

TAKING THE LONG VIEW

Sustaining Community Wealth through Gender Sensitive Natural Resource Management



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As the development of Liberia's natural wealth intensifies, a coherent set of policies that address questions of persistent gender inequality, sustainable rural livelihoods and long-term security of access to natural resources is needed. At a practical level, the capacity of rural women to maintain the local food economy must be preserved and enhanced, as must their ability to make informed decisions regarding the sustainable exploitation of natural resources. And they must enjoy equal opportunities for private employment in the formal economy. Should these concerns not be effectively addressed, the country runs a high risk of witnessing a further deepening of gender and income inequalities and undermining the country's potential for sustainable development.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Structure of the report and methodology	5
<i>Structure and objectives of the report</i>	5
<i>Research Methodology</i>	5
INTRODUCTION The Lay of the Land	6
<i>Why are women critical players in natural resource management</i>	6
<i>Why natural resource management is important for Liberia's sustained peace</i>	8
<i>Why women's greater participation in NRM requires alternative approaches</i>	8
SECTION I Natural Resources in the Non-formal Sector	10
1. <i>Who are the stakeholders in natural resource management?</i>	10
2. <i>Traditional systems and cultures of natural resource governance</i>	10
3. <i>How women define their relationships with natural resources</i>	12
4. <i>Women in aggregates and artisanal mining</i>	16
SECTION II Commercialization of Natural Resources	18
1. <i>Palm Oil plantations in Liberia</i>	19
2. <i>Plantation economies: a realistic assessment of employment</i>	21
3. <i>Plantation labour: commoditizing labour to supply commodities</i>	23
4. <i>Implications of plantation models for rural women</i>	24
5. <i>Alternatives to the plantation model</i>	24
6. <i>A note on small-scale and non-formal mining</i>	26
SECTION III Taking the Long View: Recommendations	28
<i>Recommendations to policy makers and intermediary agencies</i>	28
1. <i>Protect community lands through a gender sensitive land policy</i>	31
2. <i>Cultivate social cohesion for gender equality</i>	33
3. <i>Define and apply appropriate measures of progress</i>	35
SECTION IV Strategic Entry Points	39
<i>Entry points for protecting livelihoods through NRM practices</i>	39
<i>Entry point 1: Farming Domain</i>	41
<i>Entry point 2: Rural Markets domain</i>	44
<i>Entry point 3: Education and mobilization domain</i>	46
<i>A final note: building on momentum</i>	48
References	50
ANNEXES	54
<i>Annex I Government of Liberia policies and laws relating to community management of natural resources.</i>	54
<i>Annex II RSPO Principles and Criteria</i>	56
<i>Annex III W+ Indicators</i>	59
<i>Annex IV Consultant itinerary and interviews</i>	60

Executive Summary

“Women’s access to, use of and control over land and other productive resources are essential to ensuring their right to equality and to an adequate standard of living. These resources help to ensure that women are able to provide for their day-to-day needs and those of their families, and to weather some of life’s most difficult challenges. Women’s access to land and other productive resources is integrally linked to discussions around global food security, sustainable economic development, as well as the pressing fight against the HIV epidemic and prevention of and responses to gender-based violence”.¹

As the development of Liberia’s natural wealth intensifies, a coherent set of policies that address questions of persistent gender inequality, sustainable rural livelihoods and long-term security of access to natural resources is needed. At a practical level, the capacity of rural women to maintain the local food economy must be preserved and enhanced, as must their ability to make informed decisions regarding the sustainable exploitation of natural resources. And they must enjoy equal opportunities for private employment in the formal economy. Should these concerns not be addressed, the country runs a high risk of further deepening gender and income inequalities and undermining the country’s potential for sustainable development.

A series of recent studies warn that agro-investments² in Liberia have not met the expectations of all communities; on the contrary some communities have lost access to land resources and their food security in the process.³ The OECD DAC, the World Bank and international NGOs alike are renewing their focus on access to natural resource management as a core component of poor rural people’s entitlements as citizens. “NRM and agriculture knowledge, technology and public services are of key importance to support NR-based livelihoods, particularly in the face of environmental, climatic and market changes that require new solutions and adaptation”.⁴ This renewed focus is especially important given the growing investor interest in land and raw materials. In that sense, equal and secure access to natural resources is both a civil rights and a public service concern.

Rural women across the country already play a significant role in managing natural resources, which they do primarily for their food, fuel and water needs. There is an opportunity here to strengthen not only their management roles, but also their capacity for directly engaging in community decisions around how natural resources are developed, how the benefits from extraction of natural resources might be fairly shared, and how they might themselves engage in NR supply chains. The report takes the view that the most effective way to prepare rural women to make informed decisions in the negotiation and consultation processes in the (globalized) market of natural resources, is to reinforce and leverage their

¹ UN Women and OCHCR (2013)

² Studies such as Silas Kpanan’Ayoung Siakor (2012) Uncertain Futures: The impacts of Sime Darby on communities in Liberia and Lakshmi Balachandran, Elizabeth Herb, Shahbano Timirzi, Erin O’Reilly (2012) Everyone must eat? Liberia, Food Security and Palm Oil

³ The long-term implications of losing land and dignity and the particular impacts for rural women are being acknowledged by the international community. See Oxfam (2013) Promises, Power, and Poverty: Corporate land deals and rural women in Africa and Action Aid (2012) From under their feet: A think piece on the gender dimensions of land grabs in Africa

⁴ OECD (2012) Empowerment of poor rural people through initiatives in agriculture and natural resource management p.2

established activities within the local food economy. By **positioning women at the centre of community management of natural resources** their foundation in food production and their vested interests in healthy landscapes can be secured.

Policy makers and civil society organizations are recommended to pursue a two-pronged approach to gender-sensitive policy formulation:

- On the one hand, **protect and promote nature-based livelihoods** and their landscapes; primarily through a focus on the natural entry points for women - stewardship of natural resources for food security, support for renewable energy and, formalising women's rights within community land documentation processes;

And

- On the other, **improve individual and community access rights**, optimise the best practices that currently exist in plantation economies, lumber and extractive industries and, within that, enhance women's status so they have equal standing with men as decision-makers and stakeholders.



Structure of the report and methodology

Structure and objectives of the report

This report is divided into four sections. The first provides a portrait of natural resource management (NRM) in the non-formal sector directly from women's realities and perspectives. The second focuses on what happens to women's interests when natural resources are commercialized or commoditized, and looks at the commoditization of labour. The third section offers broad strategic recommendations for policy development. The recommendations are targeted at UN Women country office staff, at government bodies in Liberia, and at intermediary agencies including the private sector and civil society organisations. The final section outlines strategic entry points for practical action. The report is written with the following objectives in mind:

- To begin to qualify the intended and unintended consequences, linkages and trade-offs in the multiple dimensions of rural community relationships with natural resources in the country;
- To rebalance the focus of attention from the formal sector to the non-formal sector where the relations with nature are for the most part unaccounted for;
- To shift the emphasis from 'economic empowerment' of the individual in the context of national 'economic growth' to the empowerment of communities to safeguard livelihoods for themselves and for future generations from an ecological perspective;
- To offer illustrative alternative practices for the economic and ecological empowerment of communities;
- To offer practical ways for the empowerment of women in rural communities to manage change.

Research Methodology

The terms of reference requested the use of a consultative approach, which entailed interviews and field visits with key stakeholders, including:

- Sustenance farmers
- Aggregate excavators
- Protectors of ancestral sites
- Charcoal burners
- Small scale entrepreneurs
- Unemployed women
- Plantation nursery workers
- Artisanal miners.

The findings of this report are drawn from the realities and observations of farmers and agents in the agricultural sector in five counties identified by the UN Women office in Liberia. Over 75 meetings were conducted⁵ to bring a diversity of insights and opinions to this report – many of these perspectives are highly contextualized, anecdotal and personal. A good proportion of the meetings were held with government and intermediary agencies, only one meeting took place with the private sector. The author also considered existing organizations that are working on the ground at the grassroots level so as to build on the momentum and substantial knowledge already at play. Where possible other examples and practices are used to illustrate alternatives.

⁵ List of interviewees produced in Annex #

INTRODUCTION | The Lay of the Land

“Poverty, land and the environment are inextricably linked. The rural poor of Liberia depend almost entirely upon land and other natural resources for their livelihoods. Unequal access to and ownership of land and other resources have contributed significantly to economic and political inequities throughout Liberia’s history, and have exacerbated tensions and conflict.” Liberia’s Poverty Reduction Strategy (Government of Liberia 2008)

What are the key natural resources policy areas?

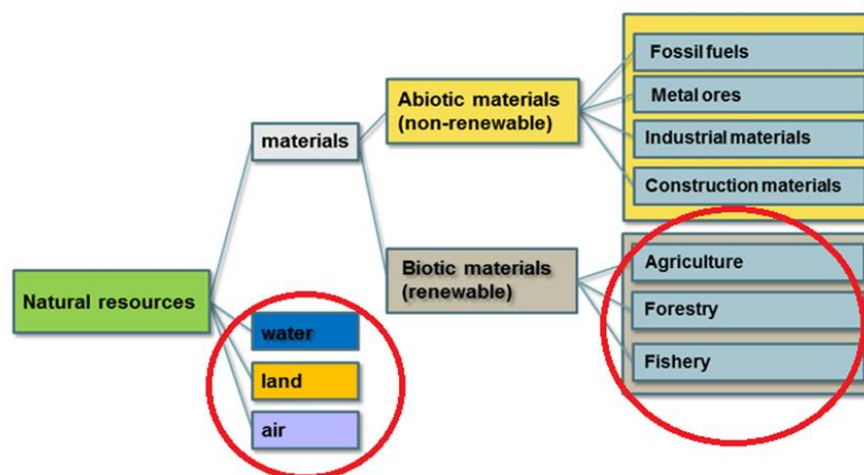
Using the UN system of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounts as a basis to categorize and analyze natural resources in Liberia, (Refer to Figure 1) four areas emerge for policy development:

1. **Public commons:** Most of the country’s water, land and air are held as community property in the public commons, with distribution of natural resources traditionally governed by male elders in the non-formal economy.
2. **Food security:** The red circles superimposed on the figure identify the natural resources that underpin formal and non-formal rural economies. The substantive basis for food security lies in agriculture, forestry and fishery, whose day-to-day management is predominantly undertaken by women.
3. **Extractive activities:** The extraction of non-renewable metal ores in the non-formal sector, artisanal small-scale mining (ASM), and plantation businesses all rely heavily on the support roles of women. The benefits they derive from these activities, however, remain largely peripheral.
4. **Non-renewable materials:** As the commercial exploitation of land and non-renewable abiotic materials (represented in yellow) intensifies and grows, it becomes important to protect women’s access to the public commons and to biotic materials in the non-formal (communal) sector, while at the same time enabling women to take engaged positions in the formal (private) sector.

Why are women critical players in natural resource management

Rural women have central and multiple relationships with natural resources that are core to their day-to-day livelihoods and their security and social safety nets. They have vested interests in seeing these resources sustained over the long term. These multiple relationships revolve around the management of food production for local consumption, a sector that generally does not attract systemic public or private sector support. Women tap into the public commons of water and forest fuel for as long as these resources are made available to them.

Figure 1: Analysis and categorization of NRM strategies, policies and programs



Source: UN System of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounts (SEEA)

A gender sensitive analysis that reflects this reality needs to underpin all NRM strategies, policies and programs in order for them to be inclusive, effective and sustainable.

When it comes to the commercialization of these natural resources, however, women's involvement becomes invisible and in most instances – is put at risk, primarily because women do not have control over the decisions taken on land and natural resource access and use. Their relationship with production and processing of these natural resources are reduced to a purely transactional one.

In response, policy makers and civil society organizations should pursue a two-pronged approach to gender-sensitive policy formulation:

1. On the one hand, **protect and promote nature-based livelihoods** and their landscapes; primarily through a focus on the natural entry points for women - stewardship of natural resources for food security, support for renewable energy and, formalising women's rights within community land documentation processes; and
2. On the other, **improve individual and community access rights**, optimise the best practices that currently exist in plantation economies, lumber and extractive industries and, within that, enhance women's status so they have equal standing with men as decision-makers and stakeholders.

Building from a position of strength: this analysis builds on the premise that in order to prepare women to take informed decisions in the negotiation and consultation processes in the (globalized) market of natural resources, it will be necessary firstly to reinforce and leverage women's management capacity and agency in their established activities within the local food economy. By **positioning women at the centre of community management of natural resources** their foundation in food production can be

secured.

Why natural resource management is important for Liberia's sustained peace

Liberia currently has one of the highest land concession rates in Africa. As the report shows, (Section II), the concentration of plantation and mining interests across the country is high, one 2012 report puts the total land allocated to “rubber, oil palm and forestry concessions at approximately 25% of the country”.⁶ These developments could become a steep price to pay for the promised benefits of revenue and employment, as the portion of land managed by rural Liberians decreases. If community engagement around land use decisions is not integrated systemically into government policy, the resulting societal tensions could be trigger points for local grievances, conflict and violence.

The Government of Liberia has established a range of policies and laws relating to community management of natural resources (see Annex I) and has signed on to related international agreements. It is still in the process of defining its new land policy and notably, has not passed the 2010 Gender Equity in Politics Bill.

Access to NR is both a public service and a civil rights issue.⁷ The management of natural resources goes hand in hand with good land management, restoration of the resource base and protection of the environment, to meet the needs of present and future generations. Agriculture and natural resource management are critical for pro-poor growth, and development research and practice agree that the empowerment of poor people in this sector as key. The OECD DAC, the World Bank and international NGOs alike are renewing their focus on access to natural resources as a core component of poor rural people's entitlements as citizens. “NRM and agriculture knowledge, technology and public services are of key importance to support NR-based livelihoods, particularly in the face of environmental, climatic and market changes that require new solutions and adaptation”.⁸

Why women's greater participation in NRM requires alternative approaches

If government policy is to take families out of poverty, then the first step is to take women out of poverty. Small-scale producers have the ability to provide for their families, communities and countries with minimal external inputs, as they have done for centuries. However, their situation deteriorates rapidly if access to land and water is denied or compromised. The growing commercialisation of land and the continued government priority given to high-input large-scale farming practices is leading to the displacement of local communities, with a parallel loss in farming knowledge, loss of biodiversity, seeds and livestock. Rural women are in a particularly difficult position because of their minority rights to land, their limited roles in decision making and their low levels of education and employability.

⁶ Knight et al (2013) Protecting Community Lands and Resources

⁷ The United States Department of Agriculture for instance, has a dedicated department that addresses civil rights.

⁸ OECD (2012) Empowerment of poor rural people through initiatives in agriculture and natural resource management p.2

There are three aspects of women's relationships with natural resources that require urgent and radical change to current practices and policies that discriminate against women and their productive activities:

1. **Enhancing the proactive contribution of women in defining and implementing solutions** in the face of increasing (domestic and foreign) demands on natural resources, growing population and the challenges of climate change;
2. **Correcting gender imbalances in land holding and use** through deconstructing, reconstructing and reconceptualising existing rules of property in land under both customary and statutory law in ways that strengthen women's access and control of land while respecting family and other social networks;⁹
3. **Supporting the mobilization and organisation of rural and urban women** to improve their situation, influence policy and realise their rights.

⁹ http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/uploaded-documents/fg_on_land_policy_eng.pdf This would be consistent with commitments made by African states in the AU's 2003 Maputo protocol to the ACHPR on the *Rights of Women in Africa* and the 2004 *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa* which call for action to address gender inequalities including women's unequal access to land.

SECTION I | Natural Resources in the Non-formal Sector

1. Who are the stakeholders in natural resource management?

The success of national environmental policies can be linked to the degree to which public participation and ownership is embedded in applying that policy. Decision-makers are recognizing the importance of understanding who is affected by the policy decisions and who has the power to influence their outcome – i.e. the stakeholders. Although this is a vital first step in any participatory planning, stakeholders are often selected on an ad hoc basis. This has the potential to marginalize important groups, or to bias the results in favour of one group over another.

The natural resource management sector has developed and refined stakeholder analysis and participatory methods for project design, planning and implementation through, for example, participatory appraisal, action research, land-use planning, social forestry, community monitoring and environmental evaluation. These initial steps are important in embedding NRM action directly with local constituencies. Those whose livelihoods are directly dependent upon natural resources and land are a key interest group with immediate stewardship, adaptation and mitigation roles which can affect not only their own livelihoods but the country's economic and ecological resilience as a whole.

This study did not conduct a comprehensive stakeholder analysis; rather it drew its information and analysis directly from the women and men already identified by UN Women and its partners in the field. A 'bottom-up' categorization of NRM stakeholders emerged, focusing on needs rather than goals, to differentiate between those women and men who are:

- working the land, tapping surface or ground water and drawing on common natural resources for day to day consumption (for food and water, construction, fuel);
- engaging in extractive activities, manual labour or market business for cash earnings;
- sourcing or processing natural materials for business income;
- threatened by or negatively affected by large scale investments including infrastructure (roads, dams) extraction practices of others (whether in agriculture, mining or other), because they are living in Project-Affected Communities (PACs) near FDI operations; and
- proactively working to protect natural resources or traditional modes of production in one form or another (sacred sites, cultural affiliations, land access).

Box 1: Stakeholder categories

Women often fit into more than two or three categories reflecting the realities of their multiple roles and interests:-

Producers: "the forest is my supermarket"

Extractors: "between a rock and a hard place"

Entrepreneurs: "working in the market"

Labourers: "looking for supplementary incomes"

Stewards: "protectors of the land"

Rural women are producers, extractors, entrepreneurs, labourers and stewards, often fitting into more than one role. (Refer to Box 1)

2. Traditional systems and cultures of natural resource governance

Changes in human demographics are reflected in shifting societal values regarding natural resources, which are further compounded by changes in land uses, climate, nutrient cycles and species distribution.

A comprehensive study on forest landscapes in Liberia describes the complex established hierarchy of traditional management, gender relationships, knowledge and customs. In Zangar, Grand Bassa County for instance, an adult male ‘bush manager’ is appointed by the elders to manage access to forest resources in the six villages, to prevent over-exploitation of forest resources. Women are not part of this group of elders, the suggested reason being that women are ‘afraid’ to make decisions and because they are excluded by the male secret society. When it comes to land access however, both men and women have equal rights to private ownership of the flood plains for sugar cane production, although capital availability limits women’s investment relative to men.¹⁰ The community expressed their opinion that there was more forest in the past compared to today and that the spread of “slash and burn”¹¹ rice farming was probably contributing to deforestation.¹²

The same study observes that most sacred groves of the male secret societies¹³ are associated with forests, with strong oversight by its members. Taboos and sanctions prohibit the exploitation of forest resources for commercial gain. With the demise of these local and hierarchical structures – through changing political space and the influence of Christian and Islamic teachings; this kind of localized forest conservation is on the decline.¹⁴

Local contexts are critically important for policy makers to consider:

- Community forest policy needs firstly to reflect the diversity of local contexts and practices and existing functioning relationships. International experience has conclusively shown that the imposition of standard management models that undermine existing customary management arrangements is a risky undertaking;
- Outside of community circles, there is limited knowledge of the subsistence and medical values of forest products, their linkages with household incomes and the local decision making processes and conservation practices;
- Most people are self-employed, drawing on the full range of natural resources for farming,

¹⁰ See IUCN (2009) p.20

¹¹ Under some conditions “Slash and Burn” or “Swidden” (forest farming) can be a sustainable form of land use and is a practice common to indigenous communities around the world. Unlike modern day slash and burning which uses chain saw/ bulldozer methods to clear land, traditional slashing would retain certain valuable grasses and large trees and farming would take place within, and sheltered by, the forest.

¹² The World Bank’s Liberia Forests Initiative (LFI) reports the following however: “Deforestation, if at all, was mainly taking place close to populated areas and likely as a result of traditional agricultural practices, which did not encroach into the surrounding dense forest. Moreover, there was no evidence of timber harvesting taking place in the investigated time period, despite the presence of visible timber roads in the imagery from 2002. Such little-exploited forest areas have presumably high biodiversity and conservation value despite the fact that the presence of timber roads may indicate that some selective cuttings could have been taking place”. Accessed at <http://go.worldbank.org/DY2C76V150> 06/06/14

¹³ The ‘poro’ for men has declined in significance in large part because the political situation in the past made it illegal for such associations. However there may be a role for other sacred institutions including the ‘sande’ for women, and in Garpu Town, a sacred institution called ‘nigi’ is organized around a river in the forest – it is forbidden to fish or hunt in the vicinity of the grove. (IUCN, p. 39) The ‘sande’ societies for instance retain knowledge of plant species for medicinal purposes and valuable traditional folklore.

¹⁴ See IUCN (2009) p.30

collection and sale of molluscs and snails, collection and sale of thatching material, fishing and crawfish harvesting, tapping of rubber, carpentry, alcohol processing from sugar cane and palm, blacksmithing and artisanal mining.

What does this imply for the decisions that women can make? In interviews conducted with village women they ranked the natural resources that they have the most access and control over as those relating to food and nutrition for the household (Refer to Figure 2 below). The resource that they have the least control over is land; particularly communal land, although women who can afford to purchase their own land do so.

3. How women define their relationships with natural resources

Women have a unique understanding of NRM due to their daily roles and responsibilities. They recognize, for instance, that sustaining the natural resource base is not necessarily equated with 'ownership', but may be more about open access to communal property and those aspects of nature that cannot be contained in land ownerships. Natural resources are critical for livelihoods and people are critical for maintaining them.

Women's priorities are motivated first and foremost by their ability to feed their families. Local food security includes granaries for storage, local markets for exchange, local infrastructure for ease of access and an organised value chain for local staples. Their priorities are different with those of men, who are more likely to pursue cash crop farming for the promise of income. Both men and women resort to similar strategies for coping when there is less food available, providing labour to other farms, selling harvested, hunted or gathered materials on the road side, or exchanging foods with other communities. Even though smallholders cause some of the damage through shifting cultivation, most of them recognize the economic, nutritional and ecological importance of indigenous fruit and medicinal trees.

Juxtaposed against the practicality of their uses of natural resources (Refer to Table 1 below) however, women face the reality that traditional decision-making behaviours now extend into more formal decision making structures. At the local county level for instance, the voices of men dominate. This has important and negative implications for women as transfers and transactions around natural resources become formalized.

The facts show that women have central and multiple relationships with natural resources that are absolutely core to their day-to-day livelihoods. They might not recognize the value of this management function themselves, and they might not be making the direct links between their farming practices, deforestation and long term water sources. Yet on a day-to-day basis, they fulfil a wide range of activities that are directly linked to natural resource management. Asked to describe their relationships with natural resources, women will invariably talk about their activities in the biotic sphere. A few descriptions include the following:

● Farming and food security

Town of Tuzon, income from cassava processing

Rose (G) (30) was born in this village and has been running her small cassava business for about five

years. She attended school to 7th grade and has one child. Her customers are local. She grows cassava and highland rice together. The raw cassava is peeled, washed and grated by hand, then cooked and spiced, lasting up to two days for freshness. Cassava can be peeled, cooked and eaten as a starchy food; it can be dried and pounded into cassava flour, peeled and fermented in water for three days and pounded to produce *fufu*, or grated and put under pressure to reduce water content to produce *gari* – which has the highest economic value.

Cassava is the second most important food crop grown by about 62% of the population. Paddy rice and cassava production and area harvested increased by more than 3% per annum during the period 2001-2009. Rice and cassava contributed 22% and 23% of the agricultural GDP respectively.¹⁵

● Energy sourcing

Town of Tiama, Charcoal processing

Asatu (B) (33) has a family of five. She borrowed LRD 1000 from her brother to purchase a gallon of diesel, and to hire labour to cut down a sizeable local hardwood tree. She walks deep into the forest to identify a suitable tree, arranges for the tree to be cut down and then prepares to slow-burn the tree. This involves around-the-clock monitoring of the flames for a period of time, up to a week for a large trunk. She cuts and prepares piles of grass and sand and dampens the flames if they become too intense. The intense heat and smoke affect her lungs, eyes and chest. Once the trunk has cooled down, she fills up cement bags – a sizable trunk can fill up 20 cement bags, and then she walks each bag on her head back through the forest to the road side. Often the women burn just half the tree, so as to purchase more diesel to burn the remaining tree with. Asatu did this for two years but found the labour extremely onerous and a severe toll on her health, she saved enough income from the charcoal processing to enable her to establish a fish-selling business. Women will also speak about collecting snails, harvesting non-timber products, and arranging for bush meat hunting.

● Forest harvesting

The hunter-gatherer aspects of every-day life form a significant contingency plan for these communities in that they retain their rights to harvest edible and non-edible plants, game meats, shell fish and raw materials from this natural capital.

Town of Tuzon, Timber harvesting for building

Lucy Y (49) and Annie K (50), walk 90 minutes into the forest to cut down long poles for building the local church. With the bark stripped off, the heavy beams are balanced, two beams to each woman, which she must then negotiate out of the forest. This was a volunteer activity towards building a church.

¹⁵ <http://www.fao.org/ag/agp/AGPC/doc/Counprof/Liberia/liberia.htm>

● Fisheries

The country has enormous marine and fresh water fishery resources. There are about 20 000 km² of marine fishing grounds, as well as over 1 800 kilometers of rivers, and countless perennial swamps and inland water bodies. Over 80% of the population directly depends on fish for animal protein supply. Apart from the seasonal fishing of rivers and creeks during the dry season, women and girls are active in splitting palm petiole to weave fishing nets and baskets, repairing fishing gear, and smoking, drying and selling fish. In some areas of the country, the mangroves have been cut back as demand for fuel sources to smoke the fish rises.¹⁶

● Waste management and sanitation

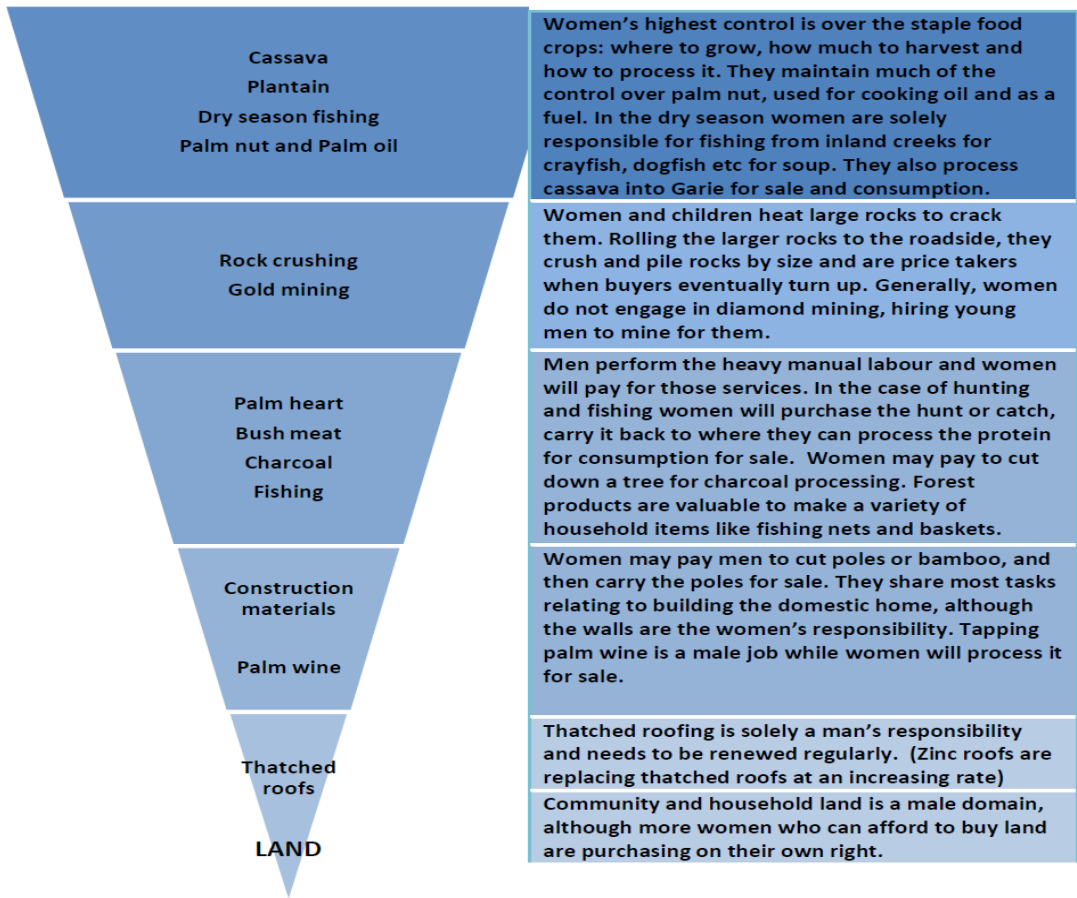
Solid waste management is an important aspect of NRM - from the standpoint of women's daily activities, it is an integral part of managing the health of both land and water. Market women in the town centres contribute to a waste management fund to keep the market grounds clean. Waste pickers and scavengers will select and recycle materials from town garbage dumps to re-use or sell. More enterprising women have established businesses to collect and manage waste disposal.¹⁷

Figure 2: Degree of control and access over natural resources as expressed by rural women in Liberia

High degree of control

¹⁶ <http://www.fao.org/ag/agp/AGPC/doc/Counprof/Liberia/liberia.htm>

¹⁷ See for example Paynesville Waste Enterprise - <http://www.bidnetwork.org/en/news/turning-waste-management-health-and-employment> accessed 06/06/14



Low degree of control

Table 1: Day to day relationships with natural resources

The table below provides a visual summary of the uses for natural resources on a day to day basis.

NATURAL RESOURCE DESCRIPTION		For human consumption	Abiotic materials	Local fuel sources	For export earnings
Aggregates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Stone of various sizes, slate, gravel, sand		✓		
Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Carbon captureSolar and wind sources				✓
Aquatics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fish	✓			
Forest Habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bush meat, snailsPoles, bambooHardwoodsCarbon capture	✓	✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓

Minerals & Metals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iron Ore Gold Diamonds 		✓ ✓		✓
Plant Species and tree crops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oil Palm Rubber Food crops 	✓			✓ ✓
Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy soils for healthy farming 	✓			
Water and watersheds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ground water Surface water Streams and rivers 	✓		✓	
Wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mangrove for fish habitat 	✓		✓	

4. Women in aggregates and artisanal mining

Women are less likely to refer to their extractive (aggregates and mining) activities, as these are activities that are perhaps more mercenary or opportunistic in nature - driven by market demand and/or by the need for supplementary cash income. It is, however, an important aspect of natural resource extraction that needs to be addressed, because of the Non-formal and highly exploitative nature of these activities.

● Sand mining

Town of Tuzon: aggregate extraction activities

Zota B (22) and Asate W (21) are both school girls, and part of a community of men and women engaged in excavating sand from the fringes of the forest on the outskirts of the village. The excavation hole is about 100 meters into the forest; it fills up with water during the rains. The men jump into the deep pool, throw out the water, and excavate the sand onto the sides of the pool. The women in turn load the sand onto baskets on their heads and transport the sand to a collection point in the village. Buyers in pick-up vehicles will purchase sand in bulk for LRD 600:00 (equiv. USD 6.80) per van. The two girls interviewed, one in 11th grade and one in 6th grade, are involved in transporting the sand as one way of earning some cash to enable them to continue their schooling.

● Small-scale artisanal mining

In Asia and Latin America approximately 10-20% of artisanal miners are women, while African women make up 40- 50% the total artisanal miner population.¹⁸ Women are more active in the Artisanal and small scale mining (ASM) sector than in formal, large scale and capital intensive sector. In Liberia, where non-formality in the mining sector is high, women only formally represent 7.59 % in the sector.¹⁹

¹⁸ Women and Artisanal Mining: Gender Roles and the Road Ahead (2003) Jennifer J. Hinton, Marcello M. Veiga, Christian Beinhoff in: *The Socio-Economic Impacts of Artisanal and Small-Scale Mining in Developing Countries* Ed. G. Hilson, Pub. A.A. Balkema, Swets Publishers, Netherlands, 2003

¹⁹ Kaiser, Janne B (2011) Gender Analysis of the GIZ Project "Regional Resource Governance in the Fragile States of

Women tend to work on the bottom of the labour hierarchy, predominating in manual processing such as crushing, sieving, washing and panning, to amalgam decomposition in the case of gold mining. The number of women owning concessions is very low as the sector is dominated by a male hierarchy of mining boys, brokers, local traders and mine owners. Despite the diverse and important roles undertaken by women in artisanal mining, limited reliable information is available on this topic.²⁰ “In order to be legal, artisanal miners and diggers, who are mostly attracted to ASM out of poverty associated with the decline of rural agricultural livelihoods, are required to pay large amounts of money for a yearly mining license of 25 acres, something that is logistically impossible for even the most professionalized miners to cover in one year”.²¹ It is highly likely that this is a price out of reach of most women.

Diamond mine camp outside town of Wheama

In a diamond mining site freshly established (October 2013) the narratives from three women diamond “miners” suggest that they stand to lose no matter what. Each woman ‘sponsors’ a team of mining boys, this includes payment, feeding, clothing and caring for the boys. One woman sponsored three boys, one sponsored five and another sponsored nine. The boys dig in open pit holes dotting the landscape. If they are successful in digging up a diamond, it is not clear how the quality of the diamond is assessed, but usually a third party ‘broker’ ends up purchasing the diamond because the women do not have sufficient funds to make the purchase. No mention was made of the women being reimbursed for their upfront costs in caring for the mining boys. As has been mentioned in other studies these mining camps are beyond formal law keeping and the harassment of women goes unpoliced. The bulk of the women in the camp travel in to sell food, water, drink and supplies to the miners. This particular mining site presented an alarming scene, as huge trees had been sawed through leaving only wide stumps to indicate the enormous trees that once stood, and the lush canopy that no longer was.

West Africa” GIZ Monrovia. With the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy estimating significantly higher percentages of women’s participation in the sector, this data hints at an even higher informality of women than their male counterparts.

²⁰ Kaiser, Janne B (2011) Gender Analysis of the GIZ Project “Regional Resource Governance in the Fragile States of West Africa” GIZ Monrovia

²¹ WWF (2012) Liberia Case Study Report

SECTION II | Commercialization of Natural Resources

This section examines the implications of the commercialization of natural resources for women in rural communities focusing on two aspects: (a) the expansion of palm oil plantations as one of the primary tree crop investments in the country, and (b) the protection of land in the face of large-scale investments (which include forestry, tree plantations and mining). (Refer to Map 1) The map provides an indication of the density of estate and mining interests in the country, although it does not reflect the (non-formal) artisanal mining interests which cut right across the entire country.

The Government of Liberia has taken a political and economic decision to rehabilitate abandoned plantations and mines in the wake of a long and destructive civil war. While it is not the intention of this paper to weigh the costs and benefits of plantation economies, it should be noted that the overwhelming evidence gathered from plantations around the developing world does not measure up to fair living standards for humans working in or living adjacent to plantation property, nor for natural biodiversity²². The implications for women especially has been mixed and it is no coincidence that more women are standing up and making their demands heard.

Rural communities that sustained a non-formal rural economy now enter into unmediated agreements in the formal economy that expose them to the risks of global markets. Recent studies warn that agro-investments in Liberia have not met the expectations of all communities, some communities have lost access to land resources and their food security in the process.²³ The long term implications of losing land and dignity are well documented and the particular impacts for rural women are acknowledged by the international community.²⁴

At the same time, as the costs of living rise, the need to earn becomes more pressing. Faced with few options, and with the reality of their low marketability, women and men in rural communities will look to new rural investments with some optimism and expectation of employment, infrastructure development and service provision.

The management of community expectations in their negotiations with private and public stakeholders requires mediation. What was notable in interviews with both government and the private sector was that the activities of representative civil society organisations were discounted, down played or ignored entirely. This does not bode well for a **forward-looking discourse around a social compact with business and the public sector**, and even less well for the representation of the interests of the poor.

²² As a point of interest, the African continent has many species of palm tree. One of Nigeria's former first ladies, Ajoke Muhammed, now devotes her time to saving indigenous plants, including the palm tree. She has 400 types of palm growing in her garden, built up over eight years in the capital, Abuja - her aim is to conserve, propagate and disseminate forgotten indigenous plants. See <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24443919>

²³ Studies such as Silas Kpanan'Ayoung Siakor (2012) Uncertain Futures: The impacts of Sime Darby on communities in Liberia World Rainforest Movement and Sustainable Development Institute and Lakshmi Balachandran, Elizabeth Herb, Shahbano Timirzi, Erin O'Reilly (2012) Columbia University: School of International and Everyone must eat? Liberia, Food Security and Palm Oil

²⁴ See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocDWFcbGts8> . See for instance Oxfam (2013) Promises, Power, and Poverty: Corporate land deals and rural women in Africa and Action Aid (2012) From under their feet: A think piece on the gender dimensions of land grabs in Africa

Map 1: Large scale land use allocations to foreign investment as at 2013



1. Palm Oil plantations in Liberia

Public scrutiny is pushing big companies to comply with national laws and regulations. Under pressure in Indonesia and Malaysia for their part in widespread deforestation, Asia's leading companies in the palm-oil industry are turning their attention to Africa where countries are keen to cash in on one of the world's most profitable agro-industries.²⁵

In Liberia, producers of palm oil have in principle access to over 622 thousand hectares and an average market capitalization of US\$8.2 billion.²⁶ There are four main concession agreements at the moment with a total investment of about USD 2.56 Billion. (Refer to Table 2) If in fact the existing agreement with Sime Darby to plant oil palm on 220,000 ha proceeds to plan, then this is more than the total land area that Sime Darby had planted with oil palm in Indonesia in 2009 (even though Indonesia is more than fifteen times the size of Liberia) and ten times more than the hectares of oil palm plantations in its entirety established in Ghana.²⁷ This gives a sense of scale to the plantation expansion plans in Liberia.

²⁵ Caramel, 2011

²⁶ RRI, 2013

²⁷ Ministry of Agriculture stats, Ghana (2010) puts total nucleus (Ha) of land under oil palm plantations at 21,574 Ha.

Palm oil²⁸ is essentially a woman's crop, but it ceases to be so once it enters the global supply chain. In the domestic markets across the West African region, women are the majority stakeholders in palm oil processing and marketing, palm fruit marketing and palm kernel processing and marketing. On the international market palm oil is increasingly being used as feedstock for biofuel although its primary use remains for food. (Refer to figure 3 for uses of palm oil)

In Liberia, the sector's immediate expansion has so far been through plantation-scale production. The intensive processes of palm oil production tends to reduce freshwater and soil quality, and adversely affects those local communities dependent on ecosystem products (such as food and medicines) and ecosystem services (such as regulation of the hydrological cycle and soil protection) provided by the forests.²⁹ The plantation model also potentially excludes other supply models that might allow small scale farmers to incorporate cash cropping with food production, arguably a model that enables women to compete and capture a share of the value through their own choice and farming decisions.

Table 2: Principal concession agreements and investment

CONCESSION / COMPANY	CAPITAL	POTENTIAL JOBS	LOCATION	TOTAL AREA (HA)
1) Decoris Oil Palm Plantation	\$64 Million	1,000	Maryland	
2) Sime Darby Gurthrie Plantation	\$800 Million	30,000	Cape Mount	311,187
3) Golden Veroleum/Southeast Plantations	\$1.6 Billion	40,000	Grand Kru and Sinoe. ³⁰	350,000 ³¹
4) Equatorial Palm Oil UK publicly listed crude palm oil (CPO) producer founded in 2005 (joint-venture with KL-Kepong International Limited)	\$100 Million	10,000	Grand Bassa	169,000 ³²

Sources: Liberia National Investment Commission (2006-2010)³³, email correspondence and company websites.

²⁸ The global palm oil industry has recently witnessed unprecedented growth, with a cumulative annual growth rate (CAGR) of 8 percent, although West Africa's CAGR is at 1.5 percent. The competitive landscape is dominated by Southeast Asian producers who have better production efficiency (higher productivity at comparable costs of production, hence able to capture larger shares of the world market) and ideal climatic conditions. Source: Ofosu-Budu, K., and D. Sarpong (2013), *Oil palm industry growth in Africa: A value chain and smallholders study for Ghana*, In: *Rebuilding West Africa's Food Potential*, A. Elbehri (ed.), FAO/IFAD

²⁹ (Fitzherbert and others 2008)

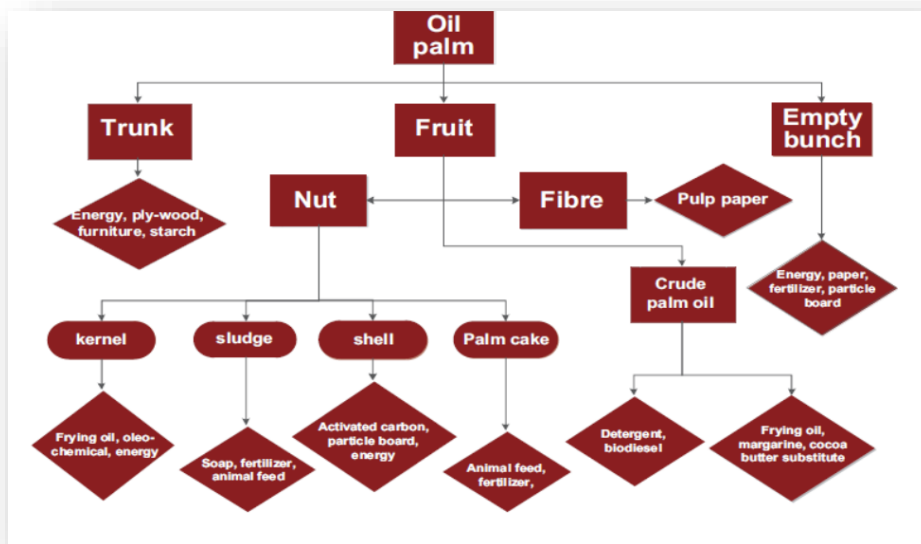
³⁰ Potential areas include Maryland, Grand Cess and River Gee

³¹ This is the total area allowed for consultation with communities before development

³² 50,000 in first 10 years doubling to 100,000 hectares in 20 years

³³ <http://www.nic.gov.lr/?environment/concessions.html> Accessed 06/06/14

Figure 3: Oil Palm Product Value Chain



(Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Ghana)

2. Plantation economies: a realistic assessment of employment

Community responses to oil palm plantations in Liberia differ within each community and from one community to the next, depending on whether they have gained or lost in the process – and generally it is women who have lost more than men.

In the plantation nurseries, women are engaged to bag, weed and administer chemicals to the palm saplings for the equivalent of US\$ 5.00 a day. In one community two young women felt emboldened to express their resentment at not being considered for employment by the oil palm company, perceiving this as a form of punishment for standing by their community's sacred area claims, and for disallowing further expansion by the plantation.

In another community, also on the borders of an oil palm plantation, one man was employed as a security guard, his pay was shared among his brothers and their families, none of whom were employed. In the interview he observed: "There are very few jobs at the plantation. We have to pay for the job". In another community, one woman interviewed was relatively comfortable as her husband had been "working in the plantations since the rubber days" while across the room, another woman sold processed cassava for cash income and was the sole breadwinner for the family.

In Malema town, none of the women interviewed worked on the plantation. They farmed on the fringes of the plantation, supplemented their needs with charcoal burning and had relinquished previous farmland to the plantation. According to them, the company health clinic was reserved for employees, although some of the children attended the "private school" up to 12th grade. They had noticed an increase in insect infestation on their farm plots, and reasoned that the use of pesticides on the plantation had led to a higher concentration of pests on non-treated farm plots. The town chief

attending the meeting provided some history to the changes in land use over the years; “the national brewery company took our land for 52 years, it then passed to a gum tree plantation before Sime Darby took over the land. The community made 19 requests to the company through the senator. No maps were presented to the community and nothing as yet has been done for the community.” This transfer of land use and the gradual encroachment of boundaries is common to many other countries across the continent.

● Example: A social compact in the making

The **post hoc negotiation model is undesirable for community, state and company, and far too often it is the most vulnerable, including the environment** that bears the cost. In December 2013, a consultant travelled to Liberia to explore this trend and examine opportunities for creating more stable growth. He met with corporate and rural community stakeholders in Montserrado, River Cesse and Grand Bassa counties with ongoing interest in agricultural, rubber and timber extraction. The main takeaway was this: “when a firm engages with the community as a system it becomes possible to better appreciate land value and the scope and potential for local disruptions. Mapping these communal systems at the point of concession, rather than as part of a post-concession communal contract process, will enable the investor to better identify the volume of extractable resources, reduce risk and improve long-term growth prospects.”³⁴

The palm oil company Golden Veroleum (GVL) is cognisant of the sensitive nature of land use and the ties to the land. From a business perspective the company sees the value in employing women, who “work faster, treat machinery more carefully and value their work relatively more than men”. The numbers of jobs available to women however, are mainly during the nursery phase of palm tree cultivation and much less so when the trees reach maturity.

Extract from interview with GVL

“We began negotiating our concession agreement with the Liberian government in 2009, by invitation from the government. Currently there are approximately 3,000 hectares planted, which include four nurseries. We have approximately 3,000 workers with the company, 99 percent Liberian. The remainder are foreign managers, mostly from Indonesia and or Malaysia. Of the 3,000 Liberian workers nearly 40 percent are female. Most positions with the company are gender-neutral, meaning our female colleagues are free to apply for any position, of which the best qualified person will be chosen per our HR guidelines. In terms of community benefits, the range is broad and includes equal opportunity employment, educational and medical benefits (both of which were originally designed for the benefit of GVL workers, however as per company policy is open to the local communities on a space available basis), Community School Partnership in which we partner with local schools and provide limited support, voluntary literacy classes, agricultural and agronomic scholarships with local Liberian universities, cadet training program where selectees are trained in mill operations in Indonesia.

Additionally, we have built or rehabilitated approximately 800 miles of road in the counties where we operate, currently Sinoe and Grand Kru Counties, and collectively constructed or rehabilitated 50 hand pumps providing clean drinking water to the communities.

³⁴ Profiting from Engagement: A view from Liberia <http://caerusassociates.com/ideas/profitting-from-engagement-a-view-from-liberia/> accessed 14.06.14

Concerning the types of employment women are able to secure with the company, as mentioned most positions are gender-neutral, but depending on the specific role for the position on-the-job training is provided to ensure proper operational standards and safety.

In terms of the community consultation process, we are typically invited into the communities which seek development in their areas. During the consultation process, which we refer to as FPIC (Free, Prior, Informed, Consent) we will meet with community leaders to include elders, women's groups, youth groups, etc, to discuss their desires and for us to present the company and our capabilities in bringing that development. During the process, which communities for themselves, we are obligated to provide all necessary information in order for the communities to make informed decisions.

Upon the culmination the community meetings, mapping, etc, the communities decide whether or not to move forward with GVL. Once agreement is met we sign a memorandum of understanding with the community, which outlines the responsibilities of all parties.

3. Plantation labour: commoditizing labour to supply commodities

With investments in plantation sector for oilseed³⁵ cultivation set to expand, the labour issues to be concerned with include:

- a. The actual numbers employed;
- b. The casuality of those employed;
- c. The conditions and pay of those employed;
- d. The provision of meaningful employment to women.

In examining labour issues in palm oil production the 2013 CIRCLE Indonesia and Oxfam Novib³⁶ found that across Africa, Asia and Latin America, labour conditions were not in accordance with ILO conventions or the RSPO social criteria on labour. Typical labour issues are often linked with other social issues including occupational health and safety, and disruption to family cohesion from the effects of migration. Day workers and casual labourers are not protected by labour laws. **This could be of significance to labour in Liberia as it is predicted that the expansion of new oil palm plantations will resort to employing more workers on a casual basis as a way to keep costs down.**

In Guatemala, labourers generally earn 85 to 95 quetzals per day (equivalent to about \$1.25 an hour) for backbreaking work that requires standing long hours lifting heavy bunches of palm-oil berries, known as *racimos*, and being exposed to thorny leaves and undergrowth. Each racimo contains an average of 2,300 individual berries and weighs up to six kilograms. A worker on average can cut 120 stems per day, though particularly skilled employees can cut up to 200. A truck can hold about 3,500 racimos, and it normally takes six to eight able-bodied men about two hours to fill these trucks, which carry their loads from the farm directly to a recently completed \$16 million extraction plant capable of processing 40 tons of fruit per hour. An Oxfam report goes further to explain: "Payment depends on productivity, and minimum goals demand a strenuous effort. Most of the men do not earn more than 60 quetzals (about \$7.50) per workday, and the women earn less than 40 quetzals (about \$5.00)," it says. "The day begins at 6 a.m., and ends at 3 p.m. The women need to get up before 4 a.m. to prepare lunch for their partners."³⁷

³⁵ This includes rapeseed, sunflower, sesame, groundnut, cottonseed and soybean

³⁶ Mapping of labour issues and advocacy works in palm oil production. Retrieved from: <http://www.circleindonesia.or.id/mapping-of-labour-issues-and-advocacy-works-in-palm-oil-production>

³⁷ <http://www.ticotimes.net/2014/05/10/palm-oil-guatemalas-newest-biggest-cash-crop>

4. Implications of plantation models for rural women

When male labour is diverted to other activities (whether mining or plantation labour) the ability of women to sustain food production is severely limited by sheer time and energy constraints, as well as by less-frequent contacts with agricultural extension workers, the diversion of their labour to cash crops or other income-earning activities, and their numerous domestic and child-rearing responsibilities. Harvest yields are further compromised if women are growing on more marginal lands, are walking further for water and fuel and are undertaking all kinds of other activities to supplement income.

Plantations can affect local food production by diverting labour from peasant agriculture and alienating land. Shifting cultivation systems, land traditionally used by women, grazing areas and land cultivated by newcomers to a community are particularly vulnerable to takeover. Pre-existing poverty and inequalities in land ownership are likely to be exacerbated by plantations. There is widespread evidence of low wages, long hours, poor housing and health risks for plantation workers around the world.³⁸

Plantation workers in palm oil and rubber production are still the poorest and most vulnerable of all plantation workers. As the world's most profitable palm oil producer, Malaysia has a long history of plantations. Not only are most women on the plantation born and raised there, but in many cases they are the **third generation** to do so. Plantation environments do not lend themselves to the provision of quality education, or acquiring skills needed in more specialized sectors of the economy. Lack of education and social exclusion not only diminishes women's opportunities and limits their possibilities for joining mainstream jobs in the industrial and service sector but does the same to their children.

Women are especially vulnerable to a range of negative consequences from large-scale agriculture. As more men leave for income related employment, rural household labour patterns also change with women taking on roles previously reserved for men. Very often, female agricultural workers are paid less than men and suffer from health and fertility problems; men often take over traditional female crops if the crops become commercialised; and when land is acquired on a large scale for farms or plantations, women can lose usufruct rights and may have to walk further for natural resources and to get to schools. At the same time, this does not mean that women cannot benefit from having a new income source, or use the new situation to defend or renegotiate control over land and their own labour-power.

5. Alternatives to the plantation model

There are a number of alternative practices that policy makers in Liberia could consider. These could be alternatives to plantation practices or systemic responses that target women producers and labourers within plantation models. The examples that follow are illustrative of current practices.

● The Mama Lus Frut Scheme (MLFS) in Papua New Guinea

MFLS was established to increase the productivity of smallholder palm-oil farmers. Before the scheme, women were tasked with collecting the loose fruit that fell from the main bunches on the ground.

³⁸ Smalley (2013)

However, the returns from the sale of the collected fruit were recorded on the household's payment card (known as the papa card after the introduction of MLFS). The women did not receive any money from collecting the loose fruit. The MLFS was introduced in 1997 by an oil palm milling company: New Britain Palm Oil Limited (NBPOL). As a part of MLFS, women were issued with harvest nets and a payment card (mama card) which allowed them to collect and sell loose fruit, and earn their own monthly payment. By the end of 1997, 1612 women had joined the scheme. By August 2001, 3271 women had mama cards. With the introduction of the MLFS, mean household income has increased by 18% for families on single household blocks and by 14% for families on multiple household blocks.³⁹

● Managing palm oil processing machinery in Nigeria

In Obuka village in Enugu state, Nigeria, the major source of income for the women is through palm oil production and selling. To reduce the strain of the labour-intensive process and increase the women's productivity, the local government donated three palm oil processing machine plants. Production increased from 20 litres of palm oil a week to between 50 and 70 litres. Almost every woman from this village is financially better off from processing and selling palm oil. Some of them have built houses of their own from their earnings. In order to prolong the life of the new technology, the local government hired an engineering graduate from the Institute of Management and Technology, to train the women on how to use and maintain the processing plant. Over 50 women underwent training and 17 are now training other women. Each woman contributes 150 naira (about one USD) monthly for maintaining the machine.⁴⁰

● The Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO)

RSPO was set up in 2004 to establish clear ethical and ecological standards for producing palm oil. As of 2013, only 15% of total palm oil production was certified as sustainable.⁴¹ Both environmental and social impact assessments are required.⁴² One of the criteria for the implementation of principle 4: Use of appropriate best practices by growers and millers, is that pregnant and breast-feeding women should not be allowed to work with pesticides. On the other hand, RSPO criteria do not instruct growers and millers to provide maternal health programmes for women. The implementation criteria for principle 6:

³⁹ Koczberski, G. (2007). Loose Fruit Mamas: Creating incentives for smallholder women in oil palm production in Papua New Guinea. *World Development*. 35(7): 1172-1185. See also: Warner, R. & Bauer, M. (2002). Mama Lus Frut Scheme: An assessment of poverty reduction. Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research. Retrieved from: <http://aci-ar.gov.au/publication/ias020>

⁴⁰ West Africa Insight Special Report Sustaining Palm Oil Production August 2012: PALM OIL

⁴¹ WWF 2013

⁴² Demand for palm oil, an ingredient found in nearly half of all supermarket products, is at an all-time high – and so is awareness of its reputation as the number one cause of deforestation in countries such as Indonesia. While the palm oil sector is finally at a tipping point, progress could quickly revert to mere greenwash unless major players ride the momentum to deforestation-free supply chains. One of these major players is the organisation created to promote sustainable palm oil, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). The RSPO has just convened a meeting in London of members and stakeholders to shore up support for its certification scheme – a scheme criticised for greenwashing palm oil from suppliers involved in forest destruction.

<http://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/deforestation-palm-oil-more-greenwash-greenpeace>

Responsible consideration of employees and of individuals and communities affected by growers and mills include the constitution of a policy on sexual harassment and violence, as well as procedures for calculating and distributing fair compensation for work. Also, there are instructions to take into account gender differences in the power to claim rights, and ownership and access to land. Although noteworthy, simply recognising gender differences is insufficient to address the entrenched gender inequalities in the rural communities of most developing countries. Instead, RSPO principles and criteria need to rest on the foundations of feminist political ecology (FPE), which can be used as a framework to employ gender as “a critical variable in shaping resource access and control interacting with class, caste, race, culture, and ethnicity to shape processes of ecological change.”⁴³ Within this paradigm, policies and procedures can be formulated to empower women through increased participation in decision making processes, and representation in worker unions.

● Protecting forests through High Carbon Stock Approach

For the first time, independently verified standards are being trialled by producers in the **Palm Oil Innovation Group (POIG)** – a collection of NGOs and progressive producers (New Britain Palm Oil, Agropalma and Daabon) that aim to provide independently verified, responsibly produced palm oil. These standards use the RSPO as a basis, but establish additional requirements on palm oil producers including to assess and protect peatland and forested areas in their concessions. Through their additional commitments GAR, Wilmar and members of the POIG have set the benchmark for identifying forests for protection using the High Carbon Stock (HCS)⁴⁴ approach, a process to determine what land can and cannot be developed. This ensures that forest destruction is not part of the equation.

6. A note on small-scale and non-formal mining

The field research allowed for only limited interface with women small scale artisanal miners. The encounter with small-scale diamond mining gave a sense of the precarious nature of these activities, in terms of livelihoods, levels of lawlessness and in terms of ecological impacts. Evidence from Latin American countries and from African countries like Tanzania and Rwanda characterize small scale mining as having a high degree of informality, high levels of violence and intimidation in proportion with the values at stake, and an increasing potential to generate conflict. These are all critical trigger points for a country like Liberia.

Supporting women’s mobilization to influence and affect change will be the way forward to enable them to **prioritize local licensing of resources** and to be able to hold their own when it comes to negotiating with powerful middle agents higher up the supply chain. These middle agents procure mining inputs such as explosives, drills, mercury, they build roads and cut down trees, and are usually immersed in the black economy. Regulating their activities in a systematic manner may help to protect and even improve the ASM realities that communities face at the grassroots level.

There is always the possibility that large-scale capital-intensive mining interests might move into these open pit areas and that local communities will, once again, face challenges of the formalization of the

⁴³ Rocheleau, D., Thomas-Slayter, B., Wangari, E. (1996). *Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experience*. Routledge, London. pg. 4

⁴⁴ [High Carbon Stock \(HCS\)](#)

sector without involving them as shareholders and stakeholders. More research and action will be needed to prepare women and men in these communities for this eventuality.

● Examples: community management to regulate mining

The **Mano River Union** provides an illustration of natural resource management in a region that transverses Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone. A World Bank report noted that women's concerns about mining policy and their ability to influence it are secondary to men unless women organise into groups.⁴⁵

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has implemented an innovative and holistic intervention with Andean governments to better regulate artisanal mining and ameliorate its environmental impacts. Their focus is on four areas:

- Techno-environmental: working and testing efficient technologies for artisanal mining
- Health-environmental: improving working conditions of artisanal miners
- Socio-economic and organisational: training members of institutions, community and producer organisations in improving environmental quality of life
- Legal-administrative: developing regulatory proposals based on findings from the project's pilot activities.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ World Bank (2009) Module 10: Gender and Natural Resources Management, Gender and Agriculture Sourcebook.

⁴⁶ Hruschka, F. (2001) Gama Project, Lima

SECTION III | Taking the Long View: Recommendations

Recommendations to policy makers and intermediary agencies

The recommendations outlined in this and the next sections are targeted at government bodies in Liberia, and at intermediary agencies including UN Women country office staff, the private sector and civil society organisations.

Policy makers and civil society organizations should pursue a two-pronged approach to gender-sensitive policy formulation:

1. On the one hand, **protect and promote nature-based livelihoods** and their landscapes; focusing on the natural entry points for women primarily through stewardship of natural resources for food security, support for renewable energy and formalising women's rights within community land documentation processes; and
2. On the other, **improve individual and community access rights**, optimise the best practices that currently exist in plantation economies, lumber and extractive industries and, within that, enhance women's status so they have equal standing with men as decision-makers and stakeholders.

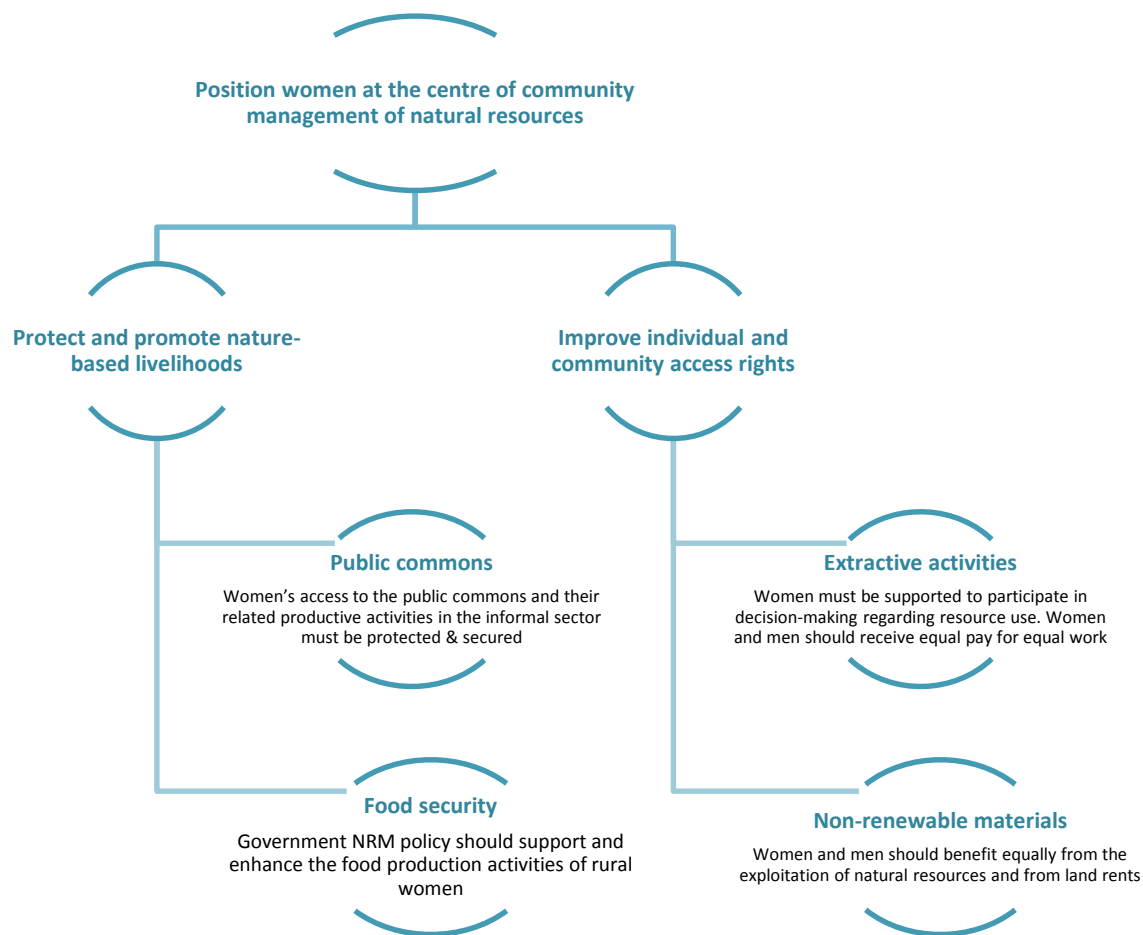
With a two-pronged approach, the following priorities can be addressed:

Public commons and rights of access: From the perspective of rural communities, the policy focus needs enable women and men to **claim and retain their rights of access to natural capital**. Government policymakers and interlocutors must be absolutely deliberate in accounting for these entitlements for the bulk of the rural population.

Supporting food security and women's activities in the rural sector will be one way to empower women to claim their rights. Their socio-economic empowerment requires support for their earnings from land and natural resources. To this end, formalizing and regulating their activities in ways that are less about enforcing compliance and more about **sheltering or supporting their various activities** is important.

Extractive industries and other large-scale uses of land for the extraction of non-renewable materials should ensure that women are able to participate in decisions around land use and natural resource management, and that the distribution of revenue from these natural resources benefit man and women equally.

Figure 4: Two-pronged approach to gender-sensitive policy formulation



Three broad policy strategies are suggested to address these goals and to underpin and safeguard long-term community wealth through gender-sensitive natural resource management:

- **Protect community lands through a gender sensitive land policy**
- **Cultivate social cohesion for gender equality**
- **Define and apply appropriate measures of progress (and targets)**

Table 3: Policy strategies for long-term community wealth through gender-sensitive NRM

Policy Strategy		Government and policy makers	Women's Rights and Civil Society Organisations
Protect community lands and natural resources	(Gender sensitive land policy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government policymakers and interlocutors must account for land and natural resource entitlements for the rural population, and especially for rural women. Review national land and NR policies with deliberate gender focus within cultural context of common property, community rights and community responsibilities. Ensure that the process of drafting and revising community rules for land and natural resource management opens up space for women's engagement and decision making. This requires working closely with CSOs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join forces and solidarity between the two gender groups to address structural issues of inequality. Provide support to and facilitate / mediate context-specific and community-based dialogue that brings out women's voices. This needs to be activated and facilitated on a case by case basis. Consider best practices and alternative community-based NRM models such as Common Pool Regimes while enabling women to articulate their rights and perspectives.
	Commons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and enforce laws and policies that protect the public commons outside of the formal land 'market' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable rural women to develop common understanding to protect and secure public commons and access to natural resources
Cultivate Social Cohesion for Gender Equality	Consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a high degree of mutual trust and collaboration with local CSOs that work in gender-sensitive ways Enable CSOs to be the representative interlocutors between government and rural communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design and facilitate 'safe spaces' for gender differentiated perspectives to be heard. Act as mediating agencies to empower civil society, facilitate dialogue, work with media, educate politicians.
	Capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen the political decentralization process that divests power directly to community Develop respect and sensitivity to diversity of opinion and voice at the local levels and target women's leadership and capacity to articulate their voice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain momentum of training for women and men equally; literacy, small business management, farm practices and management of finances, in participatory planning and monitoring processes. Support capacity building for women's awareness, confidence and leadership.

	Community cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement policies and practices that enable communities to take a long-view and work together. Enable rural communities to drive their own long-view agendas. This requires education and awareness at all levels including within government itself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build community cohesiveness, values and a spirit of cooperation. Work closely with women in their local communities to build NRM systems from the bottom-up to ensure long term tenure security.
	Compliance and social compacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge select investment partners who meet best practice in social, environmental and human rights safeguards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight the links between food security, NRM and social order as part of the social compact with business
Define appropriate measures of progress		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop indicators that tie in conservation agriculture, NRM, gendered empowerment and climate change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with communities, and especially women to adapt indicators such as W+

1. Protect community lands through a gender sensitive land policy

At the continental level, African governments have offered a range of incentives to investors to acquire land through multi-year land leases, to boost investments in agricultural inputs and technologies, processing and infrastructure. An assessment by the Land Policy Initiative (LPI) of land transactions between 2000 and 2013 records some 685 large scale land based investments (LSLBI) (i.e. involving over 200 ha) covering over 40 million acres. These cases constitute 45% of all cases of LSLBI globally over the same period and 47% of targeted land for investments.⁴⁷

At the international level, the women's movement has fought hard for women's equal rights to individual ownership of property and inheritance. This continues to be an important aspect of equal rights and access between men and women. However, poor women and men also need to claim their communal rights of access to natural capital – which is essentially priceless - within the framework and cultural context of common property and community rights. Individual rights are simply no match for the land claims made on the scale of big agri-business or timber interests.

UN Women has made a similar acknowledgement: “An international environment which recognizes and promotes women's land rights... requires a departure from viewing land principally as a commodity... the prevailing discourse around land rights has assumed the form of individuating and commoditizing entitlements to land, where access and ownership are conceived in liberal market terms and land is narrowly understood as property. This discourse is at odds with any traditional, collective and

⁴⁷ Out of the 685 cases of LSLBI, 474 deals were signed with the remainder either yet to be signed (149 cases) or failed (62 cases).

indigenous understandings of land rights, which views land not as a financial commodity to be privatized and sold, but as a **life-sustaining resource to be shared and protected**.⁴⁸

In its field research on protecting communal lands in Liberia, the report Protecting Community Lands and Resources points out that “the process of drafting and revising community rules for land and natural resource management may open up an authentic space for women and other vulnerable groups to question rules that disadvantage them and advocate for rules that strengthen their land rights and tenure security”.⁴⁹ **The findings and recommendations of this report are very pertinent to the evolving land planning policies in the country and to the gendered interests of rural communities.**

While a national discourse in light of the review of national land policies is important, putting the policies into effect will require context-specific and community-based dialogue, to be activated and facilitated on a case by case basis. **The engagement of women, speaking from their very local realities, will build their confidence and voice.** The engagement of men, working with their traditional structures, and identifying local champions is also key to this work. As pointed out in Women Rising, Women Falling “the exclusion of women from decision making is greatly influenced by men. Facilitating change in the power dynamics to enable increased participation of women requires sustained engagement of men to recognise the values that women bring to bear in community decision-making processes.”⁵⁰

Traditional agrarian systems that sustain vibrant and diversified local economies cannot be dismissed or bypassed in policy decisions. This is an important first block from which to build their agency and empowerment in relation to their landscapes⁵¹. Ultimately farm knowledge and practice will be a combination of old and new, revered and untested, random and intentional, from the elementary to the sophisticated – the centrality of ritual, ceremonial and prescriptive systems, the role of shaman and spirit, language and ecological knowledge cannot and should not be discounted.

● Example: Common Pool Regimes – community-based management model

“At one end of the spectrum, the belief that government ownership is the best way to manage natural resources – forests, for example – has in some cases led to a marked reduction in the resource. At the other end, imposing decentralisation as a remedy without a proper understanding of the local society has triggered ethnic conflict. Social-ecological systems are complex and nested, and resource users around the world vary widely in their preferences and perceptions. Such systems are not amenable to being characterised by simple models.” Elinor Ostrom, 2009 Nobel Prize Laureate in Economic Sciences

⁴⁸ UN Women (2013) Realizing Women’s Rights to Land and Other Productive Resources, New York and Geneva
United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, p.3

⁴⁹ Knight, R. Silas Siakor and Ali Kaba (2013) Protecting Community Lands and Resources: Evidence from Liberia p. 135

⁵⁰ Foundation for Community Initiatives (2011) Liberia: Women rising, women falling. P.10

⁵¹ Examples in India and the Philippines provide evidence that attitudinal and behavioural changes regarding the protection of the environment with rural production systems have been brought about by linking with cultural traditions and promoting self-interest (e.g. protecting sources of potable water) rather than by heavy enforcement or stiff penalties.

The Nobel Laureate Elinor Ostrom gained recognition for bringing economics, political science and sociology together. Focusing on the management of water resources, Ostrom looked at management of fish stocks, pastures, woods and groundwater basins and, in the process, provided compelling evidence that a third form of property,⁵² neither privately owned nor state controlled, is based on *common ownership*. Ostrom argued that economic activity is not merely split between the alternatives of market and state, but that it may be regulated by *collective social activity*.

Ostrom introduced the term Common Pool Regimes (CPR) to categorise such forms of property. Her findings documented that collective community ownership of resources by rural communities can foster the evolution and adaptation of sustainable resource systems (or regimes); and along with clear rights and functioning policies for public goods and the commons, fostering collective rights to common property supports the securing of the future provision of ecosystem services. Ostrom has challenged the established assumption that common property is poorly managed unless regulated by government or privatised and shows how individuals may work together and form collectives that protect the resource at hand. This way of thinking sits at the heart of the way pastoralists and rural women might measure the value of natural capital – where the idea of private ownership of part of all of an ecosystem runs counter to communal access to the biosphere.

2. Cultivate social cohesion for gender equality

On a practical level, a stronger collaborative relationship needs to be fostered between government and representative civil society groups, and between men and women in both the formal and non-formal aspects of natural resource management. Gender equality refers to equality of rights, responsibilities and opportunities among women and men, and girls and boys. Persistent gender inequalities that disadvantage women constitute a serious development risk for the country.

The views, interests and priorities of rural communities, and especially women, must be heard, articulated and acted upon. Representative civil society groups can play a crucial intermediary role.

A high degree of trust and collaboration needs to be nurtured between government and CSOs.

There needs to be a coalescing of voices on behalf of women. The unequal representation of women in local governance needs to be addressed, and men, who hold disproportionate weight in decision-making, must be engaged. Only by **joining forces can men and women address structural issues of inequality**.

Suggested areas for action for both government and civil society include the following:

⁵² Property rights encompass the rights to use, own, rent or sell land, its resources and benefit flow; they thus determine how they are used. Their fair distribution is essential from an equity perspective.

● Consultations with community

The processes of managing and benefiting from natural resources should empower communities, to legitimately engage in the decisions around design and allocation and to be involved in feedback, monitoring and improvements. Women's participation in these processes is fundamental, not only because the priorities and needs of women can be quite different than those of men, but also because strict gender roles in some cultures where women dominate the domestic sphere while men are more involved in public life means that women are prone to be 'invisible' in any consultation on these issues.

Gender disparities, "while pervasive in most countries and groups, are typically more pronounced for households with lower socioeconomic status: the combined effect of gender and socio-economic inequality is often to exclude women from poor households from attending school and getting rewarding jobs, denying them possibilities of self-expression and political voice, and exposing them to hazards that put at risk their health"⁵³. **Civil society organisations need to design and facilitate 'safe spaces' for gender differentiated perspectives to be heard.**

Consultation with communities needs to begin well before "telling communities after the fact". **Civil society organisations (CSO) have an important role to play in representing, articulating and mediating the views, interests and priorities of rural communities** – they need to be supported in their role as intermediaries and **a high degree of trust and collaboration needs to be nurtured** between government and CSOs.

Government established mediating agencies such as the LEITI have an important role to play in empowering civil society, especially community-based organizations. LEITI needs to ensure that information is made public easily and quickly, it could produce simplified versions of concession contract agreements so that CSOs can easily understand and disseminate the terms of the agreement through the community, especially where the potential of conflict are apparent. Civil society can assist the LEITI by publicizing clear, understandable synopses, across, for example, local radio networks and inviting and facilitating community feedback.

● Capacity building

Decentralization processes⁵⁴ that divest power directly to community leadership at all levels needs to be sensitive to diversity of opinion and voice and establish respectful communication

⁵³ Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi (2009) The Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress Revisited – Reflections and Overview p.50 <http://www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr/en/documents.htm>

⁵⁴ Refer to UN Women report (2014) From the Sidelines to the Forefront - Ensuring a Gender-Responsive Foundation for Liberia's National Decentralization Process: A Review and Analysis of Barriers, Opportunities and Entry Points

channels. Women's awareness, confidence and capacity for leadership needs support. The government, through its public policy, and CSOs through their coordinating efforts, can maintain momentum of training for both men and women equally. This includes applied literacy, small business management, farm practices and management of finances, as well as training in participatory planning and monitoring processes. The latter is critical to planning for and the disbursement of community funds.

Rights and Rice, a local NGO, recently organised a series of natural resource community forums, during which it became clear that for women and other marginalised constituencies such as the physically challenged, "they were pressing their agenda and their issues - they were and are clamoring to be part of the discussions and the decision making".⁵⁵

3. Define and apply appropriate measures of progress

"Liberia's path to sustainable growth will depend on it investing its resource rents in a manner that compensates for the depletion of those resources, in order to maintain national wealth. This means not only increasing traditional measures of capital (produced and human), but including natural capital such as land, forest, and sub-soil assets as key inputs to sustained growth. As GDP does not measure the depreciation of assets, it is widely argued that it may not be the most relevant summary of aggregate economic performance, especially in economies where growth depends largely on natural resource depletion. A long-term view of natural resource depletion and savings is necessary to ensure that future generations will have at least the same level of welfare." World Bank 2012

Gender equality and women's empowerment are critical components of poverty reduction strategies. The benefits of disaggregating data by gender are substantial. According to the World Bank, 62% of projects that included substantial gender indicators delivered positive outcomes, as compared to only 30% of those projects that did not include gender indicators.⁵⁶ To be meaningful and illuminating, indicators need to be derived in consultation with local people, and to reflect the gender context of a particular region, country or community. Community indicators⁵⁷ should take into account statutory and customary laws, as well as reflecting the ways in which gender inequalities are experienced and expressed. Only then can they convey what would constitute meaningful change for the people involved in or being affected by public policy and private investments.

UN Women Liberia and the Ministry of Gender will need to take steps to determine and apply development indicators that tie in natural resource management, gendered empowerment, food security, agro-ecological farming practices and climate change considerations. Women's empowerment cannot be confined to economic measures alone but must be integrated with a deeper set of social and nature-based values. Gender indicators need to go beyond traditional economic equity and socio-

⁵⁵ Interview notes: James Yarsiah, Rights and Rice

⁵⁶ Women's World Banking (2013) Gender Performance Indicators: How well are we serving women?

⁵⁷ The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)⁵⁷ (Winnipeg, Canada) has developed Community Indicator Systems which enables communities to identify the economic, environmental, cultural, social, and other priorities and issues that matter most to them; and select the indicators that will measure change in their priorities over time. Clearly there will need to be deliberate steps put in place to ensure that women participate in these processes of engagement and that gender equality and women's empowerment measures are integrated into such community systems.

political empowerment to include climate-relevant environmental and ecological factors, including access to public commons and natural resources.

Development and growth indicators to date have focused more on the value of what is produced, and less on what is conserved and stewarded for public access and for generations to come.⁵⁸ At a time when public and private sector finances are being held to a higher level of transparency and accountability, as more development funds integrate environmental protection with economic objectives and are channelled through climate change funding facilities, there is a need to align gender indicators with measuring gender-responsive implementation.

A number of cross-cutting qualitative and quantitative issues that gender indicators could address include:

- At the monetary level: how much money, dollar for dollar, actually reaches women and girls at the very local levels of consultation and decision making around disbursement, use, investment and reinvestments;
- At the empowerment level: how many women and how many men are actively involved and engaged in reaching those decisions and in enacting on those decisions; how many women participate in determining a valid indicator that best captures change for them;
- At the environmental/ecological level: how are the access points to natural resources that poor men and women depend on protected, how are men and women involved in the decisions and actions around stewarding natural resources for future generations;
- At the gender-differentiated level: what kinds of gender-differentiated evidence, perspectives, narratives and realities are captured, recorded and learned from as a direct result of their own measurements of progress.

● Example: Forest Investment Program

The Forest Investment Program (FIP), (a targeted program of the Strategic Climate Fund) lists the promotion of gender equality as part of its expected co-benefits. The one gender-related indicator for the FIP is “percentage income change and employment (women and men) in rural areas”.⁵⁹ This is potentially problematic, it essentially implies that economic ‘growth’ measured in income and employment can be pursued at any cost. Access to forest commons, stewardship of forest resources for

⁵⁸ One fundamental difference between the surveyed frameworks and indicators is whether their underpinning basis is production or consumption based. Within the three major green growth frameworks, the System of Environmental Economic Accounts (SEEA), the World Bank Adjusted Net Savings (ANS) approach and the Ecological Footprint (EF), the SEEA and ANS frameworks take a production approach, and the EF is the only one to take a consumption approach.

⁵⁹ IUCN (2013) Gender Review of the Climate Investment Funds p.9

access by women and men, and involvement of women and men in FIP design are not captured in these indicators. A 2013 review of the FIP program in Indonesia specifies: “There is no clear perspective on the handling of forest tenure and recognition of the rights of marginalized people and women to land and natural resources, and the FIP plan does not acknowledge women as important forestry stakeholders, and does not recognize the impact of forest degradation on women or protect their rights.”⁶⁰

● Example: Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress

The International Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress⁶¹ calls for the inclusion of indicators that measure well-being as well as economic, environmental and social sustainability. In 2009 “The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity” also addressed the inadequacy of national accounting and recommended new approaches to macroeconomic measurement that would include the value of ecosystem services, especially those upon which the poor depend.⁶² Annual natural capital losses, the study explained, are typically estimated at an unimpressive few percentage points of GDP. “If, however, the natural stocks upon which the livelihood and welfare of the poor depend are included, then we are talking about fifty percentage points and more; a figure they would find impossible to replace”.⁶³

● Example: W+ Standard

The Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture & Natural Resource Management (WOCAN) has established six main domains: income and assets, time, health, food security, leadership, education and knowledge against which indicators for its W+ Standard (formerly the Women’s Carbon Standard) are organised.⁶⁴ (See Annex III). The W+ criteria have been developed through a consultative process with stakeholders that included communities in Asia and Africa, and expert reviewers to form the basic requirements of the standard. Each application of the standard will measure how well a project meets these criteria through the validation or verification process. These are the requirements that will be

⁶⁰ ADB 2013 p.29 table

⁶¹ <http://www.stiglitz-sen-fitoussi.fr/en/index.htm> the report takes issue with the prevailing “GDP fetishism” in the developed and emerging economies – there are three working groups: classical GDP issues, sustainable development and environment, and quality of life.

⁶² The rural poor are the most vulnerable to loss of Natural Capital (biodiversity and ecosystem services). Appropriate policies require an understanding of this link and ways to measure the importance of such services to incomes and livelihoods. Measuring the GDP of the Poor can clarify current dependence and risks to poverty, development and MDGs from losses of natural capital.

⁶³ TEEB –The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity for national and International Policy Makers – Summary Report: Responding to the Value of Nature 2009, UNEP, p.5; see also: The EU’s Beyond GDP process which is piloting an environmental index for use alongside GDP and launching macro indicators to communicate key issues on sustainable development.

⁶⁴ Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture & Natural Resource Management. See <http://www.wplus.org/>

used to evaluate a project's conformance and to determine how the project has improved the quality of life for women in the community.



SECTION IV | Strategic Entry Points

Entry points for protecting livelihoods through NRM practices

Each of the following strategic entry points will require a pro-active cross-sectoral approach that needs national level endorsement and political will, capacity building at the farmer and agency levels, and the solidarity of the local civil society and international community.

*The primary motivation is to **position, value and support women at the centre of community natural resource management.***

Polymakers and practitioners alike have a responsibility to ensure that any work with community organizations on rural development and infrastructure issues, resource management issues and development policy in general should be built on efficient use of conservation information and knowledge, on proven risk management practices and on sharing local experiences and lessons learned. It is an ongoing dialogue. This is easier said than done, particularly when women are regularly excluded from mainstream dialogue. Considerably more investment of time, money and human resources is needed to support and engage women in all aspects of working with community and civil society organizations.

The research suggests three strategic entry points to better protect women's rights and remove barriers to women's use of natural resources at the community level. These are:

1. **Farming entry point:** invest in the direct and indirect activities that underpin their food security sustainability through the spread of ecologically sound farming methods, land and water stewardship, and deepening a vested interest in optimizing the environment and natural resources – given the dependence of most rural communities on a limited natural resource – base, environmental sustainability is critical to the maintenance of household income and asset streams.
2. **Rural Markets entry point:** diversifying income earning possibilities, and providing incubation/ shelters for small and medium business and social enterprise activities in the natural resource sector, including artisanal mining, energy alternatives, fisheries.
3. **Education entry point:** promote NRM learning and teaching through public education, working with youth and young women, peer-to-peer and farmer/field learning opportunities, building in local knowledge and traditional practices with emerging best practices.

The table below is not comprehensive, but more illustrative to indicate the different roles of government, private sector and civil society organisations.

Table 4: Entry points for protecting livelihoods through NRM practices

Strategic entry points & opportunities	Government of Liberia	Private Sector	Women's rights groups and Civil Society Organisations
Farming domain and local food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government policies and practices must place women at the centre of community natural resources management at the local level. Prioritize policies and programs that promote ecologically sound farming methods as part of an integrated NRM strategy. Prioritize vulnerable women farmers in agricultural, food security and climate change-related policies and practices and respond effectively to their natural resource needs Agricultural policies and practices must move urgently to a diversified farm economy that supports local food production, promotes agro-ecological farming systems and small-scale labor- intensive forms of farming. Promote the development of a vibrant local food economy and women's roles in the sector Deepen the conservation agriculture footprint 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public and private investments need to devote more resources, human hours and training to further embed CA practices through face to face, on field, and exchange demo visits to show case the importance of conservation agriculture principles Prioritize sustainability principles including land and water stewardship in all business practices Re-evaluate plantation model and adapt to diverse production practices Adopt the FAB principles into business culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build women's awareness of the key role they can play in managing land, water, forests and fisheries through their production activities. Work with rural women locally to address their energy needs through: building technical know-how and maintenance of rural renewable energy sources Promote the central role that women can play in addressing food security and climate change risk responses and support local NGOs in monitoring these risks and evaluating responses Promote the mobilization of women's farmer associations to underpin NRM learning
Rural markets domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote programs that stimulate a diversitt if small and medium business and social enterprise activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source foods, goods and services from local enterprises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support education around diversifying income earning possibilities Leverage existing functional saving groups to build capacity to develop proposals and access grant programs that support NRM

Education domain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies that promote education, public outreach and behavioural change need to be complemented with programmes that have lengthy planning timeframes in order to maximise the consultation process and reduce uneven awareness by stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support local scholarships and burseries for women and youth ▪ Provide learning opportunities to staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote and deliver peer-to-peer and farmer/field learning opportunities, building in local knowledge and traditional practices with emerging best practices ▪ Educate, inform and encourage behavioural change especially among young women ▪ Promote education and training around ecologically sound farming methods and links with NRM ▪ Develop participatory training materials and support for women farmers focused on local alternative farming, energy and water systems with incubation funding to build their capacities to steward land, water and biodiversity
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Entry point 1: Farming Domain

Food security is by far the strongest, clearest and most visible link to women's relations with natural resources; it is the core of their domain. Their energy and water uses are key components in this activity. In other activities women are active but mostly invisible, even though they are an essential part of cash transactions and exchanges.

A community-led development model that supports the formation of self-help groups as a means of promoting community empowerment, addressing poverty and food security, health and nutrition and underlying gender equity differentials can incorporate the communal elements of NRM. **Government policy will need to commit to integrating NRM with the food production activities that rural women are engaged in.** Rural women and their representative agencies need to identify those individuals within government bodies and institutions who understand and champion small-holder farm interests. These institutions often function at a policy making level, not at the grass roots level and do not involve or engage small scale rural producers. This includes those institutions responsible for solid waste management, national water commission, forestry, meteorological office, climate risk insurance bodies, lands management and environmental legislature. In other words, the policy context, while still evolving, needs the strong and vocal advocacy *from and for* women farmers.

Hunger, poverty, corruption and conflict, are all are part of the same equation. A thriving and vibrant local food economy not only addresses the first two factors, but can provide a high degree of quality employment, can amplify and upgrade rural women's productive roles in the sector, and can integrate

or embed the stewardship of landscapes into production processes for future generations. The monocrop, high synthetic input agriculture that come with plantation practices runs counter to conserving and nurturing land and water, and optimizing natural resources and natural defense mechanisms.

Women should be invested in – not only because they are farm labourers producing for a market, but primarily because they are *the* food providers, and potential ecological service providers. These are the same constituency who can either add value through safeguarding natural resources or run up huge costs and ecological debt by denuding natural resources. Planning and communication strategies with farmers to adapt their farming practices should include the messages that how they farm also promotes stewardship of land and water, and ultimately promote and nurture nature's biodiversity.

● Example: Deepen conservation agriculture (CA) imprint

The International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) is to agriculture what the IPCC report is to climate change – it is the most extensive study of its kind intended to guide world agriculture development and food production in the coming decades. It reflects a growing consensus among the scientific community that the paradigm of industrial, energy-intensive and toxic agriculture is a concept of the past. The key message of the report is that *small-scale farmers and organic, agro-ecological methods are the way forward to solve the current food crisis and meet the needs of local communities*. The work of more than 400 scientists over four years, the report is a sobering account of the failure of industrial farming.

The ultimate objective should be to reach a critical mass of conservation agriculture (CA) adopters so as to make it the default farming practice. Changing traditional farm practices is a slow process, and takes more than a few consecutive harvests to establish, particularly when farmers are 'risk adverse' to change. Conservation agriculture is a foundational link to food security, for income diversification and for climate resilience and needs to be deeply imprinted equally with women and men. Public and private investments need to devote more resources, human hours and training to further embed CA practices through face to face, on field, and exchange demonstration visits to show case the importance of conservation agriculture principles.

Enabling farmers to work with local schools to document their experiences (visually, through stories and photo journals and in writing) and how their changing practices affected overall harvests and soil and water health over time will help to imprint the sustaining aspects of CA. CA capacity building and participatory action learning could be an important foundation not just for local food security, but also for the next step towards the business disciplines of tracking production and for certified agricultural value chains that require traceability and/or agro-ecological proof. Where possible the use of rural radio, audio-visual training methods, and the use of icon-based web applications for illiterate farmers for instance could be promoted. The principal messages around ground / soil cover, soil health and water management, use of mulching, compost development, crop rotation or intercropping, and minimum tillage as well as in-situ growing of seeds, seedlings and saplings need to be further developed with

traditional practices. The local management of water supply, water conservation, storage and small scale irrigation needs to be strengthened. Placing these management roles directly in the hands of women will promote the long term sustainability of water stewardship.

Why is it so important to deepen the CA imprint? Field experience tells us that even where farmers have been trained in permaculture methods and principles over a few harvest seasons, these practices are easily lost or compromised when other inputs and practices are brought in, bundled as they often are with the requisite chemical fertilizers, pesticides or treated seeds and financial credit. Given that supply chains are constantly changing in response to internal and contextual factors, it can be anticipated that CA methods can be quickly abandoned for other business or revenue objectives. This suggests that increasing the numbers of women trained; awarding and recognising champion farmers at the county and national levels; and promoting the successes of women farmers in the local food production sector will need to be heightened. Unilever's commitment to sustainable agriculture⁶⁵ provides one example of the complexity and comprehensiveness of sustainable agriculture in practice.

● Example: UN Global Compact on Food and Agriculture Business Principles

In 2014, the UN Global Compact launched the Food and Agriculture Business (FAB) Principles⁶⁶, following a two-year consultation process with businesses, UN agencies and civil society organizations engaged in agriculture, food and nutrition systems. The FAB Principles aim to help realize sustainable development and empower businesses to contribute to the post-2015 development agenda.

“The FAB Principles are the first set of global voluntary business principles for the food and agriculture sector, and are designed to serve as umbrella principles that complement existing initiatives on agriculture and food sustainability. The Principles respond to calls from the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20) for sustainable intensification of food production through increasing local investments, reducing waste in supply chains and ensuring access to local and global markets”. On environmental responsibility, the Principles call “responsible management of agriculture, fisheries, forestry and livestock systems, while protecting and enhancing the environment and using natural resources efficiently and optimally”

This set of principles could present the agricultural and investment sectors in Liberia with an opportunity to hold agri-business and other large investors to the goals of local food security.

⁶⁵ The code was compiled drawing on the multi-national's experience with the management of annual and perennial crops, tropical and temperate farming systems in different landscapes, soils and social settings. It provides a portrait of the nature of agriculture today – it is a science, a business and a detailed record for traceability. <http://growingforthefuture.com/unileverimpguid>

⁶⁶ The Principles are: aim for food security, health and nutrition; be environmentally responsible; ensure economic viability and share value; respect human rights, create decent work and help communities to thrive; encourage good governance and accountability; and promote access and transfer of knowledge, skills and technology, for both small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and smallholders.

Currently, community social funds (at USD10:00 per hectare of oil palm planted) are not disbursed quickly and community decisions around these funds might not meet the priorities of women. The funds also tend to get invested in “visible structures” like buildings or equipment that more often than not falls into disrepair.

An alternative approach might be for agri-businesses to support the local food economy which can have a range of direct and indirect benefits, including the supply of a healthy workforce and entrepreneurial spin-offs for women in the production, processing and marketing supply chains of local foods. This may also ensure that companies pay heed to land use and are required to set aside sufficient quality arable land for small holder farming, and manage reserve funds for farming. A community fund that supports local food production could be mobilized and managed by rural women.

Entry point 2: Rural Markets domain

Women are caught in a double bind. Land is both an asset and a form of social security for them and their families. When women are not able to sustain their families through home-based production due to the loss of land entitlements, they look to all available avenues to bring in income. Their low educational status and lack of access to skills, finance and technology often limits them to the lowest paid jobs, so that the monetary value of their earnings will rarely match what they have lost in terms of natural resources.

At the same time, there is a rich, vibrant and long established tradition of entrepreneurship, innovation and trade in the region that is dominated by women. Their propensity for savings and underwriting the costs of community development is well-developed and can be leveraged towards more ambitious enterprise plans that integrate the ecological with the economic drivers. In particular, alternative entrepreneurial approaches can be promoted to

- Leverage existing functional saving groups to build capacity to develop proposals and access grant programs that support natural resource management;
- Leverage existing community-based associations to build capacity to secure and manage community lands and common pool resources.

● Example: Women in rural energy enterprise

Woody biomass is the primary energy source for domestic cooking and heating in Liberia, with an estimated 90 per cent of households using firewood and charcoal as an energy source. The National Charcoal Union of Liberia (NACUL) estimates that in 2005, 36,000 tons of charcoal was.⁶⁷ Women

⁶⁷ In 2009 a National Energy Policy (NEP) was formulated with its principal objective to ensure universal access to modern energy services in an affordable, sustainable and environmentally-friendly manner in order to foster the economic, political and social development of Liberia. Its short-term objectives by the year 2015 were:

- 40 per cent of Liberian citizens living in rural and peri-urban areas using traditional biomass for cooking shall have access to improved stoves, kerosene or efficient-gas cookers in order to reduce indoor pollution;
- 30 per cent of the urban and peri-urban population shall have access to reliable modern energy services enabling them to meet their basic needs (lighting, cooking, communication, and small production-related activities)
- 15 per cent of the rural population and 25 per cent of the schools, clinics and community centers in rural areas shall have access to modern energy services to meet their basic needs

engaged in this activity can become more efficient and ecologically sound producers.⁶⁸ In Foya two women have built a small solar lamp business. Of the four +entrepreneurs in Liberia on solar lamps three are women and they are being trained in technical maintenance. GIZ Liberia is also expecting to train three women in steel working for stove making.

As more and more technologies are developed to be 'climate smart', there are a wide range of appropriate models to draw from. Often it is less about the technology itself and more about the **engagement of rural women in its design and use**. Time and again, urban and technological (and male) biases assume that rural women have neither the interest nor the capacity to work with technologies. In fact, the opposite is true. The most successful popularization of rural technologies takes place when women 'appropriate' the technology – they become the agents of their distribution. In other words, if women are trained to build, maintain and repair appropriate technologies - from smokeless stoves to solar panels - they are more likely not only to use these technologies, but to demand them, and to train other women in their usage. Over time, the users become empowered to adapt and improve upon initial designs.

Women can be engaged in reforestation supply chain activities, such as tending to saplings as a way to replace trees cut for charcoal. 'Domesticating' high-value tree species to produce marketable forest products is another way of strengthening this source of income.

Apart from the vicious spiral of land degradation that combustible fuel fosters, biomass fuel smoke contains several pollutants including carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides. Studies have shown that burning one kilogram of wood on a typical wood-fired stove will only generate about 18% heat to the pot, 8% as smoke and 74% is waste heat. These gases are often responsible for the high levels of respiratory diseases women get in households where there is poor ventilation.

Box 3: Rural and Renewable Energy Agency (RREA)

The RREA was established by an executive instrument to serve as the legal and regulatory body for the renewable energy sub-sector, its potential for working directly with women needs to be heightened. The primary function of RREA is to promote the commercial development and supply of modern energy services to rural areas with an emphasis on utilizing locally available renewable sources of energy. The RREA's mandate includes:

- Integrating energy into rural development planning;
- Promotion of renewable energy technologies;
- Facilitating delivery of energy products and services through rural energy service companies (RESCOs) and community initiatives; and
- Facilitating the funding of rural energy projects including managing the REFUND.

⁶⁸ The Eco-Stove Project promotes the production and use of eco-stoves meant to increase energy savings and efficiency and reduce the amount of fuel wood or charcoal consumed. The eco-stove use up to 50% less fuel and also decrease cooking time and emits fewer pollutants than other types of stoves. The Lighting One Million Lives in Liberia project aims to reduce GHG emissions from the energy sector through the distribution of high quality solar energy efficient lanterns in exchange for kerosene lanterns. The Solar Project based on the World Bank's Sustainable Solar Market Packages (SSMP) approach is also expected to provide solar lanterns and solar home systems to homes and businesses in Gbarnga and surrounding towns.

● Example: Snail farming – sustainable protein and income source

Improved snail farming is one of the income generative activities being implemented by the FAO in several communities in Liberia. Small scale snail farming has a low production cost, is not labor intensive and can be integrated with other farm activities to add sources of income. Snails are nutritious as they are high in protein. A Forest & Farm family that owns 5 standard snail cages, with total investment of 535.00 USD can generate annual revenue of 1,000 USD, over 3 years which is about 85 USD per month, almost equivalent to a monthly salary of a civil servant.⁶⁹

● Example: Payment for eco-services

Land stewards can in theory earn fees for their services. Different agricultural practices have different positive or negative environmental externalities; now payments for ecosystem services (PES) is a topic of interest within conventional economic frameworks to enhance the positive environmental benefits associated with farming. The close links between environmental sustainability and poverty reduction are resulting in intensified efforts to develop PES programmes that achieve both objectives. Farmers who maintain vegetative cover, soil health and moisture content are essentially building the long-term wealth of their natural systems. By extension, certain forms of farming, such as permaculture and organic farming practices or biomass production, would be ideal candidates to 'earn' an environmental protection fee. Although PES programmes have the potential to be an income stream for rural poor women and men, it remains to be seen how much of these payment schemes will actually benefit women. Women, for instance, who have always cleaned the water canals that feed their fields as a matter of course, may find that as soon as 'ecosystem services' become commercialized, they are pushed aside by the men in the community whose priority is to earn income. The down side is that as long as they are not privy to the negotiated terms around PES, they will continue to be ignored, or worse exploited, by these regimes.

Entry point 3: Education and mobilization domain

Mobilizing rural women: The widespread disregard of women's voices in resource-based decisions, discrimination in access to timely information, and limited access to justice hinders women in negotiating their land rights in general. This works against their participation in renegotiating a new set of rights to replace existing entitlements when new investments in agriculture change the landscape, or when community development funds are set up.⁷⁰

There is an important role for intermediary agencies to support rural women in their mobilization efforts, to be able to articulate their rights and responsibilities. For women's rights and civil society organisations, the importance of engaging with men in achieving these rights cannot be overstated. There needs to be a coalescing of voices on behalf of women. While the unequal representation of women in local governance needs to be addressed at a national scale, it is equally important to engage

⁶⁹ FAO 2013

⁷⁰ Action Aid: From Under Their Feet

with the men on a case by case basis as they hold a disproportionately heavier weight in decision making. Village or community-based champions for change, both men and women, should not be disregarded on account of their gender. Only by **joining forces between the two gender groups will deep structural issues of inequality** be addressed.

It stands to reason then that the fine balance between the country's natural resource base and the equitable development of its peoples are embedded in its policies – from education of young people to the science of farming and the trade agreements that Liberia enters into. Those who are least educated, the last informed and who are consistently left out of any kind of decision making, will be least able to understand, prepare for, take control of and take actions for the immediate and the long term implications of land use. Policies that promote in-farm education, public outreach and that encourage behavioural change need to have lengthy planning timeframes in order to maximise the consultation process and reduce uneven awareness by stakeholders.

The connections between human development and environmental sustainability need to be made. Workshops and learning materials for staff that explain the interdependence between humans and the environment, and how projects targeting environmental sustainability can help meet development goals, could go a long way to ingrain environmental stewardship in program design and evaluation.

Mobilisation around NRM hinges on community cohesiveness and a reinstatement of values and a spirit of cooperation. Building systems from the bottom is the best way to build tenure security. Implementing supporting policies with practical farm-level training towards comprehensive natural resource management practices will enable communities to take a long-view approach and work together. This process requires education and awareness building at all levels including within government itself.

A module framework outlined in the table below could be further developed with community engagement.

● **Example: Participatory learning framework for community NRM**

Table 5: Module framework for participatory learning

T.R.E.E.S FRAMEWORK	Learning Dimensions and Objectives
TAKING STOCK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Natural Resource community mapping: Who is using what, when, how, how, why (then and now) ■ Deepen understanding of land-use patterns in communal land systems, the close inter-linkages between rural livelihoods and land use, encompassing use for farming, for the collection of firewood, fruits, wild foods and medicinal plants, for water collection and fish protein.

RECOGNISE & RESPECT gendered roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and respect gender roles and value of nature: Understand why it's important to replenish our resources and be cognizance of their scarcity The gendered roles of men and women are identified, recognized, and supported Traditional practices that promote ecological health are reawakened
EQUAL RESPONSIBILITY for natural resource DECISIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable men and women to participate in the decisions that will have implications for their access to resources Both men and women need to play a role not only in decision making but also in maintaining accountability and monitoring of resources. Involve women at all levels of decision making
EQUITABLE BENEFIT SHARING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide for equitable benefit sharing frameworks and methods so that both men and women are able to access a stake in the exploitation of natural assets on the national and international markets Equitable benefit sharing is not just between men and women but between the big corporations and the people that have historically inherited, utilized, protected the land Equity is a principle that calls for fairness, inclusion and justice, and equitable policies often require concrete actions and steps beyond simply making everyone "equal before the law".
SECURITY AND STEWARDSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governments and businesses need to plan beyond short term goals of terms in office and quarterly statements towards long term goals of peace, security and stewardship.

A final note: building on momentum

The 1987 Brundtland Commission report made the link between poverty and environment stating that "many parts of the world are caught in a vicious downwards spiral: poor people are forced to overuse environmental resources to survive from day to day, and their impoverishment of their environment further impoverishes them, making their survival more difficult and uncertain". Poverty is now better understood and recognized as a complex issue with socio-institutional and 'structural' factors generally being more important than pure economic or biological aspects. In other words it is not nature's intention to create poverty; poverty is a man-made construct.

In its 2014-2017 Strategic Note UN Women Liberia focuses on four primary programmes, one of which is "to economically empower Liberian women and girls, especially the poorest and most marginalized". This is in line with the Ministry of Gender's own aspirations outlined in the Agenda for Transformation (AFT). Under this programme, there is a broad statement made in relation to natural resources: "increased role of women in the management and oversight of community land, natural resources, and

the environment and the expansion of renewable energy sources.” It goes on to say that UN Women will “broaden the scope to look at natural resource management which is a key driver of Liberia’s national economy and formulate recommendations for improved corporate social responsibility and enhanced engagement of women in the stewardship and oversight of natural resources in their communities.”

At the global level, UN Women has also been turning its attention to gender relationships with natural resources. In collaboration with UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, UN Women released a 2013 report of an expert group meeting on rights to productive resources with a focus on land⁷¹ and later that year, conducted a study on women and natural resources from a peacebuilding potential.⁷² This overall commitment is both timely and urgent in the face of intensifying investor interests in both the extractive and the farming/forestry sectors of this country.

⁷¹ UN Women and OHCHR (2013) Realizing women's rights to land and other productive resources Geneva and New York

⁷² UNEP, UN Women, PBSO and UNDP (2013) Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential

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ANNEXES

Annex I | Government of Liberia policies and laws relating to community management of natural resources.

The 1986 Liberia Constitution gives mandate to the state to manage the national economy and the natural resources in such manner as shall ensure the maximum feasible participation of Liberian citizens under the conditions of equality as to advance the general welfare of the Liberian people and the economic development of Liberia (Article 7). This mandate, as a result of poor and arguably deliberate misinterpretation, has led to years of state control over forest resources and invariably control over land. This centralised control has been marked by exclusionary practices of rural communities, notably women, and contravenes the maximum feasible participation clause stipulated in article 7.

Agenda for Transformation (Aft) (2012)	The Aft is structured around the following five strategic pillars: Pillar I - Peace, Justice, Security and Rule of Law Pillar II - Economic Transformation Pillar III - Human Development Pillar IV - Governance and Public Institutions Pillar V covers cross cutting issues, including gender equality, child protection, disability, youth empowerment, environment, HIV/AIDS, human rights and labor and employment
Domestic Relations and Inheritance Act (1998)	Specifically highlights equal rights in marriage and inheritance under Customary and Statutory Laws
Act to Govern the Devolution of estates and establish Rights of Inheritance for spouses of Statutory and Customary Marriages (2003)	
Liberian National Gender Policy (LNGP) (2009)	
National Gender-Based Violence Plan of Action (NGBVPA)	
National Action Plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325.	
The 1986 Liberia Constitution	<u>ARTICLE 7</u> Gives mandate to the state to manage the national economy and the natural resources in such manner as shall ensure the maximum feasible participation of Liberian citizens under the conditions of equality as to advance the general welfare of the Liberian people and the economic development of Liberia <u>ARTICLE 22</u> (a) provides that “every person shall have the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.” But despite the provision in Article 22, women in rural parts of the country are still the victims of discriminatory practices in terms of access and ownership of land even though the government has signed and ratified Convention on the elimination of all forms of violence against women. <u>ARTICLE 24</u> indicates that the state guarantees the inviolability when this happens. The article, however, does not provide clear procedures on how to proceed to get prompt and just payment. The Constitution (<u>ARTICLE 65</u>) also provides the basis for the application in court of both customary and

	statutory laws in accordance with the standards enacted by the Legislature. This sets the legal framework for the application in the courts of customary land issues that affect most rural people including women men or CEDAW.
The Forestry Development Authority (FDA)	Charged with the responsibility of leading the forest reform sector has developed the following documents to support the process: FDA Ten Core Regulations, Liberia Community Rights Law, National Forest Reform Law, Liberia Forestry Policy, and the National Forestry Management Strategy.
Community Rights Law	The only direct mention of women participation in the IS IN SECTION 4.2 (A) , which states that “a five member Community Forestry Management Body shall manage the day-to-day activities of community forest resources. At least one member of the body shall be a woman.
The Inheritance Law of 2003	Prior to 2003, an indigenous woman had no rights over her husband’s property when he died and this caused a lot of economic and social problems for women. brought an end to this practice. The overriding objective of this law is to give equal property rights to women who are married under customary law as well as to give adequate protection to surviving spouses of such marriage
Rural Energy Fund (REFUND)	Will provide low interest loans, loan guarantees, and grants as targeted subsidies to ensure access by the poor.
The National Energy Policy (NEP)	Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy (MLME) will act as the lead agency that defines and reviews state energy policy.
Rural and Rural Energy Agency (RREA)	The primary function of RREA is to promote the commercial development and supply of modern energy services to rural areas with an emphasis on utilizing locally available renewable sources of energy. Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy (MLME) will act as the lead agency that defines and reviews the RREA.
Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Policy and Action Plan for Liberia	The purpose of the policy is to increase national awareness on renewables and energy efficiency and remove barriers to investment and market development through a national policy instrument
National Transport Policy Strategy (NTPS) (2010)	Provides comprehensive policy guidance and direction for sustained national transport system.
Draft National Petroleum Policy (NPP)	In August 2012, consultations on a draft petroleum policy paper for Liberia were launched. The draft policy paper contains information, on nine thematic areas including resource ownership, maritime boundary, state participation, transparency and accountability.
Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL)	The Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) is a new initiative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to mobilize action from all sectors of society, including business, government, investors, community groups and academia to forge common ground in support of three interlinked objectives: Ensuring universal access to modern energy services; Doubling the rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and Doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix. Liberia has been chosen as a SE4ALL nation.
National Forest Reform Law (2006)	Amended the National Forest Law of 2000 by providing greater emphasis to the conservation of forests
REDDplus (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation, Forest Degradation, and the role of Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forest and the Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks)	Is a forest mitigation option that could reduce Liberia’s increasing deforestation rate, contribute to national income, improve the livelihood of forest dependent people and deliver conservation and biodiversity benefits. Liberia is currently in the readiness phase where it is building its capacity, institutions and regulatory and policy frameworks to accommodate a domestic REDDplus mechanism. The document that

	would guide this readiness process is known as <u>THE READINESS PREPARATION PROPOSAL (R-PP)</u> . It was developed with a US\$200,000 grant from the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and co-financing from Flora and Fauna International, Conservation International, Liberia and UNDP, Liberia. All this was after a Project Idea Note (R-PIN) had been submitted and approved by the FCPF in 2008
The Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) (2003)	CAADP is an integrated, continent-wide framework that seeks to restore agricultural growth, facilitate rural development, and ensure food and nutrition security in Africa. The target of the framework is a 6% per annum agriculture sector growth for all parties. In order to meet this target, Liberia is required to commit at least 10% of its annual national budget to agriculture.
National Integrated Water Resources Management Policy	The renewable energy potential within Liberia's six major rivers is a key component of the NEP's renewable energy target and the goal to make Liberia carbon neutral by 2050. Before 2007 there was no comprehensive legal framework governing water resources in Liberia. Neither was there an effective Integrated Water Resources Management Policy guiding water resources development, use, protection and conservation.
Liberia National Bio-diversity Strategy and Action Plan	Addresses women empowerment indirectly or directly through the formulation of appropriate strategy and action plans that addresses gender imbalances.
National Land Policy	Drafted and pending Cabinet approval
<u>FAILURE</u> by the Legislature to pass the Gender Equity in Politics Bill of 2010	<u>FAILURE</u> to pass by the legislature in 2010

Annex II | RSPO Principles and Criteria

Principles	Criteria
Commitment to transparency	Oil palm growers and millers provide adequate information to other stakeholders on environmental, social, and legal issues relevant to RSPO criteria. This information is provided in appropriate languages and forms to allow for effective participation in decision making. Management documents are publicly available, except where this is prevented by commercial confidentiality or where disclosure of information would result in negative environmental or social outcomes
Compliance with applicable laws and regulations	There is compliance with all applicable local, national and ratified international laws and regulations. The right to use the land can be demonstrated, and is not legitimately contested by local communities with demonstrable rights. Use of the land for oil palm does not diminish the legal rights, or customary rights of other users without their free, prior and informed consent
Commitment to long-term economic and financial viability	There is an implemented management plan with the aim to achieve long-term economic and financial viability.
Use of appropriate best practices by growers and	Operating procedures are appropriately documented and consistently implemented and monitored. Practices maintain soil fertility at, or where possible improve soil fertility to, a level that ensures optimal and sustained yield.

millers	<p>Practices minimise and control erosion and degradation of soils.</p> <p>Practices maintain the quality and availability of surface and ground water.</p> <p>Pests, diseases, weeds and invasive introduced species are effectively managed using Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques.</p> <p>Agrochemicals are used in a way that does not endanger health or the environment.</p> <p>There is no prophylactic use of pesticides, except in specific situations identified in national Best Practice guidelines. Where agrochemicals are used that are categorized as World Health Organisation Type 1A or 1B, or are listed by the Stockholm or Rotterdam Conventions, growers are actively seeking to identify alternatives, and this is documented.</p> <p>An occupational health and safety plan is documented, effectively communicated and implemented.</p> <p>All staff, workers, smallholders and contractors are appropriately trained.</p>
Environmental responsibility and conservation of natural resources and biodiversity	<p>Aspects of plantation and mill management, including replanting, that have environmental impacts are identified, and plans to mitigate the negative impacts and promote the positive ones are made, implemented and monitored, to demonstrate continuous improvement.</p> <p>The status of rare, threatened or endangered species and high conservation value habitats, if any, that exist in the plantation or that could be affected by plantation or mill management, shall be identified and their conservation taken into account in management plans and operations.</p> <p>Waste is reduced, recycled, re-used and disposed of in an environmentally and socially responsible manner.</p> <p>Efficiency of energy use and use of renewable energy is maximized.</p> <p>Plans to reduce pollution and emissions, including greenhouse gases, are developed, implemented and monitored.</p>
Responsible consideration of employees and of individuals and communities affected by growers and mills	<p>Aspects of plantation and mill management, including replanting, that have social impacts are identified in a participatory way, and plans to mitigate the negative impacts and promote the positive ones are made, implemented and monitored, to demonstrate continuous improvement.</p> <p>There are open and transparent methods for communication and consultation between growers and/or millers, local communities and other affected or interested parties.</p> <p>There is a mutually agreed and documented system for dealing with complaints and grievances, which is implemented and accepted by all parties.</p> <p>Any negotiations concerning compensations for loss of legal or customary rights are dealt with through a documented system that enables indigenous peoples, local communities and other stakeholders to express their views through their own representative institutions.</p> <p>Pay and conditions for employees and for employees of contractors always meet at least legal or industry minimum standards and are sufficient to provide decent living wages.</p> <p>The employer respects the right of all personnel to form and join trade unions of their choice and to bargain collectively. Where the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining are restricted under law, the employer facilitates parallel means of independent and free association and bargaining for all such personnel.</p> <p>Children are not employed or exploited. Work by children is acceptable on family farms, under adult supervision, and when not interfering with education programmes. Children are not exposed to hazardous working conditions.</p> <p>Any form of discrimination based on race, caste, national origin, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, union membership, political affiliation, or age, is prohibited.</p>

Responsible
development of
new plantings

A policy to prevent sexual harassment and all other forms of violence against women and to protect their reproductive rights is developed and applied.

Growers and mills deal fairly and transparently with smallholders and other local businesses.

Growers and millers contribute to local sustainable development wherever appropriate.

A comprehensive and participatory independent social and environmental impact assessment is undertaken prior to establishing new plantings or operations, or expanding existing ones, and the results incorporated into planning, management and operations.

Soil surveys and topographic information are used for site planning in the establishment of new plantings, and the results are incorporated into plans and operations.

New plantings since November 2005, have not replaced primary forest or any area required to maintain or enhance one or more High Conservation Values.

Extensive planting on steep terrain, and/or marginal and fragile soils, is avoided.

No new plantings are established on local people's land without their free, prior and informed consent, dealt with through a documented system that enables indigenous peoples, local communities and other stakeholders to express their views through their own representative institutions.

Local people are compensated for any agreed land acquisitions and relinquishment of rights, subject to their free, prior and informed consent and negotiated agreements.

Use of fire in the preparation of new plantings is avoided other than in specific situations, as identified in the ASEAN guidelines or other regional best practice.

Commitment to
continuous
improvement in
key areas of
activity

Growers and millers regularly monitor and review their activities and develop and implement action plans that allow demonstrable continuous improvement in key operations.

Annex III | W+ Indicators

Domain	Outcome	Indicator
Income and Assets	Increased income in Households Increased ownership of assets Increased community funds under women's control.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase in women's income generation - Control over use of household income by - Access to business management development initiatives - Increase in Assets (land, trees, equipment, livestock)
Time	Improved well-being and increased productivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - reduced drudgery - increased discretionary time. - Increased sharing of women's work by
Education and Knowledge	Increased knowledge and skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased access to literacy/numeracy and business skills - Increased access to new ideas - Increased access to extension services, including agriculture and health
Leadership	Increased decision making roles for women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased representation in governance bodies - Increased numbers of women in executive positions of governance bodies - Increased quality of participation in community groups - women are actively supported /encouraged to participate and voice their opinions by
Food Security	Decreased food insecurity (goal to decrease under and malnutrition)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decrease in period of Food insecurity - Increase in yields - Increased access to seeds and seed diversity - Increased access to veterinary services -(veterinary services are open for longer hours to accommodate women and men
Health	Improved health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved air, water quality - Improved sanitation and services - Access to Health education and Functional health posts

Source: *Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture & Natural Resource Management (2013) Women's Carbon Standard (WCS) Annex I*

Annex IV | Consultant itinerary and interviews

County	Village/Community	People met (Female)
Grand Bassa	Qwarkpiillia	25 (10)
	Buchanan (capital)	Environmental Inspectors 2
Grand Gedew	Zwedra (capital)	10 (10)
Putu mimina	Tiama	30 (30)
	Tuzon	8 (8)
Sinoe		
Greenville (capital)	Butwa	16 (13) + Commissioner
	GVL Company	8 (1)
Bomi	Goladee Township/Gayle	25 (20) + school principal
Sam	Malema Town	30 (15) + town chief
Gburpolu	Bopolu (capital)	1 President of Rural Women's Association
	Henry's Town	26 (26)
	Diamond Mine	7 (7)

May 2014							
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
				Monrovia Meetings	Monrovia Meetings	Transfer to Buchanan	
		Arrival in Liberia		10:00 am Educare	11:00 am EPA	County Superintendant	
			Emily Stanger	11:00 am MoT	1:00pm FCI @ UNW		
				1:00 FDA	4:00pm World Bank	Joined by UN Women gender office	
			Finalize inception report	3:00 GEF Small Grants		Village visit: EPO concession	
						Grand Bassa	
18	20	20	21	22	19	24	
					Emily Stanger		
Hans-Hartlieb Euler, GIZ	Transfer to Zwedru	Focus group meeting Tuzon town	Focus group meeting Zwedru town	Golden Veroleum Liberia	Mark Mattner GIZ	Henry's town	
Rajkumar Singh, Concessions, Ministry of Finance	Focus group meeting Tiama town	Transfer to Greenville		Transfer to Monrovia	Transfer to Bomi	Small group mtg Wheama town: Jungle J	
					Goladee township		
					Malema town		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	
transfer to Monrovia	African Development Bank	Presentation to Minister of Gender					
	FAO	Diola, Educare					
	Rural Energy Agency	Sustainable Development Institute					
	Ministry of Finance	4:00 departure					

