



This action is funded by the European Union

**ANNEX 3**

of the Commission Decision on the Annual Action Programme 2015 in favour of Liberia to be financed from the 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund

**Action Document for Support to the NAO function, Aid Harmonization and Coordination in Liberia**

**INFORMATION FOR POTENTIAL GRANT APPLICANTS**

**WORK PROGRAMME FOR GRANTS**

This document constitutes the work programme for grants in the sense of Article 128(1) of the Financial Regulation (Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012) applicable to the EDF by virtue of Article 37 of Regulation 2015/323 in the following sections concerning grants awarded directly without a call for proposals: section 5.4.2.

<b>1. Title/basic act/ CRIS number</b>	Support to the NAO function, Aid Harmonization and Coordination in Liberia. CRIS number: 2014/037-353 financed under 11 <sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF)			
<b>2. Zone benefiting from the action/location</b>	West Africa, Liberia The action shall be carried out at the following location: Liberia			
<b>3. Programming document</b>	Liberia - National Indicative Programme (NIP) for the period 2014 - 2020			
<b>4. Sector of concentration/ thematic area</b>	"Support Measures"			
<b>5. Amounts concerned</b>	Total estimated cost: EUR 4 050 000 Total amount of EDF contribution EUR 3 360 000 This action is co-financed in joint co-financing by the Government of Liberia for an indicative amount of EUR 690 000.			
<b>6. Aid modality(ies) and implementation modality(ies)</b>	Project Modality Direct management: - grants – direct award , procurement of services Indirect Management with the Republic of Liberia			
<b>7. DAC code(s)</b>	15110			
<b>8. Markers (from CRIS DAC form)</b>	<b>General policy objective</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	X
	Aid to environment	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Gender equality (including Women In Development)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade Development	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, Maternal, New born and child health	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<b>RIO Convention markers</b>	<b>Not targeted</b>	<b>Significant objective</b>	<b>Main objective</b>
	Biological diversity	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>9. Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC) thematic flagship</b>	n/a			

## SUMMARY

This proposed project is a continuation of the ongoing EU support to the National Authorising Officer's (NAO) office in Liberia.

The Action's **overall objective** is to contribute to the reduction of poverty in Liberia through enhancing aid harmonization and coordination capacity of the Government of Liberia.

The **specific objective** is to strengthen the NAO to effectively programme, supervise, manage, monitor the implementation and account for EU cooperation development projects and to move towards more ownership by and alignment to national structures.

The identification phase has been based on the current challenges faced by the NAO office, as well as the new opportunities created by the creation of the new Ministries of Finance and Development Planning. The process has included discussion with the NAO office and within the Delegation that was developed further during formulation.

## 1 CONTEXT

### 1.1 Sector/Country/Regional context/Thematic area

Although Liberia has enjoyed relative peace and stability since the end of the war in 2003, it remains one of the poorest countries in the world with one of the lowest levels of human development (ranking 174 out of 186 countries), weak state capacity, and a high level of dependence on international donors. The situation following the 2014 Ebola outbreak and the forthcoming reduction or withdrawal of the United Nations Mission to Liberia (UNMIL) remains one of fragility.

Despite this there is a strong political will and commitment to enhance governance reform and maintain peace in Liberia. Liberia has shown regular progress since 2006 in governance indicators, the Ibrahim Index on African Governance and the World Governance Indicators. Liberia's ratings are above the African average for voice and accountability and political stability, but much remains to be done to improve the rule of law.

#### 1.1.1 Public Policy Assessment and EU Policy Framework

The National Development Plan the "Agenda for Transformation" (AfT), aims to implement this vision in the period 2012-2018. The plan has two key objectives: (1) to create wealth and (2) to increase inclusiveness for a more equal and just society.

The AfT addresses the main challenges for economic and social development in Liberia, aiming at tackling the root causes of the conflict holistically, focusing on security, growth, social issues and civil service reform.

The Government of Liberia has shown a high level of commitment and ownership in implementing the plan, but it is yet hampered by the institutional capacity to coordinate and follow-up on implementation. In recent years, Liberia has adopted a number of good quality sector policies, strategies and work plans in a number of sectors. However, there is not always the needed coherence between the Agenda for Transformation and the plans, in particular as regards funding priorities and performance indicators. Following the Ebola crisis the Government has launched its Economic Stabilization and Recovery Plan to define strategic interventions that will assist in recovering from the effects of the outbreak and build up resilience. The implementation of this plan is and will face the same challenges as the implementation of the AfT, which is also undergoing some revisions following the crisis.

According to the Cotonou Agreement Article 35 of Annex IV, each Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) country appoints an NAO to represent it in all operations financed through the European Development Fund (EDF). During the civil war, the NAO functions of Liberia were removed and vested in the European Commission. With the end of the civil war the EU and Liberia initiated a process that led to normalization of relations. In 2007 the Government of Liberia established an NAO office under the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA), but the agreement to reinstate the powers of the NAO did not come until September 2010. Through the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF a Technical Assistance to the NAO office started in 2009. Support to the NAO office was intensified with the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF and the "Support to the NAO Office-Liberia" project started implementation in early 2012, and is currently ongoing. The project has contributed to strengthening the human and infrastructure capacity of the NAO office, which nevertheless continues to suffer from capacity constraints, both in terms of implementing EDF procedures, but also more broadly in its role within the Liberian aid management structure.

In 2013 the Liberian legislature approved the dissolution of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Finance to form a new Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. A central assumption at identification stage (also initially supported by the Government of Liberia), was that the NAO office would become part of the planned Aid Management Unit of the new Ministry. However, in the reformed Ministry, the NAO office has now been directly placed under the Minister. Despite this, the new structure does provide new possibilities to streamline EU cooperation in the broader framework of aid coordination in Liberia, and live up to the commitments in the Paris Declaration.

### *1.1.2 Stakeholder analysis*

The main target group of the proposed programme are the staff of the Office of the NAO within the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. The secondary target group are the staff working on aid coordination in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, in particular at the Aid Management Unit, but will also benefit by closer alignment with the NAO office.

The third target group are the staff of the Line Ministries and Agencies who are responsible for implementing the focal sector programmes of the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF.

Ministry of Finance and Development Planning will be a crucial player in the design and implementation of the State Building Contracts.

General Audit Commission: Support to the General Audit Commission of Liberia is foreseen to continue under the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF. Staff are already familiar with EDF procedures, but capacity needs to be strengthened for instance on procurement and Programme Estimates management.

Ministry of Education: Education will be one of the focal sectors of the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF NIP. While specific interventions are yet to be defined, the Ministry has important capacity gaps in terms of management, planning and coordination. While this project will support only one component of these gaps as relates to aid coordination and EDF procedures, these must be complementary.

Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy: Energy will be a focal sector of the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF NIP. With support of the NAO staff, it is foreseen that the Ministry will be involved in important procurements for works and supplies contracts under the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF.

Ministry of Justice: As Liberia prepares for the security and justice transition, the Ministry of Justice will be an important stakeholder in the focal areas that will be part of the foreseen budget support operations.

Ministry of Agriculture: Agriculture will be another important focal sector of the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF NIP. Specific interventions are yet to be defined.

Forestry Development Authority (FDA): The EU will continue to partner with the FDA in the implementation of the Voluntary Partnership Agreement.

Non-State Actors (NSAs): Besides the structured dialogue with Non-State Actors, these will also be part of the implementation of the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF programme. There will be funds available for Non-State Actors both under the EDF as well as under Thematic Budget Lines such as NSA-LA and EIDHR.

Other relevant stakeholders include ministries and agencies that are involved in donor interventions, particularly EU funded, such as the National Electoral Commission and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

### ***1.1.3 Priority areas for support/problem analysis***

The problems that this proposed action intends to tackle are three-pronged. Firstly, the NAO office continues to face challenges in terms of the effective management of EDF funds. Secondly, the NAO office is often seen as functioning in isolation from the wider aid management system of the Liberian government. Thirdly, there is not a clear distribution of function between what has been established as an NAO office and the line ministries and agencies involved in EU supported projects.

In terms of infrastructure capacity the ongoing NAO support project has provided significant inputs: computers and furniture have been procured, and a new building to house the NAO offices has been constructed. In terms of staff capacity the office is adequately resourced, although the skills in terms of technical expertise remain limited. The NAO office has still not done a performance assessment of staff.

One problem concerns the functioning of the NAO office and the use of EDF procedures. This includes using correct checklists and templates, the evaluation of tender. This has resulted in important delays to the implementation of EDF projects in Liberia. Additionally, limited capacity and skills of technical staffs is a major constraint, and the issue of organization culture and management are yet to be embedded in daily office routine. The problem of staff motivation, recognition and fringe benefits has had serious consequences on the running of the office in terms of meeting deadlines and outputs. In-house mentoring by Technical Assistants on EDF procedures is not yet yielding the needed result. On the one hand there have been delays in implementing necessary trainings and on the other hand on-the-job-training has not been necessarily structured around the specific needs of staff in the NAO office.

Different surveys from the EU<sup>1</sup> have pointed out the problem of NAO support units that run in parallel with the country systems, leading to lack of ownership and alignment of NAO offices in the country. The NAO function may not necessarily be embedded in an NAO office, but should be considered in relation to the institutional set-up of the ACP state and the specific needs of the NAO in the country. In the case of Liberia, the NAO office has fulfilled an important role in the period following the end of the civil war. However, with the strengthening of EU-Liberian cooperation, the office has also become increasingly isolated from the broader donor architecture in Liberia. The Delegation already has a productive direct engagement with line ministries and agencies in EDF financed projects and programmes, where the NAO office plays a limited role. While the NAO function remains a crucial element of EU-Liberia cooperation, there is a need to define its functions more clearly between line ministries and agencies. Another unintended consequences of the NAO office's isolation is the lack of government commitment in keeping the office running, for instance as regards the lack of commitment to the staff salaries.

With the incorporation of the NAO office into the aid management structure of the new Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, an opportunity has arisen to better align the NAO functions within the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

## 2 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The main risks and mitigation measures are:

<b>Risks</b>	<b>Risk level (H/M/L)</b>	<b>Mitigating measures</b>
Qualified staffs are not assigned to fulfil the NAO function	High	All NAO staff incorporated into the new Ministry of Finance and Development Planning as civil servants. A capacity scan will be conducted. A system to periodically assess staff performance will be put in place.
High turnover and low commitment of staff due to unattractive working conditions	High	Incentivise staff to remain in NAO Office through realistic contractual and remuneration arrangements, which take into account market conditions, availability of qualified staff and the reality of supporting NAO functions in a fragile state
The Liberian government will not live up to its financial contribution to the project, for instance in the payment of staff salaries and operating cost	Medium	Three operating grants will be signed for a duration of 12 months each between the EU Delegation and NAO office, where the grant agreement will include the government' financial contribution.
NAO function is not clearly delineated between Line Ministries and Agencies and the External Resources, Aid Coordination and Debt Management Division at the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning	Medium	Clear definition and distribution of NAO, line ministries and agencies, and EU Delegation roles and responsibilities
Poor communication with the EU Delegation	Low	Systems set up to improve line of communications, such as periodic/sectional meetings and clear reporting lines

<sup>1</sup> EC Working Paper,; Orientation Note on the reinforcement of the National Authorising Officer System", February 2004. NAO Study: Mainstreaming Capacity Development in EU aid management (draft), 2013. OECD-DAC Peer Review of the European Union, 2012, page 83. <http://www.oecd.org/dac/peer-reviews/50155818.pdf>

## Assumptions

- Liberia will remain stable and there will be no re-occurrence of civil strife.
- Government of Liberia remains committed to reform, to improve governance and economic management and in particular to establishing rigorous management and accountability procedures
- Government of Liberia establish conditions to ensure the effective functioning of the NAO Office and the Directorate of Aid Management and coordination.
- Willingness of Line Ministries and Agencies to take appropriate roles and responsibilities in respect of EDF programmes and projects.
- Willingness of Non-State Actors to take appropriate roles and responsibilities in respect of EDF programmes and projects and EU – Liberia cooperation.
- Willingness of stakeholders to engage in the development of joint visibility, information, communication and education plans and to designate specific staff for this function.

### 3 LESSONS LEARNT, COMPLEMENTARITY AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

#### 3.1 Lessons learnt

The objective of the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF NAO project was on developing capacity through the presence of Long Term Technical Assistance (LTTA) and a training package. To date there has been no Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) mission of the current programme, but a final evaluation of the project is foreseen. The ongoing 10<sup>th</sup> EDF NAO project has certainly achieved positive outcomes, such as the construction of a new NAO office, training modules, and the recent integration of all trained staff into the government payroll. A Rapid Institutional Capacity Assessment of the current programme, undertaken by independent consultants during the formulation process (July-August 2014) found that, despite TA support, there was still insufficient capacity in the NAO Office to execute its role and responsibilities as defined by the Cotonou Agreement - in particular to manage EDF funds efficiently and effectively. Capacity building has not been sufficiently demand-driven or based on a thorough assessment of the capacity needs of the NAO function in Liberia.

Furthermore, the Rapid Institutional Capacity Assessment stated that to avoid major staff turnover a realistic compensation package should be provided to the NAO office staff. The NAO has under the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF programme integrated all staff into the civil service payroll. Despite this important effort, the Government of Liberia remains unable to provide reliable remuneration packages, which continues to risk the retaining of existing qualified staff at the NAO Office.

In the case of Liberia the NAO has fulfilled an important role in the period following the end of the civil war. However, with the strengthening of EU-Liberia cooperation, the office has also become increasingly isolated from the broader donor architecture in Liberia. While the NAO function remains a crucial element of EU-Liberia cooperation, there is a need to define its functions more clearly between line ministries and agencies. There were attempts to strengthen linkages between the NAO and line ministries by setting up thematic working groups on EDF programmes and inviting ministry and agency staff to trainings. However, this has not led to fruitful results, in part due to the lack of consistency and focus in the objectives of the activities, as well as the lack of support from the management in different ministries. The Rapid Assessment concluded that the relationship between the NAO Office and Line Ministries implementing the EDF projects and programmes was neither clearly defined nor respected in practice.

A general view persists amongst EU Delegation and some Development Partners that currently EU visibility and communication is weak considering the significant EU funds granted to Liberia. There are no visibility and communication strategy in place other than the usual EU visibility materials for supported projects and programmes.

### **3.2 Complementarity, synergy and donor coordination**

The Aid Management Unit (AMU) has received support from the Project Financial Management Unit of the Ministry of Finance, funded by the World Bank. This support aimed primarily at strengthening the capacities in data collection and analysis. The Unit also received some support through the Peace Building Fund managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This has included support through the Instrument for Stability for the roll out of the Aid Management Platform (a web-based tool for managing aid data), which is currently being used, but still needs improvement and to be used fully by all partners.

Training and technical assistance for project preparation and programme development is foreseen through the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF TCF for an amount of EUR 2 000 000. Additionally, all EU funded interventions have provided technical assistance to address capacity constraints in the Government of Liberia. The State Building Contract under the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF will also include EUR 3 000 000 in support measures for capacity development and accountability that will complement the capacity development of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

There is no specific donor coordination/sector working group dealing with a project of this nature, although some strategic discussions on public sector capacity building take place in the periodic meetings between heads of donor agencies.

### **3.3 Cross-cutting issues**

The NAO Office will work closely with the Aid Management and Coordination Directorate and, through its continuous dialogue with the EU Delegation, work on mainstreaming crosscutting issues into all EU financed programmes. Gender will be addressed at the level of results, indicators and activities in each of the projects and programmes in the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF. Crosscutting issues have particular implications for the programming, monitoring and evaluation responsibilities of the NAO, the Implementing Line Ministries and Agencies and non-state actors (NSAs). Resources and tools such as the ‘Handbook on Promoting Good Governance in EC Development Cooperation’; the ‘Environmental Integration Handbook for Development Cooperation’; and the ‘Toolkit on Mainstreaming Gender Equality’ will be used.

## **4 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION**

### **4.1 Objectives/results**

The Action’s **overall objective** is to contribute to the reduction of poverty in Liberia through enhancing the Aid Harmonization and Coordination capacity of the Government of Liberia.

The **specific objective** is to strengthen the National Authorising Officer (NAO) to effectively programme, supervise, manage, monitor the implementation and account for EU cooperation development projects and to move towards more ownership by and alignment to, national structures.

## 4.2 Main activities

**Result 1: Capacity of NAO Office to efficiently and effectively programme, supervise, manage, monitor the implementation and account for EDF Aid increased and sustained**

**Indicative Activities:** (i) Efficient and effective procurement; (ii) Ensuring Annual reviews of EU aid carried out; (iii) Processing of tender dossiers and Calls for Proposals; (iv) Ensuring gender and other cross cutting issues (Gender, HIV/AIDS, Environment) are addressed in the design and monitoring of projects and programmes and mainstreamed of gender and other cross-cutting issues in capacity building activities; (v) Ensuring the full participation of all stakeholders in CSP/NIP process; (vi) Study tours to regional NAO structures; (vii) Training in application of EDF procedures to NAO staff and support training in application of EDF procedures to implementing line ministries and agencies; (viii) Monitoring and reporting on the NIP and EDF contribution to the Agenda for Transformation as well as increase NAO dimension in the Regional Indicative Programmes (RIP).

**Result 2: Capacity of Line Ministries & Agencies and Non-State Actors for results-based management and implementation of EDF programmes and projects is strengthened**

**Indicative Activities:** (i) Participation of NAO in Programme Steering Committees of Line Ministries and Agencies; (ii) Develop and execute a training and support strategy/plan for Implementing Line Ministries and Agencies and Non-State Actors; (iii) Support to develop and/or improve internal monitoring and reporting system at implementing Line Ministries and Agencies, building on and aligned to existing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) structures; (iv) Development of integrated result-oriented monitoring and reporting system for NAO system; (v) Establish and support for NAO Focal Point in Line Ministries and Agencies; (vi) Align actions with and support the gender focal points of Line Ministries and Agencies.

**Result 3: Strengthened aid effectiveness capacity of the NAO to enhance ownership, alignment, harmonisation of EU programmes and projects to national structures**

**Indicative Activities:** (i) Reporting on EU/EDF aid data into the National Aid Management Platform; (ii) Proactive participation of the NAO office staff in Donor coordination meetings at sector and policy levels; (iii) Local Workshops and Seminars related to Principles of Aid Effectiveness targeting the NAO Office and Directorate of Aid Management and Coordination; (iv) Studies in relation to integration of financial audit systems into national systems; (v) Monitoring of EU compliance and progress in respect of aid effectiveness indicators; (vi) Activities to share information, align and avoid duplication of actions between the EU and other donors; (vii) Facilitating the participation of other donors in joint-assessments/reviews of the utilisation of EU development resources.

**Result 4: Enhanced visibility of EU-Liberia Cooperation**

**Indicative activities:** (i) Development and execution of a Visibility, Information and Communication Strategy for Liberia-EU cooperation; (ii) Training, dissemination and monitoring of EU visibility strategy for NAO, EU Delegation and implementing line ministries and agencies; (iii) Support the implementation visibility, information and communication strategy at the Line Ministries and Agencies; (iv) In cooperation with the EU Delegation, establish linkages with Liberian and regional media (press, radio, television); (v) Update NAO website with information on EU assistance instruments to enhance visibility and prepare plan to keep it up to date and sustainable; (vi) Produce a basic and coherent visibility/corporate image package of deliverables for Liberia-EU cooperation including EU Member States as appropriate.

### **4.3 Intervention logic**

The results will be achieved through:

- the award of operating grants to the NAO for their running costs (direct management);
- A short-term "Bridging" Technical Assistance (TA) (framework contract) is foreseen to support the NAO Office during the inception phase of the project before the procurement of the Long-Term Technical Assistance (LTTA) has been finalized. This short-term TA will support the NAO in preparing the first grant agreement and revising the logframe and activity calendar for the project.
- an LTTA service provider to be contracted by the NAO:
  - o that will include a team of (i) one Finance & Contract Expert; (ii) one Public sector Capacity Building expert; (iii) one Visibility and Communication expert; (iv) Short-Term experts.
  - o the LTTA Team will be embedded in the NAO Office to (a) ensure that EDF procedures are followed and (b) build the capacity of the NAO Office in applying correct procedures in a timely fashion.

The transfer of capacity to the NAO Office staff will not only enable it to better support the Line Ministries and Agencies in implementing the focal sector projects funded under EDF, but will facilitate a better alignment of the NAO function with that of the Aid Management and Coordination Unit, thereby increasing the Government's ownership of the NAO, and the NAO's relevance to the implementation of national development plans such as the Agenda for Transformation.

## **5 IMPLEMENTATION**

### **5.1 Financing agreement**

In order to implement this action, it is foreseen to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country, referred to in Article 17 of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement.

### **5.2 Indicative implementation period**

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 4.2 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is 36 months from the date of entry into force of the financing agreement.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's authorising officer responsible by amending this decision and the relevant contracts and agreements; such amendments to this decision constitute non-substantial amendment in the sense of Article 9(4) of Regulation (EU) 2015/322.

### **5.3 Implementation of the budget support component**

#### **5.3.1 *Rationale for the amounts allocated to budget support***

N/A

#### **5.3.2 *Criteria for disbursement of budget support***

N/A

#### **5.3.3 *Budget support details***

N/A

## **5.4 Implementation modalities**

### *5.4.1 Grants: call for proposals (direct management)*

N/A

### *5.4.2 Grant: direct award "Support to the NAO function, Aid Harmonization and Coordination in Liberia" (direct management)*

(a) Objectives of the grant, fields of intervention, priorities of the year and expected results.

The objective of the grant is to strengthen the National Authorising Officer (NAO) to effectively programme, supervise, manage, monitor the implementation and account for EU cooperation development projects and to move towards more ownership by alignment to national structures.

Expected results that the grant is intended to uphold include:

Result 1: Capacity of NAO Office to efficiently and effectively programme, supervise, manage, monitor the implementation and account for EDF Aid increased and sustained

Result 2: Capacity of Line Ministries and Agencies and Non-State Actors for results-based management and implementation of EDF programmes and projects is strengthened

Result 3: Strengthened aid effectiveness capacity of the NAO to enhance ownership, alignment, harmonisation of EU programmes and projects to national structures

Result 4: Enhanced visibility of EU-Liberia Cooperation

(b) Justification of a direct grant

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the operating grant may be awarded without a call for proposals to the NAO Office of the Republic of Liberia under the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning.

Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to an award of a grant without a call for proposals is justified because the Minister of Finance and Development Planning acts as National Authorising Officer of the Republic of Liberia, and the operating grant is aimed as supporting the functioning of the NAO Office, which is part of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning which corresponds to the monopoly situation described in Article 190(1)(c) of Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012.

(c) Eligibility conditions

Not applicable.

(d) Essential selection and award criteria

The essential selection criteria are the financial and operational capacity of the applicant.

The essential award criteria are relevance of the proposed action to the objectives of the call; design, effectiveness, feasibility, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of the action.

(e) Maximum rate of co-financing

The maximum possible rate of co-financing for this grant is 58%.

In accordance with Articles 192 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012, if full funding is essential for the action to be carried out, the maximum possible rate of co-financing may be increased up to 100 %. The essentiality of full funding will be justified by the Commission's

authorising officer responsible in the award decision, in respect of the principles of equal treatment and sound financial management.

(f) Indicative trimester to conclude the grant agreement

Second trimester of 2016.

#### **5.4.3 Procurement (direct management)**

Subject in generic terms, if possible	Type (works, supplies, services)	Indicative number of contracts	Indicative trimester of launch of the procedure
Bridging TA (framework contract)	services	1	2/16
Evaluation	services	1	4/19
Audit	services	3	3/17, 3/18, 4/19

#### **5.4.4 Indirect management with a Member State/third donor country/EU specialised agency/international organisation**

N/A

#### **5.4.5 Indirect management with the Republic of Liberia**

The Long-Term Technical Assistance referred in 4.3 may be implemented in indirect management with the Republic of Liberia in accordance with Article 58(1)(c) of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 applicable by virtue of Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323 according to the following modalities:

The Republic of Liberia will act as the contracting authority for the procurement and grant procedures. The Commission will control ex ante all the procurement and grant procedures.

Payments are executed by the Commission.

In accordance with Article 190(2)(b) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 and Article 262(3) of Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1268/2012 applicable by virtue of Article 36 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323 and Article 19c(1) of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, Liberia shall apply procurement rules of Chapter 3 of Title IV of Part Two of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012. These rules, as well as rules on grant procedures in accordance with Article 193 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 applicable by virtue of Article 17 of Regulation (EU) 2015/323, will be laid down in the financing agreement concluded with the Republic of Liberia.

#### **5.4.6 Contribution to an existing Regional Blending Facility**

N/A

#### **5.4.7 Changes from indirect to direct management mode due to exceptional circumstances (one alternative second option)**

N/A

## 5.5 Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility in accordance with EDF-ACP States Article 22(1)(b) of Annex IV to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of products and services in the markets of the countries concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult.

## 5.6 Indicative budget

Item	EU contribution (EUR)	Government of Liberia contribution (EUR)
5.4.1.2. Direct grant to the NAO Office Operating Grants*. For results 1, 2, 3 and 4.	960 000	690 000
5.4.1.3 Procurement (direct management)"Bridging" Technical Assistance (for results 1, 2, 3 and 4)	300 000	
5.4.1.5 Procurement (indirect management with the Republic of Liberia) Long-Term Technical Assistance Service Contract (for results 1, 2, 3 and 4)	1 700 000	
Contingencies	200 000	
Audit	80 000	
Evaluation	120 000	
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>3,360,000.00</b>	<b>690 000</b>

\* This cost includes EUR 150,000 for visibility and communication.

## 5.7 Organisational set-up and responsibilities

Key national staff of the NAO office has been allocated by the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. An organigramme of the NAO office will be submitted alongside job descriptions for all staff of the office.

A Steering Committee shall be set up to oversee and validate the overall direction and policy of the project. The project Steering Committee shall meet twice a year and shall be made up of:

- The Deputy National Authorising Officer as representative of the National Authorising Officer,
- A representative from the Directorate of Aid Management and Coordination,
- The project Supervisor,
- A representative of the Long Term Technical Assistance to the NAO,
- A representative of the Head of Delegation,
- Other members seen as relevant.

The Project Supervisor shall be assigned to the management and implementation of the project by the National Authorising Officer, with prior approval by the Head of Delegation.

The Project Supervisor will be responsible for: (1) Convening the Steering Committee meetings. This includes setting the agenda, sending invitations with relevant documentation, and preparing minutes of the meetings; (2) Submission of Annual Reports on the indicators of the project agreed in the logframe, to the NAO and to the Head of Delegation; (3) Submission of reports to the NAO and to the Head of Delegation (see next section); (4) Ensure that project risks are properly addressed; (5) Convene monthly meetings to inform the NAO and EU Delegation of project implementation; (6) Work closely with relevant NAO staff on the preparation, monitoring and reporting for the grant; (7) Coordinate activities of the LTTA.

## **5.8 Performance monitoring and reporting**

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its results (outputs and direct outcomes) as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix (for project modality). The report shall be laid out in such a way as to allow monitoring of the means envisaged and employed and of the budget details for the action. The final report, narrative and financial, will cover the entire period of the action implementation.

The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

## **5.9 Evaluation**

Having regard to the nature of the action, a final evaluation will be carried out for this action or its components via independent consultants contracted by the Commission.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that the NAO office has the capacity to implement EU-Liberia cooperation, providing the necessary visibility and that it is fully aligned to national aid coordination structures.

The Commission shall inform the implementing partner at least three months in advance of the dates foreseen for the evaluation missions. The implementing partner shall collaborate efficiently and effectively with the evaluation experts, and inter alia provide them with all necessary information and documentation, as well as access to the project premises and activities.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

Indicatively, one (1) contract for evaluation services shall be concluded under a framework contract in the last year of the project.

## **5.10 Audit**

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audits or expenditure verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

Indicatively, three contracts for audit services shall be concluded under a framework contract in the last quarter of each year of implementation.

## **5.11 Communication and visibility**

Communication and visibility of the EU is a legal obligation for all external actions funded by the EU.

This action shall contain communication and visibility measures which shall be based on a specific Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action, to be elaborated at the start of implementation and supported with the budget indicated in section 5.6 above.

In terms of legal obligations on communication and visibility, the measures shall be implemented by the Commission, the partner country, contractors, grant beneficiaries and/or entrusted entities. Appropriate contractual obligations shall be included in, respectively, the financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

The Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union External Action shall be used to establish the Communication and Visibility Plan of the Action and the appropriate contractual obligations.

Communications and visibility will be implemented through the grant, where an allocation of EUR 150 000 for the period of implementation of the project is foreseen. A Visibility and Communication Expert will be included in the LTTA contract, with an additional provision of EUR 20 000 for materials.

## **6 PRE-CONDITIONS**

Contractual and remuneration issues in relation to NAO Office Staff are agreed between NAO and EU Delegation prior to the signing of the Financing Agreement.

## APPENDIX - INDICATIVE LOGFRAME MATRIX

The activities, the expected outputs and all the indicators, targets and baselines included in the logframe matrix are indicative and may be updated during the implementation of the action without an amendment to the financing decision. The indicative logframe matrix will evolve during the lifetime of the action: new lines will be added for listing the activities as well as new columns for intermediary targets (milestones) when it is relevant and for reporting purpose on the achievement of results as measured by indicators.

Intervention Logic	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Sources of Verification	Assumptions
<p><b><u>Overall Objective</u></b>  <i>To contribute to the reduction of poverty in Liberia through enhancing the Aid Harmonization, Coordination and capacity of the Government of Liberia</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased degree of coherence, complementarity and coordination of 11<sup>th</sup> EDF support with Medium and Long-term Development Strategies of the Government of Liberia</li> </ul>	<p>Country Strategy Paper (CSP)            Agenda for Transformation            National Aid Policy (Draft)            National Statistics / Economic Indicators            Interviews with key stakeholders            Final evaluation</p>	<p>Political and economic stability in Liberia</p>
<p><b><u>Specific Objective</u></b>  <i>To strengthen the National Authorising Officer (NAO) to effectively programme, supervise, manage, monitor the implementation and account for EU cooperation projects and programmes, and to move towards increased ownership by and alignment to national systems and structures</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commitment rate and disbursement rate in 11<sup>th</sup> EDF NAO Support Project</li> <li>- Commitment rate and disbursement rate in 11<sup>th</sup> EDF NIP</li> <li>- Reduced TA requirements anticipated in a future support NAO programme</li> <li>- EDF interventions consistently in line with defined Government of Liberia policy and with Paris Declaration Principles</li> <li>- System for reporting on EDF aid flows to the Liberian Aid Management Platform is in place and fully functional</li> <li>- NAO is producing annual reports on EU contribution to AfT</li> </ul>	<p>Internal Monitoring Reports            External reviews and evaluation            External Audit Report</p>	<p>Government of Liberia remains committed to reform, to improve economic governance and economic management and ensure appropriate staff and accountability procedures for the EU EDF and other EU actions</p>

<p><b><u>Project Results</u></b></p> <p>1. <i>Capacity of NAO to efficiently and effectively programme, supervise, manage, monitor the implementation and account for EDF Aid increased and sustained</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual reduction in the number of formal procedural documents returned by EU Delegation to NAO for correction</li> <li>- Staff turnover over the period of 11<sup>th</sup> EDF</li> <li>- Accounting and Management Information System updated as appropriate and functioning effectively</li> <li>- NAO produced annual procurement plans for all EDF financed projects</li> </ul>	<p>TA Reports</p> <p>Internal Monitoring Reports</p> <p>External Reviews and evaluations</p> <p>Training Reports</p> <p>Audit Reports</p>	
<p>2. <i>Capacity of Line Ministries &amp; Agencies and Non-State Actors for results-based management and implementation of EDF programmes and projects is strengthened.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NAO Office staff participate in all meetings and steering committees linked to EDF projects and programmes and to joint programmes and projects implemented with other donors</li> <li>- EU/EDF Focal Points in LMAs established and strengthened</li> <li>- Number of trainings and workshops facilitated by NAO staff for Line Ministries &amp; Agencies and Non-State actors</li> <li>- Improved scoring in Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM) over the implementation of the project</li> </ul>	<p>Minutes of Meetings</p> <p>Memorandum of Understanding and Agreements</p> <p>Internal and External Monitoring Reports and Evaluations</p> <p>TA reports</p> <p>Training Reports</p> <p>External Assistance Management Report (EAMR)</p>	<p>Willingness of LMAs to take appropriate roles and responsibilities in respect of EDF programmes and projects.</p> <p>Willingness of NSAs to take appropriate roles and responsibilities in respect of EDF programmes and projects and EU – Liberia cooperation.</p> <p>Willingness of Ministry of Finance and Development / NAO planning to respect independence and sovereignty of NSAs</p>

<p>3. <i>Strengthened aid effectiveness capacity of the NAO to enhance ownership, alignment, harmonisation of EU programmes and projects to national structures</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NAO takes the lead in coordinating EU aid and encourages the participation of civil society and private sector in this process as indicated by number of organisations consulted</li> <li>- % of EU/EDF aid data validated and fed into aid management platform</li> <li>- Number and quality of donor coordination meetings initiated</li> <li>- All EU programmes and projects by the end of 11th EDF are monitored for their contribution to the Agenda For Transformation</li> <li>- Number of joint-programming, assessments, reviews carried out together</li> </ul>	<p>CSP TAPs/Financing Agreements Reports of Donor Coordination Meetings Programme Evaluations Minutes of Programme Steering Committees</p>	<p>Government of Liberia establish conditions (staff, equipment, resources, etc.) to ensure the effective functioning of the Directorate of Aid Management &amp; Coordination</p>
<p>4. <i>Enhanced visibility of EU-Liberia Cooperation</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NAO website regularly updated and used</li> <li>- Information on EU support to Liberia readily and immediately available upon request</li> <li>- Annual increases in number of references, articles slots in local, national and regional media (newspapers, radio, TV, etc.)</li> <li>- Visibility, Communications and Information Strategy developed and effectively implemented</li> <li>- Number of staff in NAO Office, EU Delegation and Line Ministries &amp; Agencies and Non-State Actors trained in Visibility Information, Communication and Education</li> <li>- Number visibility events held between NAO, EU Delegation and Line Ministries and Agencies</li> </ul>	<p>Internal Reports ROM, external reviews and evaluations Training Reports Financial/Technical Audits Visibility and communication plan of NAO Office, EU Delegation and of NSAs (where appropriate) Visibility and communication materials produced and distributed</p>	<p>Willingness of stakeholders to engage in the development of joint visibility, information, communication and education plans and to designate specific staff for this function</p>