognizant of the fact that peace and stability are decisive conditions for growth and livelihoods, government’s preoccupation in this post–conflict era will focus on building confidence, particularly in the rural areas, revitalizing the productive sectors, especially agriculture, to improve the availability of food and generate income. Therefore, the short–term government’s first imperative is to resettle the thousands of people displaced by the conflict, most of who are farmers, re–integrate ex–combatants in their respective communities on a sustainable basis, and ensure food for all households. At the same time, the government intends to strengthen institutional, administrative and managerial capacities to ensure efficient implementation, supervision and monitoring of development programmes.

I.32. Preliminary agricultural policy guidelines indicate that the broad objectives in agriculture for the medium to long–term would be to increase agricultural production to improve food security and to restore the vital role of the sector as a driving force for economic development. At the core of this development policy orientation lays the transformation of the smallholder agriculture into a

sustainable, diversified, income–generating sector that is well integrated into markets. This policy objective also envisions the establishment of a vibrant commercial agriculture that is capable of providing adequate support and incentives to small farmers.

I.33. The commitment of the government to the development of the sector will be implemented through appropriate policy measures, institutional reforms and programs, and the promotion of agricultural production and productivity. These will include major food crops, fisheries, forestry and livestock to achieve sustained food security, increased domestic and sub–regional trade, increase production and export of cash crops for revenue generation, farm diversification, agro–processing, with emphasis on increasing domestic and foreign investment, and sustainable management of natural resources. Among other things, the achievement of such objectives will entail the re–orientation of research, extension and training, reforming agricultural institutions, developing productive capacity and supply chain, putting into place appropriate legal and regulatory framework.

(ii) *Major Partners Strategies*

I.34. In the past, many donors have supported the development of Liberia’s agricultural sector. Either they have been involved in institutional capacity building or some aspect of integrated agricultural development. All the support activities of the past have attempted one way or the other, to reverse the growing levels of poverty in the country. At the advent of the civil crisis and towards the transitional period, donors have generally adopted a low–key approach in supporting the sector, owing to the political situation and lack of confidence in the overall management of the national economy of that period. However, donors were committed to assisting in the resolution of the crises that normally emerge after the war by funding the RFTF.

I.35. With the ushering in of a new and democratically elected government, a more constructive relationship is emerging, and many donors are engaged in purposeful dialogue with the government. In spite of such positive stance, however, most of the donors have not come up with clear assistance strategy, very likely preferring to see GOL’s move in shaping up the economic, political and social framework under which it will operate. Because of this, it will be premature to discuss meaningfully the strategy of donor assistance at this stage. However, some observations concerning the orientation of certain donor assistance are discussed below based on general information available on this subject.

I.36. *Multi–lateral donors.* Some of these categories of donors are most directly interested with the resolution of the arrears, discussed above, before they come up with a clear assistance strategy. The World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are holding policy related discussions with GOL, and are keen to assist in mapping out the way forward on this subject. The current WB support to Liberia aims at reducing the emergency–induced stress, rather than at providing development aid. The latter is expected to follow after the issues related to the arrears are resolved. The Liberia programme of the WB has now a total of about US\$30m, mainly consisting of technical assistance in financial management and procurement, as well as carrying out studies in infrastructure improvement. Most relevant WB support to the rural areas comprise the development of medium–term forest reform and a community empowerment programme, where about 100 community–based project would be supported. The African Development Bank (ADB) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are also engaged in initial dialogue with GOL. These discussions are expected to result in outlining specific plans of action, by each development partner, in due course.

I.37. The United Nations agencies are currently assisting the government in dealing with the emergency situation in their respective areas of competence. They are also engaged in dialogue with GOL on how to approach and plan in facing the challenges in the different socio–economic sectors.

I.38. Within the agricultural sector, FAO is involved in the emergency programme aimed at installing the farming communities and helping them to start farming life again. It is also assisting GOL in the initial steps of formulating agricultural development policies and strategies namely the Statement of Policy Intent for Agriculture and Indicative Action Plan. Discussions are taking place with a view to providing support in the overall review of the agricultural sector. As its general assistance strategy, FAO proposes to provide the country with essential technical support that can enable it to address the major challenges. The recent FAO assistance in developing a surveillance system on Avian Influenza, and preparedness for its eventual prevention and control, is one example of such a strategy. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is involved in supporting some rural areas under its community–based recovery programme, working through the district authorities. UNDP is also one of the three coordinating bodies, together with the USAID and the World Bank, in the implementation framework of the RFTF, which is actually executed by the Ministry of Planning. However, its future development assistance is not yet spelled out since it is awaiting the completion of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

I.39. **Bilateral donors.** Most of the bilateral donors are financing the emergency programme, primarily through the specialized UN agencies or non–governmental organizations (NGOs), but have not come out with explicit assistance strategy. However, some have announced specific support to agricultural development. For instance, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany has approved a US\$13m to affect an integrated rural development project, taking the lead in this new dispensation.

I.40. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is the largest single bilateral donor in Liberia. In the past two years, it has been involved in providing crucial assistance under its community revitalization and reintegration strategic objective, which aimed at enhancing good governance and the peace process, as well as creating economic and social conditions for the reintegration of people within their communities and rehabilitating infrastructure. USAID has a great deal of experience in supporting Liberian agriculture, and intends to provide meaningful support to rural development. Although there are no details at this stage, USAID is expected to provide assistance in improved rural infrastructure, sustainable tree crop–based farming techniques and agro–forestry (to reduce the shifting cultivation–induced pressure), as well as in sustainable forest management.

I.41. Other important bilateral donors currently involved in relief efforts include Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, Ireland, Spain, France and Italy. The People’s Democratic Republic of China is also an important bilateral donor, and is currently involved in the supply of farm tools and equipment to farmers, and proposes to provide technical assistance by assigning specialized personnel to teach the Liberian farming communities. It also intends to facilitate Chinese private sector investment in the agricultural sector. Other traditionally important bilateral donors, such as the European Union, Japan and the United Kingdom, are supporting the emergency programme, but have not indicated their future involvement in agricultural development.

I.42. **Other donors.** A number of NGOs do also assist in the relief operations. The Catholic Church and other religious organizations provide significant resources to tackle the emergency situation.

(iii) Lessons Learned

I.43. Donors' assistance to the agricultural sector development since the 1990s has been influenced by conflict and social crises, and only a certain strata of the population has benefited. Areas targeted for assistance in the country were often decided on the basis of security concerns and accessibility. Hence, only areas cleared by security authorities gave rise to NGOs to intervene and provide the assistance needed to target population. Initially, aid mainly centred in the immediate south of the country (Montserrado County) and gradually spread to the central and northeast. The most marginalized areas were the northern and western as well as the south–eastern parts of the country. This calls for adopting a more balanced development approach, now that the security concerns have been reviewed.

I.44. Experience has shown that a successful small farmer development program does not only rest with the provision of factor inputs but the conduct of a thorough feasibility study of the area concerned, which should give practitioners the opportunity to plan appropriate programs that have the capacity to impact the lives of beneficiary farmers. Therefore, understanding the basic characteristics of a region in terms of its capacity and willingness to undertake development initiatives should be considered a pre–requisite in determining which program best suits a region. Ignoring these concerns in the past has resulted in the failure of many development projects.

I.45. Further, similar experience has also dictated that introducing new farming technologies aimed at increasing productivity of small farmer, may not be effective if existing local technologies are not taken into consideration or blended. Agricultural research, however limited in scope it has been, its subsequent results did not readily filter down to end users for the purpose of increasing production and incomes. If small farmers are to improve upon existing traditional farming practices, new and improved seeds and breeds of animals must be introduced to achieve such objective. In Liberia, many farmers are yet to be exposed to economically viable new crops and animals and advanced farming techniques. To improve this situation, research and extension must play a leading role in enhancing agricultural production through applied and participatory approaches.

I.46. Experience has also shown that, however assistance is provided to enhance small farmer development, this will be doomed if farmers do not have access to markets. Many areas in the country are excluded from development simply because of lack of access. Hence, the rural areas should be facilitated through all weather roads to enable farmers and traders to transport easily agricultural inputs and outputs. Poor access roads have hindered development of farmers due to high transportation costs and, or damage of delicate products. Provision of support services and modern production technology can succeed only if there is market availability in the context of an enabling policy environment.

I.47. Lack of financing, especially by small farmers, has been found as an important bottle neck in that it deprived farmers from using modern inputs or forced them to borrow at much higher costs from non–institutional sources. In previous times, the most familiar formal institution offering credit facilities was the ACDB, which provided loan schemes to farmers. ACDB developed complex lending procedures for loan applications, assessment and collateral requirements. The regulations were that only cooperative societies that had accounts with the ACDB would be qualified for loans, and the registrar of the Cooperative Development Agency (CDA) would be required to recommend a particular cooperative for a loan. Moreover, since it was thought that most cooperative societies were marketing cooperatives, loan approval was based on selling produce (mostly coffee and cocoa) to LPMC who would in turn send a Weigh Bill to ACDB for payment, and loans were to be repaid through deductions from sales income. At present, even these structures are, at best, largely

dysfunctional, calling for an establishment of a smallholder–friendly financing system, perhaps with the involvement of the communities and local authorities.

I.48. One of the shortcomings in Liberia has been the apparent absence of a well thought out agricultural development policy framework that provided clear objectives and priorities, that is understood and followed by all entities, including the donors. In order to have consistency in the approach of agricultural development, it is important to establish a mechanism that screens the conformity of development programmes to GOL development objectives and priorities. Such mechanism should also provide for a clear system for supervising, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes. Having a well understood development policy framework would also guide private investors as to their limits and opportunities for investments in the sector.

(iv) Project Pipeline

I.49. It is since January 2006 that the democratically elected government was officially in place, and its immediate tasks have been directed towards the establishment of the necessary institutional base for governing the country, as well as at tackling the emergency needs of the population. While these activities are still in progress, GOL is also preparing the ground for the formulation of medium to long–term development policies and strategies for the agricultural sector that will spearhead future investment programmes. Given this situation, it is premature to pinpoint at a definite development project pipeline at this instant, before the policy and strategic approach to agricultural sector development is finalized.

I.50. Up to now, most of GOL and donor activities in the agricultural sector are focused on emergency and rehabilitation of the rural areas, particularly at settling ex combatants and farming communities who had fled from their dwellings during the war. Some of the development activities that are being contemplated are road rehabilitation, including rural roads, with the assistance of donors. However, details are not yet readily available. Indicative correlation between possible GOL agricultural development programmes and projects and the five NEPAD–CAADP pillars are shown in Annex 2 of this document.

II. CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A. Weaknesses and Constraints

II.1. **Macro–economic difficulty.** The economy is under severe pressure from high public debt. During the second quarter of 2005, total public debt accounted for US\$3.7 billion, the bulk of which was of external origin. Compared with the second quarter of 2004, the debt stock increased by 6.8 percent or US\$234.5m. This means that the government is expected to face growing challenges in the next five years or more, depending on its ability to create a conducive and stable macroeconomic environment that will have the capacity to withstand shocks and provide opportunities for employment and the ability to satisfy wage demands. In addition, the existing ban on diamond and timber (mainly logs) exports is a major challenge facing the GOL, as this stifles government’s efforts in accelerating investment in its recovery programmes. Fortunately, it is widely believed in Liberia that the ban will be lifted after not very long time.

II.2. **Lack of rural infrastructure and market access.** Liberia’s road network consists of some 11,000 km, of which 94 percent is unpaved and under poor condition. Given the massive size of the unserviceable roads, it is likely that the level of coverage of feeder roads in the country will be inadequate

for a long while to come. In this case, the smooth flow of agricultural commodities to markets would be hindered, thus the emergence of an efficient trade network. The lack of a reliable and sustainable marketing structure will eventually discourage increased production, thereby reducing income options of small farmers as they are regarded as “price-takers”. In the past, the LPMC was in charge of buying and marketing goods produced through agricultural cooperative societies, but the system has broken down. At any rate, this arrangement was not satisfactory as farmers were not happy with the system, hence will certainly call for a thorough review by government, in order to define future roles and functions of such agencies in the context of GOL’s new policy objectives.

II.3. **Weak institutional and support services.** Like most institutions in the country, MOA has been weakened by the civil war. The ministry has lost a large number of its professional and technical staff both at headquarters and in the field. In addition to retirement, many staff have left MOA either to join NGOs and other institutions within the country, or to migrate, and their replacement has not been done adequately. MOA has also suffered from low allocation of budgetary resources, to the detriment of staff morale and the execution of normal ministerial support to farmers and mandated operations. The ministry has been essentially operating a budget that covers recurrent costs, with little or no capital expenditure on its staff and institutional development or on improving services to farmers. These problems need to be resolved if MOA is to become an agent of change and development in the rural areas.

II.4. Research and extension services have also been disrupted during the civil conflict, and at present these services are practically non-existent. Physical infrastructure and related research facilities have been looted or destroyed, and CARI is now basically non operational. Its present status is such that it will not be able to provide any support to the farming community, unless it is rehabilitated and strengthened through the provision of adequate staff, technical assistance, equipment and other facilities and operational funds.

II.5. Extension service, which was coordinated and subsequently provided under the auspices of MOA, was usually weak, due to the lack of trained manpower and logistics. Linkages between research and extension were also a traditionally acknowledged problem in the agricultural sector. Therefore, not only should an effective extension service be devised to support the rural areas, there must also exist an appropriate linkage between research and extension to maximize the output of these services. The continuous use of unimproved production methods, including the use of rudimentary tools by small farmers, is responsible for the low productivity levels. Therefore, research and extension should aim at addressing the key causes for low agricultural productivity and help farmers to adopt improved and sustainable production practices.

II.6. **Lack of agricultural finance.** At present, the financial sector is also experiencing hard times, and does not seem to be ready to provide credit to the agricultural sector at this stage. In any case, provision of credit to small farmers was not forthcoming even before the war. The only source of institutional credit for small farmers prior to the war was ACDB, in collaboration with the LPMC, and was designed to reach coffee and cocoa producers only, through the cooperative organizations. The bulk of the small farmers were thus excluded from obtaining institutional credit, as they could not furnish tangible assets to secure loans. Local traders who distribute inputs also require some sort of loan security, and often end up selling inputs at very high prices, to minimize their risks, making these least affordable for the small farmers. Lack of funding for purchasing inputs by most of the small producers will hinder them from adopting improving production technologies that may be recommended by research and extension services, when the latter will be strengthened.

II.7. **Soil fertility and land tenure system.** The following four types of soil are found in Liberia: Latosols of low to medium fertility occur in rolling hill country and cover about 75 percent of the total

land surface; shallow, coarse lithosols, in the hilly and rugged terrain, cover about 16 percent of the land; infertile regosols, or sandy soils, found along the coastal plains; and highly fertile alluvial soils representing only about 3 percent of the land area, now largely used for agriculture. Therefore, the bulk of the soils in the country will require appropriate soil management practices, including inputs and/or techniques, which are not readily available to the farmers.

II.8. Another limiting factor that interferes with modern agricultural development is the existing land tenure system. Land is generally available throughout the country, but the process of acquiring it for agricultural production appears cumbersome, especially for long–term investors, who may not be guaranteed a longer tenure. Therefore, one of GOL’s reform agenda priorities is to place security of land tenure to promote investment in production systems, enable vulnerable groups to access assets and encourage environmental sustainability.

II.9. *Limitations specific to small–scale fisheries.* Artisan marine fisheries is also facing difficulties due to many reasons, some of which are similar to that of small farmers viz., lack of market access, unimproved fishing practices, non availability of inputs and finance, as well as poor infrastructure. However, there are also specific issues related to marine fisheries. In particular two problems are prominent: a) over fishing and improper fishing in some of the coastal areas leading to environmental hazards; and b) conflict between commercial and artisanal fishers because of the encroachment by commercial vessels on the fishing ground of small–scale fishers, thereby damaging fishing gears of the latter. This situation calls for GOL to enable traditional fishers to fish away from the coast in the open sea, and to ensure that fishing regulations are enforced by all categories of fishers. Aquaculture development also suffers from poor support in terms of technology transfer and input supply, including the provision of quality fingerlings.

II.10. *Lack of reliable data base.* Non availability of updated agricultural information and data also pose problems by making agricultural planning risk–prone. It is difficult to access relevant data for planning, as all imaginable data was lost during the war periods. Besides, even if they were to be found, their use would be limited as they are obsolete and not reflecting present reality.

B. Strengths and Opportunities

II.11. *GOL commitment to creating a favourable socio–economic policy environment.* Such commitment, enhanced by actual peace and stability, is certainly one of the most important pre–requisites for development. The critical post–war situation of the country and the emergence of a new democratically elected government with positive policy orientation, are encouraging donors and the international community to support Liberia in different areas of development. Therefore, it is widely believed that Liberia will benefit from strong and sustained support from development partners as long as suitable socio–economic environment and good governance continue to prevail in the country.

II.12. *Availability of considerable natural resources.* Liberia has abundant arable land, suitable climate, forestry and marine resources and is richly endowed with rivers that can be used for irrigation and other purposes. Hence, with good development practices and efficient management, the country should be able to resolve the major issues related to poverty and food insecurity. At present, the country has competitive advantage on traditional tree crops such as cocoa, coffee and oil palm which are mainly exported. However, rice production is believed to be competitive only in the lowlands, but not in the uplands. Given that rice is a staple crop, future activities in research and extension should address the major issues related to rice in order to improve productivity.

II.13. Other crops such as cassava, groundnuts and vegetables are in general profitable commodities to producers. Since the country has the potential to produce a wide range of crops, eventual agricultural sector reviews should aim at examining prospects for crop diversification. Being located within a geographically food deficit region, Liberia should exploit this opportunity and plan to produce, competitively, commodities that can be exported in such countries.

II.14. The availability of a relatively large rural population should be considered as an important asset to agricultural sector as this will provide sufficient manpower to the sector. Furthermore, the poor status of the agricultural sector, characterized by low productivity, lends itself for major improvement through the use of modern technology. For agricultural development in Liberia to advance, there is a need for improving existing technologies that are capable of boosting the productivity of the large mass of subsistence farm families.

III. INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

A. The Strategy

III.1. In spite of the present constraints, there are good prospects for agricultural development in Liberia, provided that GOL takes a lead in creating suitable conditions for the private sector to operate. What would be considered a good and sustainable strategy on the part of the government is to devise a socio–economic policy framework that encourages the private sector to actively participate in the growth of agriculture through investment and application of their entrepreneurial imagination. In addition, GOL should endeavour to resolve the present difficulties of access to the rural areas and to deliver agricultural support services to farmers. Once these tasks are satisfactorily accomplished, they will be considered by the private sector as adequate investment incentives, inducing them to take part in the development of the sector.

III.2. Under such a scenario, it is clear that government’s role would be limited to providing policy and institutional support, as well as rehabilitating agricultural support services such as research and extension; hence leaving the entire production, processing and trade of inputs and outputs to the private sector. Issues such as agricultural finance, inputs distribution, soil fertility limitations and land tenure system, among others, should be fully addressed in an agricultural development policy instrument. In order to reverse the low productivity of small farmers, a concerted action that tackles the constraints mentioned above will be required, calling for major GOL resources to be directed to the agricultural sector to finance the development of the necessary infrastructure and services. This would be in line with the spirit of the Maputo Declaration on increasing investment to the agricultural sector. Introduction of effective land administration, land use and land management practices, should be integral parts of future agricultural production systems. In short, GOL should have a clear agenda for agricultural modernization in Liberia. To this end, the relevant agricultural institutions should be reorganized and strengthened in order to align them with the new development policies and priorities, as well as to enhance their implementation capacity qualitatively and quantitatively.

III.3. Upgrading agricultural institutions may require, at least in the short–run, technical assistance inputs aimed at assisting the government in capacity building through staff training and by expediting the implementation of development programmes. In particular, MOA should have a clear institutional and staff development programme for the short and long–term that is congruent with its future development plans. In order to obviate or minimize the loss of productive capacities in rural areas, GOL should also adopt a strategy that creates awareness of HIV/AIDS within the communities. Ideally, each development programme should incorporate HIV/AIDS awareness component. Parallel

to this, a gender and youth sensitive development goal should be pursued in the rural areas, especially with emphasis on empowering women, as they are the most dynamic constituent of the rural economy.

III.4. GOL strategy in agricultural production should focus on the crops for which the country has a demonstrated comparative advantage. Within this proviso, preference to high value crops should be privileged in order to improve farmers' income. Reduction of dependency on few traditional crops should also be pursued through a well thought out diversification programme. Research and extension services should be geared towards the attainment of these objectives.

B. The Programme

III.5. Against the above background, an agricultural development programme that supports the NEPAD–CAADP objectives has been formulated. This programme commenced in September 2005, where an awareness workshop on the concept of NEPAD–CAADP and on modus operandi was conducted. Following this workshop, MOA undertook an internal exercise aimed at prioritizing areas for agricultural development which became a major input in the work of a team of consultants who were entrusted to prepare a draft NMTIP for discussion in a national stakeholder workshop that was conducted on 18 May 2006. The national stakeholders' workshop discussed and endorsed a set of priority investment areas, and they all fall within one or more of the NEPAD–CAADP pillars. These priority areas reflect the national goals of reducing poverty and hunger, stimulating food production and enhancing the rural economy, and are randomly presented below:

- Rebuilding institutional capacities and agricultural support services;
- Improving rural infrastructure and market access;
- Support to inland swamp development;
- Improving micro–finance services in rural areas;
- Implementation of a national programme for food security;
- Livestock development;
- Support for sustainable artisanal fisheries;
- Support for tree crops development and agroforestry;
- Developing off–farm skills and rural employment opportunities;
- Monitoring, surveillance and enforcement of fisheries regulations.

III.6. ***Priority 1: Rebuilding institutional capacities and agricultural support services.*** National capacities for supporting agriculture and food production are very weak in the country due to the prolonged civil war and the neglect of the agricultural sector. Many professional and technical staff have retired, employed by NGOs or migrated during the war. Facilities and equipment were damaged or looted. The rural extension system was severely weakened, and as a result technology transfer mechanisms were disrupted. Farmer and fishing groups are currently without external assistance, and they lack the necessary inputs and equipment to resume productive activities and improve agriculture production. In addition, farmer and community organizations need a comprehensive support to become effective in the development process.

III.7. At this juncture, a programme for rebuilding national capacities is urgently required. Capacities refer not only to physical matters, such as facilities and equipment, but also human and social capital. A programme for rebuilding national capacities for agriculture and rural development

would contain the following main strategic lines: (i) institutional capacity building; (ii) strengthening applied research, extension and other farmer support mechanisms; and (iii) enhancing farmer and community organizations.

III.8. ***Institutional capacities.*** Strengthening institutional capacities should include: (i) reorganization of MOA and strengthening its infrastructure; (ii) provision of staff training to MOA and related agencies; and (iii) support to information and statistical data collection and dissemination system.

III.9. ***Strengthening applied research, extension and other farmer support mechanisms.*** This priority line would focus on promoting applied and participatory research in agriculture and related disciplines. Liberia should emphasise a farmer–based research agenda, and should take existing knowledge and technologies in the region to adapt them to the communities’ needs. Farmer–based breeding and seed production systems should be considered as one example of such initiative. In addition, the country needs to rebuild a farmer support mechanism, examining options and exploring new approaches such as the Farmer Field Schools system. Rebuilding the physical and human resource–base of CARI is a priority need, and this should be carried out with a renewed vision of supporting applied research, including through farmer–based, participatory research and training programmes. Consequently, the rebuilding of CARI may entail a process of reformulating or strengthening its mandate and functioning.

III.10. ***Enhancing farmer and community organizations.*** Farmers’ associations and cooperatives are a driving force for developing agricultural production and marketing capabilities. Organised farmers are better recipients of external technical and financial support. In addition, the bargaining power of organized farmers is much greater than single farmers, and can play an important advocacy role vis–à–vis the government. In this context, mobilising rural populations and helping them to develop strong cooperatives and community organisations becomes a key strategy for reducing poverty and improving economic and social development. Furthermore, production and community organisations have a pivotal role in reconciliation, as they foster dialogue and cooperation within the rural areas.

III.11. ***Priority 2. Improving rural infrastructure and market access.*** This investment priority requires joint collaboration between the ministries of Agriculture, Public Works and Finance. There is an urgent need to rehabilitate or construct basic infrastructure that could enhance food security, trade and other income generating activities. The main elements that come to mind are roads and bridges, which are of course of paramount importance. However, other key infrastructures are also needed for rapid development in the rural areas. These include storage and produce drying facilities, flour mills, traditional tree crop produce and fish processing facilities and fish landing sites. Therefore, there is a need to invest in supporting farmers and fisher organizations to acquire basic equipment, in rehabilitating and expanding important farm–to–market roads and in building market infrastructure to stimulate trade and improve the human and environmental conditions in the marketplace. Development programmes should aim at supporting economically active organizations and small enterprises by investing in infrastructure and equipment for processing, packaging, storage, transportation and marketing of agricultural products, as well as by improving the quality of agricultural produce.

III.12. ***Priority 3. Support to inland swamp development.*** Liberia is endowed with abundant water resources, but they are poorly utilized. It is estimated that there is an annual rainfall of about 5 000 mm; hence food production during the rainy season is plenty. However, this is not the case during the dry season when the water table goes down in most part of the country, with a notable loss of food and potential income by farmers. Fortunately, the country has many inland swamps that could

be highly valuable for agriculture, particularly rice and vegetable production. However, the utilization of these lands has been minimal because of health hazards and cultural stigma. Adequate equipment, appropriate technology and sensitization about the productivity and usefulness of the swamps could help to integrate such lands into the agriculture and food production system of the country.

III.13. Inland swamps are generally under–utilized, but gained momentum during the 1990s at the advent of the integrated agricultural development projects in Lofa, Bong and Nimba Counties. An appreciable impact was felt by the target population as a result of the introduction of lowland development. Studies have shown that well–developed inland valley swamps, with sufficient water control systems, can become productive and sustainable farming undertakings. The use of appropriate equipment and sensitization of the people can significantly reduce the health hazards posed by swamps. Rice and vegetable production in the inland swamps is highly remunerative. Using inland swamps is also environmentally sound, as it can be cultivated on a continuous basis, hence reducing the need for the environmentally destructive practice of shifting cultivation.

III.14. **Priority 4. Improving micro–finance services in rural areas.** Micro–finance services are almost non–existent in the rural areas. The country needs to develop and deploy a micro–finance network, with a view to making it accessible and valuable to smallholder farmers and small–scale entrepreneurs. Farmers’ associations and agricultural cooperatives should be strengthened to become regular recipients of micro–credit as well as to become key participant in the rural financing system. A project that supports the creation of a strong rural micro–financing mechanism is, therefore, considered as an important element in developing the agricultural sector.

III.15. **Priority 5. Implementation of a national programme for food security.** Food insecurity and malnutrition are widespread in Liberia. The right to food is a growing international concern, hence, there is a need to design and implement a national programme for food security. A national programme for food security could consist of an inter–ministerial arrangement that would plan, finance and monitor activities aimed at reducing food insecurity and malnutrition in the country. Major components of such a programme could include: (i) promotion of food production and diversification of agricultural systems; (ii) improving availability of food products in the markets; (iii) access to food among vulnerable population groups; (iv) prevention and management of food crises; (v) reinforcement of capacities of food insecure stakeholders; and (vi) monitoring and sensitization on food and water quality.

III.16. **Priority 6. Livestock development.** A project to support livestock development is proposed with the goals of raising income levels of smallholder farmers and livestock producers, diversifying production systems and expanding the supply of animal protein in the country. Livestock has been decimated during the war; therefore any meaningful programme will have to start with restocking and breeding activities. A focus on supporting small–scale producers and medium–sized farms is recommended to ensure that the project balances production needs with poverty reduction goals. In this context, poultry and small ruminants have an important role to play as their social impact will be much greater than large–scale cattle ranching. A livestock development venture should also aim at improving animal health, hence assisting private veterinarian to service farmers, provision of training to the farming community and supply of vaccine and drugs.

III.17. **Priority 7. Support for sustainable artisan fisheries.** Fishery is an important sector in Liberia, particularly in the extended coastline, as it is the main source of livelihood in these areas. There is also a relevant fishing activity developed by artisanal fishers in the inland waters. The development of artisanal marine fishery is one of the principal development goals in the country given its importance in the livelihoods of some 20,000 households living along the coast, its potential in supplying protein to the country and in earning foreign exchange. Attempts at reviving fisheries

occurred during and after the war as emergency responses, with various support projects from FAO, but these were only limited interventions to make a sustainable impact. Key needs are the provision of basic equipment for artisan fishing organizations, training and facilities for processing and marketing fish products. In addition, the country should develop national capacities to carry out effective planning for sustainable industrial and artisanal fisheries, and to monitor fishing volumes. A project to support sustainable fisheries could comprise three major components: (i) support to artisanal marine fisheries development; (ii) promotion of small–scale aquaculture development; and (iii) enhancing national capacities for sustainable development of fisheries.

III.18. ***Priority 8. Support for tree crops development and agroforestry.*** The protracted war has induced many farmers to abandon their farms, and most of these farms are now unproductive. A project to support tree crop production systems and market–oriented agroforestry is proposed to respond to the national potential on tree crops (such as cocoa, coffee and oil palm) and to deploy valuable agroforestry practices. The main objectives of the project would be to improve the income of rural households and promote environmentally sustainability farming systems. Specific project activities would include: (i) rehabilitation and replanting of existing farms; (ii) rehabilitation of rural infrastructure and facilities to support the processing and marketing of tree crops; (iii) promotion of agroforestry practices in the different ecosystems of the country; (iv) revitalizing marketing system for tree crop and agroforestry products; and (v) strengthening MOA capacity in extension and grassroots community organisations for tree crop and agroforestry development.

III.19. Liberia has already experience tree crops development. Apart from a long history of tree crops farming and exports, many national and international agencies have made various interventions in Liberia to revitalize the tree crops sector, including UNHCR/GTZ, USAID/IITA, the European Union and different NGOs. However, the country has little experience in agroforestry development. Hence, this relatively new activity will require a special attention, and it is being proposed that a comprehensive collaborative framework be arranged with a major international agricultural centre, with expertise and experience in this domain such as the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) or the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA). The collaborative framework that would be encouraged, would include adapting viable production practices, training, community mobilisation and setting up monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

III.20. ***Priority 9. Developing off–farm skills and rural employment opportunities.*** Rural areas have a possibility of developing off–farm skills and employment opportunities. For instance, there is a high potential for artisan jobs related to carpentry, rubber transformation, mechanics, plumbing, blacksmith and construction. A project to support these artisan vocations would serve to improve employment in rural areas, provide locally available and affordable services in these domains, and help youth and ex–combatants to integrate in the country’s social and labour fabric. A project to support artisan workers would combine training (technical and management training) with seed capital for individuals or groups aiming at establishing small enterprises.

III.21. ***Priority 10. Monitoring, surveillance and enforcement of fishery regulation.*** The issue of monitoring of the different fishing grounds, undertaking surveillance of territorial and economic zones, as well as the enforcement of fishery regulation in the Liberian coastal waters is critical to sustainable fishing in the coastal areas. At present, industrial fishery is interfering with artisanal fishing activities, hence with the source of their means of livelihood. This issue has come about because of the intrusion of commercial fisheries in the traditional fishing grounds of the artisanal fishers near the coast, resulting in the damage of nets, canoes and other fishing gears by the large commercial vessels. A system for monitoring such activities should be devised, with the aim of preventing commercial vessels entering the fishing grounds dedicated to artisanal fishers by law. Cooperation of the fishing communities is also needed to avoid illegal fishing, including the use of

small mesh that leads to destructive and unsustainable fishing practices. In summary, there is a dire need for correcting the present weakness in adequate monitoring, control and surveillance system to track the operation of industrial vessels, monitor the activities of all illegal fishing and enforce fisheries regulations in the Liberian waters.

C. Bankable Project Selection Criteria

III.22. The main project selection criterion was the potential of each of the projects in contributing to the main goals of poverty reduction, food security, and sustainable utilization of the natural resources and protection of the environment. The identification of the above investment priorities was undertaken by the government and validated at the national stakeholders' workshop of the NMTIP. In the identification of bankable projects for preparation with FAO assistance, the following additional criteria have been used:

- **Consistency with government policy orientation.** All development interventions need to be consistent with the government's fundamental orientation in involving the concerned major stakeholders, particularly farmers, fishers and other beneficiaries. Proposal for implementation framework needs also to reflect the importance of the private sector and local authorities involvement as these elements will facilitate the smooth execution of projects.
- **Technical feasibility and sustainability.** Project proposals need to be tested whether they make technical sense, and can thus be considered sustainable ventures in terms of resource utilization. Examples of previous projects or projects in similar areas, which have proved their technical viability, are useful indicators in this respect.
- **Financial and economic feasibility.** At the early stage of project identification, it is difficult to obtain more than a vague idea of the financial and economic viability of a project, but enough information should be included to justify continuation of the project preparation process. Indicative crop budgets can suggest whether a particular technical process is financially viable in the current pricing and marketing context. A rough idea of investment costs per hectare or per fisher in comparison with returns from the commodity they would produce, will give an indication of the financial viability. Wherever possible, a preliminary comparison of the benefits with the costs of the project should be made, possibly using a simple cost/benefit ratio in financial terms.
- **Absorptive capacity.** In the light of depleted government services and inadequate rural infrastructure, this is an important criterion in the context of Liberia, as discussed in the earlier sections. It is a difficult task to pass judgment on this topic, especially in a period that is characterized by many changes. However, a subjective judgment may be made in the context of the experience of the agricultural institutions and their manpower capacity.
- **Synergy with ongoing programmes.** Duplication of other projects' efforts or operating across the purposes of other programmes needs to be avoided as such would lead to unnecessary wastage. On the contrary, one of the selection criteria should be the search of synergy with other projects and programmes.

D. Preliminary Identification of Projects for Development with FAO Assistance

III.23. On the basis of the priority areas and selection criteria indicated above, three projects were selected for development into BIPPs with FAO assistance. These are summarized below.

III.24. ***BIPP 1: Inland Swamp Rehabilitation and Development.*** The objective of the project is to increase food production by expanding cultivation within the inland swamps, thereby contributing to poverty reduction and food security. The project would: a) rehabilitate abandoned inland swamps and develop new ones for the production of rice and vegetables; b) promote small–scale community irrigation, especially for women market–gardeners to produce high value crops; and c) strengthen institutional capacity in water resources management to support farmers. To this end the project would organize farmers to obtain technical assistance, training, extension service and credit for the purchase of farm equipment and inputs. MOA staff would also be strengthened through the provision of training, technical assistance equipment and incremental operating funds.

III.25. The project would operate in the main areas where inland swamp is prevalent and where there is a tradition and experience in swamp cultivation, i.e., Lofa, Grand Gedeh and River Gee counties. A total of 4,000 ha of swamp area would be rehabilitated; while about 2,300 ha would be newly developed. Some 1,400 farmers, mostly women, would also be assisted to practice small–scale irrigation by constructing shallow wells and small reservoirs, to produce crops during the dry season.

III.26. Total project costs, over a period of five years, are estimated at about US\$8.3m. The overall responsibility for the project would be vested with MOA. However, the actual execution of the project would be carried out under an implementation unit to be established under MOA.

III.27. ***BIPP 2: Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Development.*** The proposed five year project has four components: a) support to artisanal marine fisheries development; b) support to aquaculture development; c) strengthening national capacities for sustainable fisheries development; and d) project management. The first two components will be supported by credit arrangements with a view to providing communities to undertake sustainable fishing operations; while the institutional strengthening component will create capacity for executing the project and prepare the ground for the implementation of much larger development programmes in the future.

III.28. The proposed project, to be implemented over a five year period, would be located in the fishing communities of the six coastal counties (Maryland, Grand Kru, Sinoe, Rivercess, Grand Bassa and Grand Cape Mount) for artisanal marine and riverine fisheries; and in the inland valley swamps in Lofa, Grand Gedeh and River Gee for aquaculture development. A total of about 3,650 artisanal fishers and 1,600 aquaculture–based fish farmers would benefit from the project. Total project cost would be of the order of US\$7.7m.

III.29. While MOA would have overall responsibility for project implementation, it would be managed by a project implementation unit to be established by MOA. The unit would have a team of senior professionals that would work full time for the project. Within MOA, the Bureau of National Fisheries would play a major role in the planning, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

III.30. ***BIPP 3: Market–Oriented Agroforestry and Tree Crops Production Systems.*** The main objectives of the project are to improve the income of rural households and enhance environmentally sustainability of farming systems. To this end the project proposes to: rehabilitate and replant tree crops' plantations, mainly coffee, cocoa and oil palm; rehabilitate rural infrastructure to support the production and marketing of tree crops; promote agroforestry practices as part of enhancing the

productive and environmental sustainability of farming systems; revitalize the marketing system for tree crop and agroforestry products; and to strengthen the capacity of MOA extension personnel and grassroots community organizations.

III.31. The project would consist of four components i.e., rehabilitation of cocoa, coffee and oil palm farms; planting trees and promotion of agroforestry practices; support for the marketing of tree crop products; and project management. The project proposes to organize farmers in order to ensure a smooth project implementation; to provide them with training, extension and credit; and to facilitate their produce processing and marketing. MOA would be strengthened through staff training, provision of additional funds and equipment and other facilities.

III.32. The project would be implemented under the overall supervision of the MOA and its Forestry Development Authority (FDA). However, considering the fact that the MOA and FDA lack adequate trained manpower and capacity to successfully implement the project in a timely manner, it is proposed that implementation is supported by experienced international institutions such as IITA or ICRAF. Overall project costs are estimated at about US\$10.1m.

IV. FINANCING GAP

IV.1. During the Second Ordinary Session of the African Union, held in Maputo in July 2003, the Heads of State and Government have pledged to “... *allocating 10 percent of national budgetary resources for the implementation of CAADP... and sound policies for agricultural and rural development within five years*”. Liberia is aware of the commitment it made in Maputo, but unfortunately it was unable to start its implementation as the country was in the middle of a prolonged social crisis caused by the civil war. Following the establishment of the new government, however, initial steps for its implementation have started immediately, as demonstrated by the preparation of this document (NMTIP), which is meant to underpin GOL agricultural policies and investments within the framework of the above mentioned Maputo Declaration.

IV.2. In a market-based economy, like the one that will be followed by GOL, the actual development of agriculture would essentially be carried out by the private sector through their involvement in different facets of production, processing servicing and trade. Formulation of adequate policy and regulatory framework and increased public expenditure are meant to facilitate and enhance private sector investment and maximize the efficiency of the overall investment in the sector. Therefore, increased budgetary allocation should be directed to the priority areas identified in Section III, as their objective is in line with the emerging national goals. In addition, investment in these areas will serve as a catalyst for private sector investment. As indicated above, increased public expenditure alone will not bring about development if it is not supported by well thought out strategic framework that incorporates encouraging policy, institutional and regulatory environment.

IV.3. Past expenditures in the agricultural sector were only a fraction of the total budget. Although there are no readily available information at this stage, allocation of national budget to MOA hardly reached one percent in the last decade. Therefore, it is not surprising to see the institutional weaknesses in providing support services to agriculture and the poor infrastructure that characterizes the rural areas. The low budgetary share is also confirmed by a review of the current budget of 2005/06, in which, out of the total national budget of US\$80m, MOA has allocated US\$0.74m, slightly less than 1 percent of the total. This amount is barely sufficient to cover the Ministry’s annual recurrent expenditures, let alone to undertake meaningful development work or provide support to farmers who are the largest majority of the population. Fortunately, with the advent of the new

government, clear signs of change in support of the rural areas in general, and agriculture in particular are emerging. Therefore, the agricultural sector is expected to receive increased allocation from the national budget. However, the level of allocation is not known at this stage, because GOL has yet to undertake the necessary exercise in forecasting its future revenues, and completing allocation percentages in line with its priorities. In the absence of such information it would be difficult to undertake sound analysis that aim at defining the level of GOL financing and determining eventual financing gap, if any, from the levels agreed upon in Maputo. Nevertheless, with this proviso in mind, some indicative analysis could be conducted on the basis of some assumptions derived from the on-going discussions within GOL and from current policy orientations.

IV.4. Indications are that preliminary national budgetary levels are expected to increase significantly, on account of higher domestic revenue. This will be realized by stepping up institutional and administrative effort in revenue collection, which will eventually result in an increase of allocation to the social and economic sectors. Again, preliminary forecasts suggest that GOL will be able to collect about US\$100m during the year 2006/07 and this will make the total national budget for that year, which is an annual increase of 25 percent. The direction of the expenditure pattern for the year 2006/07 is to allocate about half the amount to the social sector and the other half to all the remaining sectors. During this fiscal year, i.e. 2006/2007, MOA and related institutions, such as CARI, are expected to receive an allocation in the order of US\$5m, equivalent to 5 percent of the total budget. If this plan is realized, it will be a very welcome event as it will open new hope for supporting farmers and advancing agricultural development.

IV.5. Government revenues are expected to increase significantly in the next few years as a result of institutional strengthening, increased economic activity and lifting of the UN ban on exports. Assuming that revenues continue to grow by 10 percent, 15, 20, and 25 percent per annum during the period 2007/08 and 2010/2011, the total budget would amount to about US\$189.8m, which is much less than the budget levels of the late 1980s. If GOL allocation to agriculture is increased by one percent per year during the same period, annual agricultural budget would more than triple, reaching about US\$17m, equivalent to nine percent of the total budget, close to the figure agreed upon in Maputo.

IV.6. The matter that may give cause for concern, at this stage, is not whether GOL will allocate to the agricultural sector as indicated below, but rather the availability of implementation capacity of MOA and its related institutions of such a larger programme as implied by the enhanced budgetary resource. Since the agricultural institutions have pointed out their weakened status as a result of the civil war, they might be unable to implement large programmes without major investments in capacity building. This should be done as a matter of priority if the level of financing to agriculture is to become meaningful as intended.

Estimate of National Budget Financing to Agriculture (2006/07 to 2010/11)						
Item	Fiscal years					
	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/2010	2010/2011	2006/07
Total national budget	'000 US\$	100,000	110,000	126,500	151,800	189,750
Expected national budget increase	%	NA	10	15	20	25
Share of agricultural budget	%	5	6	7	8	9
Expected national agricultural budget	'000 US\$	5,000	6,600	8,855	12,144	17,077.5
Financial gap	%	5	4	3	2	1
	'000 US\$	5,000	4,400	3,795	3,036	1,897.5

V. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

V.1. The Bureau of Statistics of the Ministry of Agriculture will develop monitoring mechanisms within the context of the NARD, MTEF and PRSP that will serve as a tool to keep track of each project activity, ensuring that planned activities are carried out in accordance with project principles. The overall monitoring and evaluation of the NMTIP will be contingent on whatever reporting procedure is established, and all stakeholders should conform to it. Specific indicators will be outlined to measure degree of impact on beneficiaries at certain phases of project implementation or in accordance with the reporting procedures. Key indicators to be considered would be the following:

- the self–sufficiency ratio for staple food crops, especially rice and palm oil;
- the rate of growth of agricultural GDP;
- the growth in the value of agricultural exports;
- growth in the agricultural loan portfolio of financial institutions;
- growth in area planted to improved varieties and yield;
- growth in area under irrigation (the command area);
- number of farmers’ associations and extension workers trained;
- change in the proportion of districts that are classified as medium to highly vulnerable;
- number of farmers receiving credit;
- extent of rural roads and other infrastructure improved or established.

V.2. The indicators will be measured against data collected from a number of institutions. This will include baseline data specifically generated for NMTIP and data contained in annual progress reports. Implementation of the monitoring and evaluation programme would require significant investments in training, equipment and statistical software.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Sectors Indicators

Annex 2: Linkages to CAADP

Annex 3: Summary of the Stakeholders Workshop on the National Medium–Term Investment Programme

Annex 4: List of References

Annex 1: Sectors Indicators

Indicators	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
GDP at market prices (US\$m)	543	559	435	492	614
Real GDP growth (%)	2.9	3.7	-31.3	2.4	8
Consumer price inflation (av. %)	12.1	14.2	10.3	7.8	15.5
Population (m)	3.16	3.21	3.22	3.24	3.5
Exports fob (US\$m)	127.9	166.5	108.9	103.8	110
Imports fob (US\$m)	-155	-145.3	-140	-268.1	-295
Current–account balance (US\$m)	-133.2	-19.2	-79.2	-65.5	-80
Reserves excl gold (US\$m)	0.48	3.3	7.4	18.7	35
Total external debt (US\$m)	2,164	2,324	2,567	n/a	n/a
External debt–service ratio, paid (%)	0.5	0.5	0.1	n/a	n/a
Rubber production ('000 tonnes)	107	109	104	180	185
Exchange rate (av. L\$/US\$)	48.6	61.8	59.4	54.9	57.6

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit 2006

Sector	US\$m	GDP share (%)
Agriculture & fisheries	235.7	47.9
Forestry	84.1	17.1
Manufacturing	48.2	9.8
Mining	1.0	0.2
Services	123.0	25.0
Total	492	100.0

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit 2006

Commodity	1987	1988	1997	1998	1999
Rubber	68.9	73.5	19.4	26	30.9
Coffee	2.1	2.2	0.1	0.3	1.7
Cocoa	10.7	11.4	0.7	1.6	0.2
Rice	93.5	99.8	50.9	64.2	72.5
Cassava	45.8	48.9	39.8	44	48.4
Others	101.9	108.7	71.3	81.5	91.7
Agriculture	322.9	344.5	182.2	217.6	245.4
Logs/timber	29.2	31.2	5.9	13	19.3
Charcoal & wood	18.8	20.1	39.5	40.4	41.7
Forestry	48	51.2	45.4	53.4	60.7
Total (US\$m)	370.9	395.7	227.6	271	306.1

Source: Liberia Sectoral Origin of GDP at Current Prices, 1987– 2003, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs.

County	Estimated population	Estimated rural pop. (70%)	# of farming families	Rice production (*)	Cassava production (**)
Bomi	21,864	15,305	2,551	612	4,592
Bong	323,449	226,414	37,736	9,057	67,925
Grand Bassa	161,573	113,101	18,850	4,524	33,930
Grand Cape Mount	39,191	27,434	4,572	1,097	8,230
Grand Gedeh	98,704	69,093	11,515	2,764	20,727
Grand Kru	25,242	17,669	2,945	707	5,301
Lofa	269,801	188,861	31,477	7,554	56,659
Margibi	206,717	144,702	24,117	5,788	43,411
Maryland	127,402	89,181	14,864	3,567	26,755
Montserrado	928,855	650,199	108,366	26,008	195,059
Nimba	538,814	377,170	62,862	15,087	113,152
River Cess	29,450	20,615	3,436	825	6,185
Sinoe	71,965	50,376	8,396	2,015	15,113
River Gee	62,297	43,608	7,268	1,744	13,082
Gbapolu	117,879	82,515	13,753	3,301	24,755
Total	3,023,203	2,116,242	352,707	84,650	634,874

(*) Rice average estimations in: (i) yield: 0.4 tonnes/ha; (ii) area: 0.6 ha/family; (iii) yield: 0.24 tonne/family.
(**) Cassava average estimations in: (i) yield: 6 tonnes/ha; (ii) area: 0.3 ha/family; (iii) yield: 1.8 tonne/family.
Source: Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission, Jan. 2006, MOA/FAO

Farming Households' Primary Activity	
Food crops	Staple starches: rice, cassava, plantain, eddoe, sweet potato, yam Legumes: broad beans, pigeon pea, mung beans, peanut, sesame Vegetables: hot pepper, okra, eggplant, African eggplant ("bitter ball" or "garden egg"), country tomato, cucumber, and various squashes, and palava sauce Fruit: pineapple, oranges, banana, coconut, papaya, lime, mango.
Women's household gardens	Maize, hot pepper, okra, eggplant, African eggplant, country tomato, cucumber, and various squashes, broad bean, pigeon pea, onion, and palava sauce. Women also cultivate peanut, sesame, and cassava.
Farming Households' Secondary Activities	
Cash crops	Commercial cash crops: rubber, cacao, oil palm, coffee (over-grown farms and low prices are not encouraging the rehabilitation/production of coffee). Secondary cash crops: coconut, sugarcane, kola nut, oranges, pineapple, sugarcane.
Sales of agricultural products	Rice: generally sold to pay for necessities such as school fees and medical care. Local seed is scarce, which limits the area planted and households' harvests. Only few communities reported that they sell rice. Cassava in various forms (flour, <i>gari</i> , <i>fufu</i> , <i>domboy</i> , roasted, and the unprocessed root). Also: palm oil, plantain, eddoe, maize, sweet potato, beans, banana, pineapple, cassava and sweet potato greens, and women's vegetables (above).
Petty trade	Both men and women engage in petty trade. The pattern is to sell agricultural products and palm oil, and then buy dry goods to resell in the community. Many rural people sell and buy in Monrovia and some are active in cross-border trade in food and consumer necessities.
Hunting in the southeast and fishing in the central/northwest	Bush meat and fish are eaten and sold, both fresh and dry. Hunting is more important in the south-eastern counties, and fishing is ubiquitous in the central/northwest. Some fishing communities raise sea turtles from hatchlings.
Wage labour	Both men and women work as wage labourers. They work in the farms, for payment in cash and kind (rice); they transport goods by foot; and men tap rubber.
Charcoal-making	Men fell trees and burn them into charcoal; women break the charcoal into chunks and bag them. The payment for bagging 20 sacks of charcoal is one sack.
Other	Men: cut and sell firewood; make and sell fish traps; illegal diamond mining was mentioned in Margibi county; make rattan furniture; and some men work part-time at trades such as masonry and carpentry. Women: make and sell fish traps; weave baskets and trays to sell; make and sell pastries, doughnuts, bread, and sweet bread.

Source: Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission, Jan. 2006, MOA/FAO

Annex 2: Linkages to CAADP

Government Sector Policy	Potential Relevance to CAADP Pillars ⁸				
	1	2	3	4	5
Agriculture, fisheries, livestock and forestry					
Agricultural production and productivity and employment generation	X	X	X	X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create socio-economic enabling environment to sustain agriculture sector development • Provide incentives to attract private-sector participation in food security programs; • Promote market information on factor inputs and commodities prices to stimulate crop intensification and wealth creation; • Promote rehabilitation of traditional export crops (cocoa, coffee, oil palm) to improve income levels and livelihoods; • Introduce new and improved technology to improve farming practices that leads to increased income. • Promote skills training opportunities 					
Intensify and diversify food crops production toward eliminating food deficits and encouraging increased income for farmers	X	X	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and diversify crop germ-plasm and establish stock of varieties to meet food, feed and industrial needs; • Encourage and promote the establishment of post-harvest activities such as processing, storage for value-addition; • Introduce and establish new alternative crops of high market value and potential for export such as cashew, cowpeas, soybeans and groundnuts; • Establish national program for food security with focus on revitalizing communities through improving productivity on crops, livestock and aquaculture, including processing and commercialized production; • Encourage and put in place an input planning system to assess requirement for seeds, tools and related inputs for every agricultural season and assess the public and private sector ability to delivery in a timely manner to farmers; • Pursue and establish a favourable inputs marketing, including tax reductions on factor inputs critical to agricultural production. 					
Restructure and strengthen research				X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate a vigorous rehabilitation of CARI, including basic infrastructure to ensure immediate technology transfer to farmers; • Promote farmer-centered research in agriculture and related disciplines and strengthen linkages between research – extension and farmer; • Provision of manpower training schemes, aimed at building the technical capacity of CARI in all disciplines at graduate and post-graduate levels; • Encourage and promote linkages with international research centers and with community-based extension. • Promote farmer centered-research in agriculture and related disciplines, strengthening linkages between research-extension and farmers 					
Restructure and strengthen the national extension service				X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish community-based Farmers Field Schools, where trained technical staff of the department will train master farmers on improved methods and they will pass it on to other farmers to improve production; • Encourage and provide training opportunities at post-secondary, post-graduate and graduate programs as efforts at re-building the manpower capacity to strengthen timely delivery service to farmers; • Encourage and initiate participatory extension to improve information dissemination to farmers. 					

⁸ See Preface.

NEPAD – Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme

Liberia: National Medium–Term Investment Programme (NMTIP)

Government Sector Policy	Potential Relevance to CAADP Pillars ⁸				
	1	2	3	4	5
Restructure, develop and implement agricultural credit/ micro finance services in rural areas		X	X		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and re–capitalize the Agricultural Cooperative and Development Bank; Review cooperative structure and related framework; Rehabilitate and strengthen agricultural cooperatives/associations to play leading role in input marketing; Encourage and promote internal capacity building to make cooperatives efficient partners in development; Design national policies, strategies and legislation to enhance cooperative roles in development, emphasizing the need for synergy and the economic gains to be derived from their involvement in decision–making and program implementation. 					
Rehabilitate and develop rural infrastructure to ensure access to agricultural input and output markets for the promotion of commercial agriculture	X	X	X		X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with the Ministries of Public Works and Rural Development to rehabilitate existing farm to market roads, bridges and develop new ones; Establish community–based post–harvest processing centers and promote farmers’ access to markets; Create an efficient inputs marketing channel, using the public and private sectors as catalysts to ensure timely delivery to farmers; 					
Diversify and expand tree and cash crop production to promote income generating opportunities		X		X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate a vigorous rehabilitation of existing small holder tree crops (i.e. cocoa, coffee, oil palm) holdings and encourage expansion of their farms; Introduce and encourage the adoption of new and improved crop cultivars of marketable value alongside improved technologies; Promote partnership between commercial farms and small holders to establish the basis for capita injection and access to inputs market, facilitate technology transfer and marketing opportunities critical for increasing production and market competitiveness; Encourage and promote non–traditional export crops such as sunflower, sesame and other vegetables, oil seeds, maize, commercial quantities of coconuts, bananas, cashew nuts, cola nuts and avocado, etc. 					
Develop a sustainable livestock program to meet country’s protein requirements and related purposes such as income generation.			X	X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and encourage restocking of short–cycle livestock for breeding to build up the national herd; Enhance surveillance and information on animal diseases; Encourage and promote feed processing technology to reduce high cost of imported feeds; Encourage and promote livestock research and veterinary service 					
Develop a national aquaculture and fisheries policy and strategy.			X	X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and strengthen existing Maritime and fisheries laws and regulations to eradicate poaching and related vices; Establish and encourage a capacity building program for fisher folk and youths in sustainable fisheries and to take it as a vocation; Promote credit schemes for fisher folk organizations; Encourage and promote the formation of cooperatives/associations and create an efficient input marketing channel that ensures ready access 					
Rebuild institutional and human capacities for agriculture and rural development			X	X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen capacity of farmers, including women and youth groups, to adapt and implement technologies Strengthen researcher–farmer–extension linkages to improve productivity; Strengthen existing M&E systems for data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of results to end users; Rehabilitate and strengthen research and extension delivery systems. Rehabilitate MOA and related facilities Rehabilitate agricultural statistics for improved data collection Strengthen farmers’ cooperative societies to ensure a viable sector. 					

NEPAD – Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme

Liberia: National Medium–Term Investment Programme (NMTIP)

Government Sector Policy	Potential Relevance to CAADP Pillars ⁸				
	1	2	3	4	5
Water Resources Management					
Develop irrigation schemes	X				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rehabilitate existing micro-irrigation schemes to assume former roles in rice seed multiplication to respond to growing need for seed rice by small farmers; Promote and develop small-scale community irrigation development schemes to encourage sedentary agriculture; Develop water management policy framework that aims to highlight water conservation measures and agro-meteorology; Provision of training and capacity building in irrigation and drainage control, water management, and related fields; Assess and determine ground water potential and water quality; Encourage and promote the optimal use of scarce resources with regards to minerals, forestry (biodiversity), surface and land water, etc.; Promote agroforestry and community woodlot. 					
Protect and preserve natural resources (forestry, watersheds, etc)	X			X	X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect watersheds and promote the wildlife; sanctuaries; Establish mechanisms for harvesting and replenishment of forest resources on a sustainable yield basis; Initiate data collection on forest reserves and forest biodiversity Monitor and protect forest reserves and protected forests. 					
Land resources					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a coherent and coordinated land policy to address land use and administration and land delivery systems Land valuation, registration of titles, and land administration Establish a process for national land use planning and mapping through the establishment of a "National Land Commission" or "National Natural Resources Commission". 	X				

NMTIP Projects	CAADP Pillars					Cooperating Partners								
	1	2	3	4	5	FAO	EU	USAID	GTZ	ADB	IFAD	UNDP	JICA	BADEA
Project 1: Rebuilding institutional capacities and agricultural support services		X	X	X				X						
Project 2: Improving rural infrastructure and market access		X	X								X	X		
Project 3: Support to inland swamp development			X		X			X			X			
Project 4: Improving micro-finance services in rural areas		X	X				X	X	X					
Project 5: Implementation of a national program for food security	X		X			X	X	X						
Project 6: Livestock development			X	X	X			X		X	X			
Project 7: Support for sustainable artisanal fisheries	X		X	X	X						X		X	
Project 8: Support for tree crops development and agroforestry			X		X			X	X					
Project 9: Developing off-farm skills and rural employment opportunities		X	X					X				X		
Project 10: Monitoring, surveillance and enforcement of fishery regulation		X	X	X								X	X	

Annex 3: Summary of the Stakeholders Workshop on the National Medium–Term Investment Programme

(Monrovia City Hall, 18 May 2006)

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2001, the Organization of African Unity launched the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as an African-led effort to eradicate poverty and catalyze development on the continent. Within the NEPAD framework, agriculture and rural development acquired soon a priority support since this area is critical to the livelihoods of most Africans.

In 2003, African Governments, meeting at the African Union Assembly, endorsed the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and committed themselves to allocating at least 10 percent of national budgetary resources for implementing agricultural and rural development projects within five years.

To advance NEPAD–CAADP, it was proposed that every country would prepare a National Medium–Term Investment Program (NMTIP) on agriculture and rural development, as well as profiles of some priority bankable projects. This would be carried out under the auspices of the NEPAD Secretariat, the technical assistance of FAO and the use of participatory approaches.

In June 2005, the Government of Liberia signed a cooperation project with FAO to receive assistance in the implementation of NEPAD–CAADP process. In September 2005, an awareness workshop on NEPAD–CAADP was held in Monrovia. In February 2006, with the backing of the newly elected Liberian Government, the process was resumed and a national team for NEPAD–CAADP Agriculture was recruited, giving birth to a draft National Medium Term Investment Programme (NMTIP) on agriculture and rural development, which was reviewed in a national stakeholder workshop on 18 May 2006.

II. WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

At the Workshop on the National Medium–term Investment Programme the following topics were discussed in groups:

- Group 1 Production Systems
- Group 2 Rural infrastructure and market access
- Group 3 Institutional capacity and farmers' support systems
- Group 4 Agricultural policy and poverty reduction strategies

Each working group examined the following issues in relation to their respective theme:

- 1. Constraints and opportunities
- 2. Priorities
- 3. Any major issue/proposals

Group 1 – Production System

The group divided the production systems of Liberia into the following:

A. Traditional system: subsistence farmers mainly involved in the production of rice, cassava, potato, corn, okra and other food crops, and are either intercropped or mono-cropped on a single plot of land. The traditional farmers use rudimentary tools.

B. Commercial or modern/mechanized system: include the cultivation of cash crops such as rubber, cocoa, coffee and oil palm. This is widely practiced by concessions and/or large companies. It also includes livestock such as poultry and cattle ranching.

Constraints

- Lack of inputs, particularly farming tools and seeds.
- Late delivery of seeds and bad quality (impure seeds)
- Low productivity and obsolete post-harvest technology
- Incidence of disease and pest
- Small area of cultivation, and the practice of shifting cultivation and land degradation
- Unfair market prices and difficult market access
- Lack of access to credit
- Lack of preservation and processing facilities
- Lack of technical know-how and support by research

Opportunities

- Availability of abundant land
- Employment opportunities (the kuu system)
- Availability of training facilities
- Strong political support by the new government
- Availability of other natural resources (fishery, forestry and water)

Priorities

- Training extension technicians to assist farmers
- Improving varieties and farming methods (post-harvesting technology)
- Farmer's access to credit
- Access to market and availability of inputs

Major issues

- The establishment of a germplasm resulted from the fact that the country lacks the required planting materials as a means to stimulate agricultural production. Germplasm should be collected from across the country to revive the sector
- Limited monitoring and control capabilities improvement.
- Low institutional capacities and the need for strengthening
- –The need for training farmers

Group 2 – Rural infrastructure and market access

Constraints

- Unserviceable farm-to-market roads (transportation)
- Lack of storage and processing/preservation facilities
- Local financial institutions
- Shortage of farmers training institutions
- Unreliable market structures and lack of information on prices of commodities, locations of commodities, availability of buyers/sellers, quality of commodities, etc
- Lack of fish ponds
- Absence of safe drinking water

Opportunities

- Availability of suitable land
- Existence of a political will
- Availability of manpower
- Evidence of an international good will/donors support
- Willingness of the IDPs to return to their homes/villages
- Relatively peaceful/stable environment
- Abundant natural resources

Priorities

- A. Reconstruction/rehabilitation of productive infrastructures such as:
- Farm-to-market roads
 - Storage and processing facilities
 - Fish ponds
 - Preservation facilities
 - Training institutions
 - Market structures
 - Rural water supply and sanitation
- B. Market information collection and dissemination

Major issues

In their deliberations, the group observed that empowerment of rural communities through the following will lead to increased income and production:

- Access to market
- Price standardization and quality control
- Ensuring that Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation's monopoly to buy and sell produce is broken and farmers' cooperatives are giving the opportunity to access external markets to obtain good offers for their produce.
- The Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation is revamped and takes on the role of monitoring and, or regulatory status
- The cooperatives societies, including their funding-related institutions (ACDB, CDA and other credit institutions mandates are reviewed and reactivated).

Group 3 – Institutional Capacities and Farmers Support Systems

Constraints

- Insufficient trained manpower
- Lack of infrastructures
- Lack of logistics/equipment
- Limited lending opportunities

- Deficiency in technology transfer
- Lack of a political will
- Lack of a clear and well– defined agricultural policy document
- Lack of fair market price structure

Opportunities

- Favourable weather
- Sufficient and fertile land and abundant supply of water
- Availability of manpower
- Farmers' willingness and eagerness to resume farming
- Prevailing political and international good will

Priorities

- Clear–cut agricultural policy
- Institutional capacity–building
- Infrastructure: rehabilitation and construction of roads and market structures
- Appropriate technology, research and strengthening extension service
- Data collection and enhancing information dissemination
- Good governance and improved security

Major issues

- A. Sustainable livelihoods and issues of security
- B. Institutional building/empowerment
 - Support to agriculture–related institutions/programs
 - Fair prices for farmers' produce and services

Group 4 – Agricultural Policy and Poverty Reduction

Constraints

During the deliberations, the group observed that the major short–comings of agricultural development in Liberia were the lack of the following:

- Data on agricultural–based commodities
- Access to markets
- Unfair prices for agricultural produce
- Relatively poor soils
- Limited budgetary support for agricultural sector development
- Insufficient technical know–how
- Shifting cultivation (land–use practices)
- Poor road network
- Limited access to credit

Opportunities

- An emerging socio–economic enabling environment in all sectors
- Expressed desire of Liberians for enactment of policies and strategies
- Government's commitment to improve the livelihood of the population
- Good will on the part of international partners
- Available human resources for policy formulation and implementation

Priorities

- Training agricultural researchers for agricultural development
- Employment for income–generation
- Empowering local farmers through extension service
- Participatory approach in policy formulation (involvement of stakeholders)
- Development and improvement road networks
- Improvement of agricultural production systems to encourage high yields
- Encouraging specialization in agricultural production
- Institutional reforms

Major issues

- Agricultural commodities pricing system
- Storage facilities
- Distribution mechanisms for factor inputs (seeds and tools)

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The groups made a 9–point recommendation as an attempt to restore the productive capacity of the agricultural and rural development sector, representing the following:

1. Rehabilitation of farm–to–market roads.
2. Rehabilitation of storage, processing, preservation and marketing structures and/or construction of appropriate sites.
3. Establishment of financial institutions/credit facilities are established at the districts' level.
4. Establishment of Farmers training institutions at the county's level, and strengthen research–extension farmer linkages;
5. Establishment of communication systems to enable farmers to access information related to prices, location of commodities and buyers/sellers at both the districts and counties' levels.
6. Strengthening of blacksmithing institutions to provide locally–made tools to the farming communities.
7. Encouragement and intensification of aquaculture production in all farming communities.
8. Provision of safe drinking water and sanitation at the local levels.
9. Review land tenure system is reviewed to encourage investment in the agricultural and rural development sectors.

List of Participants

National Stakeholder Workshop on National Medium–Term Investment Programme (NMTIP)
in Support of NEPAD–CAADP Implementation

No.	Name	Organization	Address/Title	Phone #
1.	James Flomo	Pulukper	Bong County	06–816782
2.	Morris B. Zorbah	MOA	5 th Street	07–7039590
3.	Wilson Bolonger	Pulukpeh	Bong County	
4.	Kessah P. Saywon		Mont. County	
5.	Henry S. Bundor	MOA		06–524172
6.	John R. Nyancie	MPEA	Randall Street	07–7012426
7.	Solomon Fofleetoe	URFA	Maryland Co,	077263344
8.	Geny Lapina	GTZ	Mamba Point	06–585020
9.	Francis B. Janyan	LRDA	Monrovia	06–467125
10.	Sadee K. Jaberteh	ADA	Monrovia	06–533521
11.	Oretha T. Dennis	ECOWAS Civil Society	Monrovia	06–580822
12.	Luopu Kandakai	MOA	Deputy Minister	06–517174
13.	Joseph Anderson	ADA	Tech. Consul.	06–540023
14.	Emmanuel Jah	WVL	Dep. Agri Manager	07–7206086
15.	George Trokon	Kpain–Kpain–Gbo	Exe. Director	07–7406047
16.	Sunday K. Soloh	MFDC	Chairman	07–74233230
17.	Yevewou Z.Subah	MOA/FAO	Fish Specialist	06–517742
18.	Emmanuel Yarkpazua	LWF/WS	Agri. Manager	06–569363
19.	James S. Kiazolu	WVL	Agriculture	jameskiazolu@wvi.org
20.	Tom Evert	Mercy Corps		Tevert@mercycorpsfield.org
21.	Jonathan Davis	World Bank	Economist	06–446409
22.	Dr J. Chris. Toe	MOA	Minister	
23.	William Sheriff	LPMC	Marketing Manager	06–547349
24.	Ezekiel M. S. Davis	CUAP	Ex. Director	06–553267
25.	Jacob B. Swee	BWI	Head Agric.	06578546
26.	P. C.Nimely	FFL	PRO	06–462289
27.	Simeon Z. Woheel	RPAL	Ex. Director	06–543672
28.	Joseph F. Charlie		Editor	06–544922
29.	Charles Nyantee	FLY	Newport St.	
30.	Charles Deemie	LINFU	Bahn, Nimba	
31.	Rita Deemie	LINFU	Bahn, Nimba	
32.	Peter N. Korvah	MOA	Dep. Minister	
33.	Boima Vafaie	LCIP	Forestry	bbafaie@yahoo.com
34.	D. Winfred Hammond	FAO	Res. Rep	
35.	Joseph Boiwou	FAO	Dep. Rep.	
36.	Rennie Thomson	Bureau/Bud.	Analyst	
37.	J. Ebenezer Daygbor	The Analyst	Journalist	06–449267
38.	Solomon A. Ware	Truth FM		soloware@yahoo.com
39.	Nah Chea	Crystal FM	1 st Street	07–7008682
40.	Kremena Ionkova	WB	Opr Officer	06–434450
41.	J. Kollie	ARUMAI		
42.	Ladean Teage	MOA	Proj Planning	
43.	Wilmot J. Paye	Min./Gender		
44.	Franklin Henries	FAO	Agronomist	franklin@myway.com
45.	Francis T. Wayne	MGD	Educator	06–520207
46.	Ora Ganway	Heritage	Journalist	06581352

NEPAD – Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme

Liberia: National Medium–Term Investment Programme (NMTIP)

No.	Name	Organization	Address/Title	Phone #
47.	Albert Dolo	CDA	Agric.	07–7075319
48.	George Duokenel	MLM& E	Exploration	
49.	Augustine S. Laveleh	CRS	Agronomist	
50.	J. Twaplayfano Dohr	AMEU	Educator	06–553674
51.	N. Cester Gmah	CAP	Agric.	04–711497
52.	James Kingsley	LCC	Theologian	06–527–326
53.	Leon Quist Ledlum	MOA	Dep. Mini	07–7233631
54.	Chief Bisi Klah	MOA	Agro–Journalist	06587547
55.	Kpede Woiwor	ACDB	Economist/Banker	06–532484
56.	Paul K. Jallah	FAO	Agriculturalist	06–471166
57.	Ben Donnie	UNDP		ben.donnie@undp.org
58.	Arthur Berrian	NARDA		narda@nardaliberia.org
59.	Musu Sirleaf	Crystal FM		07–7201040
60.	Dr. Wilbur G. Thomas	USAID		withomas@usaid.gov
61.	Sam Y. Garwoloquoi	Harrisburg		
62.	Fataumata Fofana	Daily Observer		sweetnabie21@yahoo.com
63.	Joseph T. Kettor	ODAFARA	Agri. NGO	odafara@yahoo.com
64.	John Y. Jukun	LINNK		
65.	D.S. Mohammed Fofanah	LINFU	Agri.	
66.	B. Elias Showyin	Foreign Aff.		
67.	Gertie K. Suluteh	County Off.	Agric./Bong	
68.	Burton Davies	Forum	Press	
69.	Jangar S. Kamara	FDA		
70.	Robert D. Geezay	LRDA	Agriculturist	
71.	Betty J.Sawy	ACDB	OIC	06–514706
72.	Arthur R. Tucker	FAO	Media	06–562960
73.	Jerome Toe	LOVE FM	Press	07–7544033
74.	William F. Vanwen	LINFU	Agriculture	libfarm2005@ahoo.com
75.	T. Romeo Quiah	MPEA	MPEA	
76.	Daniel F. Davie	MICAT		
77.	David Barshell	The Dairy		
78.	Sam Zota, Jr.	The Monitor		zokar2006@yahoo.com
79.	James S. Roberts	CONTUL		congress@yahoo.com
80.	S. Nyemah Krejardiah	U.L.		077–05–3838
81.	Josep A. Gart	FAO/Rome	Rural Dev. Spec.	josep.gari@fao.org
83.	Augustine Ocokey	King FM	Editor	05–850815
84.	Pearl W. Fahnbulleh	NAWOCOL	Ex. Director	06–536137
85.	Rev. Kortee Duwor	LINFU	Member/Invest	07–7256440
86.	D. Siaffa Dennis Morris	FDA/CSO	Member	077207903
87.	Patrick Kormawa	Africa Rice Center	WARDA Director	p.kormawa@cgiar.org
88.	Lewis Konoe	Veritas		077201667
89.	J. Othello Gbediah	Information		077062688
90.	Elijah J. Nyenkan	Min. Commerce		077049554
91.	Abraham V. Dukuly	MOCI		06–420986
92.	E. Daoda Fahnbulleh	MARS, Inc.		06–551876
93.	Zack V. Monir–carl	Diaspora		
94.	Paul M. Bardoe	ELBC		
95.	Bob Woods	LOVE FM		077072946

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