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| **Draft country programme document for Liberia (2020-2024) UNDP****Swedish comments and questions and Liberia Country Office Response** |
| **General comment:** | **CO Response** |
| The culture and ethnic context need to be understood as Liberia’s population is largely divided into ethnic groups. Exclusion should be avoided, and public perceptions of geographic concentration need to be considered and managed. The geographical focus as proposed in the draft CPD is unfortunate and the rationale for the selection of the prioritized counties is not clear. We would encourage UNDP to avoid geographical focus as most of UNDP’s thematic focus areas need to cover the whole country for the programmes to be effective. It is important also as to manage the aspiration to not leave anyone behind. The CPD refers to UNDP’s work in coastal counties but one or two coastal counties are left out. We would prefer a whole of the country approach throughout the CPD | This observation is well noted and speaks to the overall premise and theory of change that underlies the CPD – that of addressing marginalization and exclusion. By targeting the geographic areas identified, the CPD was complying with a key requirement set in the guidelines – that “the programme effectively identifies targeted groups/areas, prioritizing discriminated and marginalized groups left furthest behind, including strategies to ensure voice and participation. In addition, successive reviews and evaluations of the programme have pointed out that UNDP supports too many projects in too many geographic contexts and thematic areas, often stretching UNDP’s scarce resources and expertise thinly, and undermining the quality, impact and sustainability of interventions. Hence the need to narrow the focus and target, a key hallmark of this CPD.That said, it should be noted that the CPD combines focus on downstream and upstream work, using the former to test innovative or pilot approaches and generating evidence from the ground to inform policy level interventions, thus enhancing the likelihood for transformational change. To that extent, the CPD will retain a national focus targeting its interventions in terms of upstream policies, institutional strengthening, relationship with Civil Society, capacity building, advocacy promotion, planning, resource mobilization, overall public financial management accountability and oversight support activities. It will continue to support decentralization efforts in all the counties of Liberia, scaling up the County service Centers. However, with regard to some downstream progress, and tackling vulnerability and addressing needs of communities Finally, the CPD will concentrate in 7 counties which represent (2,467,980 or 70 % of Liberia’s population and 10 of Liberia’s official tribes (ethnicity)[[1]](#footnote-1). Along with this, 8 of the 9 coastal communities are targeted due to their vulnerability to climate impacts. The Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) to which the CPD is aligned commits to provide greater income security to an additional 1m Liberians and reduce absolute poverty by 23% across 5 out of 6 regions. The CPD’s geographical targeting in also informed by this commitment.  |
| UNDP could shift its focus in Liberia to more upstream support to making institutions and policy-making work efficiently, accountable and inclusive | As explained above, The CPD’s value addition consists in its commitment to provide high-level evidence-based policy advice, technical support for policy formulation, capacity development, and innovations from downstream work for scaling up. Taking into account the context, it has adopted an approach that blends downstream work involving community engagement testing new and innovative approaches, addressing specific and serious geographic challenges and generating evidence from this to inform policy level interventions. In other words, its strategic thrust combines thematic focus and geographic targeting. With regard to themes like climate change, natural resources management, forestry, DRR, peacebuilding, biodiversity, the geographic targeting is determined by the identification of “hotspots”, focusing on underserved and poorer counties. The CPD places emphasis on providing policy support development and implementation as well as focusing on institutional strengthening and improved governance. Other areas of upstream work includes support in the areas of electoral reform, addressing corruption, and strengthening governance institutions, budget oversight, planning development coordination/development effectiveness, domestic resource mobilization, budget oversight  |
| We miss references to what other multilaterals are doing in the sectors UNDP is engaged in | *Firstly*, the CPD prioritizes the building of strategic partnerships in accelerating the achievement of the SDGs (para 14); *secondly*, as a mitigation measure against decline of ODA, UNDP will seek to expand partnerships with the private sector, international financial institutions, foundations and non-traditional donors (including multilaterals which it names) investing in innovative solutions while leveraging funding for scaling up programmes in rural areas (para 38).*Thirdly,* the results and resources framework (RRF) includes a column on “major partners and partnerships frameworks” linked to the specific outcome and output areas. These partners include multilaterals WB, EU, ADB, among others. The CPD recognizes the work that USAID, EU, World Bank and other key partners are engaged in and more likely to engage in for the various thematic areas, and acknowledges the results that have been achieved in the past through such partnership. |
| Correction under” programme rationale” – women have 9 out of 73 seats.  | Noted. 9 out of 73 |
| Corruption - at all levels in the justice chain - disrupts access to legal services and justice. The CPD should include how UNDP seeks to address corruption, in particular in the justice system  | Agreed and acknowledged so in the CPD’s situation analysis; Corruption is the pervasiveness and need to be tackled. UNDP sees this crucial governance issue, and therefore the CPD rank orders pillar 4 of the CPD (governance and Transparency) as its Priority Outcome 1. It is therefore proposed to imbibe a citizen’s feedback mechanism supporting studies and assessment on perception of corruption the identification of the corruption hot spots as well devising specific measures including institutional strengthening e institutions develop a by tailor made anti-corruption policy and trainings /orientation to curb the menace.  |
| The importance of the informal/traditional justice system in the Liberian cannot be understated. This is however not reflected in the CPD (informal justice institutions are just very briefly mentioned in the results matrix). UNDP should acknowledge the importance of the traditional justice system, find ways to support human rights principles in traditional justice system, and work towards harmonizing informal and formal justice systems, and making them complementary and mutually reinforcing. | The CPD is strong on this, both in the analysis and in the programme choices under its outcome 3 - ..” providing access to inclusive, effective, equitable justice and security services, capable of promoting and protecting the human rights of all”.UNDP approach in the new CPD draws from experience in justice and security sector as well its sensitivity to the conflict drivers and fragility context CPD will invest in customary justice system with the aim of harmonizing it with the statutory justice system since it is accessible and mostly used by most locals. Additionally, UNDP is building the capacity of informal justice actors through sensitization/training on existing laws and their jurisdiction in order to provide quality mediation services. This will also include the use of legal referral pathways. |
| With regard to UNDP’s role following UNMIL departure, there would be a potential to emphasize UNDP role in some of the areas where UNMIL was a critical partner. Understanding practical measures such as bolstering of staffing in thematic areas such as Governance and Rule of Law could be seen as important in this connection, which is not very clear in the document at this stage  | The CPD is framed in the post-UNMIL dispensation informed by the report the UNCT capacity mapping exercise identifying role can capacity of each UN agencies post UNMIL, and the disproportional burden that UNDP carries especially in the un-realized political-sensitive structural reforms.For example, under its current Rule of Law Programme, designed with UNMIL presence, UNDP has stepped up its technical support in the areas of corrections, an area where UNMIL would have typically been visible, taping into correction advisory expertise seconded by Sweden, in addition to the deployment of an SSR and Transition Advisor and the Senior Rule of Law Programme Manager. Additionally, the CPD commits investments in decentralization, peace consolidation, constitutional reform, elections and electoral reforms, among other areas which UNMIL took lead but could not take to the last mile. The quest in this CPD to have a visible county office presence is inspired by that mapping, demonstrating a move away from Monrovia to provide support to the local institutions like UNMIL. However, due to word limitations, the CPD does not detail past and planned efforts to respond to the needs of the country. UNDP has stepped up its human resources capacity in key areas which UNMIL heavily supported.  |

1. Page 4 paragraph 15; 2008 national population census which is the last census conducted in Liberia [↑](#footnote-ref-1)