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CPGA
Crisis Preparedness Gap Analysis

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LIBERIA CRISIS PREPAREDNESS GAP ANALYSIS

TECHNICAL ANNEX



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data	LHSR	Liberia Household Social Registry
ARC	African Risk Capacity	LMS	Liberia Meteorological Service
ASP	Adaptive Social Protection	LNRCS	Liberian National Red Cross Society
Cat DDO	Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option	LRRC	Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission
CBL	Central Bank of Liberia	MHCP	Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan
CCDR	Country Climate and Development Report	MiGOF	Migration Governance Indicator
CERC	Contingent Emergency Response Component	MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
CMU	Country Management Unit	MoE	Ministry of Education
CPF	Country Partnership Framework	MoF	Ministry of Finance
CPGA	Crisis Preparedness Gap Analysis	MoGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
CPRT	Crisis Preparedness and Response Toolkit	MoH	Ministry of Health
CSO	Civil Society Organization	MoME	Ministry of Mines and Energy
DRF	Disaster Risk Financing	MoPW	Ministry of Public Works
DRM	Disaster Risk Management	NAPHS	National Action Plan for Health Security
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction	NASSCORP	National Social Security and Welfare Corporation
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	NCCRM	National Coordination Centre for Early Warning and Response Mechanism
EOC	Emergency Operations Center	NDP	National Development Plan
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency	NDMA	National Disaster Management Agency
EWS	Early Warning System(s)	NDMTC	National Disaster Management Technical Committee
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	NEWEOC	National Early Warning and Emergency Operations Center
FAR	Fixed Asset Register	NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
FCS	Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations	NPHIL	National Public Health Institute of Liberia
GAR	Global Assessment Report	NSSNS	National Social Safety Nets Secretariat
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	PAPD	Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery	PEFA	Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability
GoL	Government of Liberia	PFM	Public Financial Management
GP	Global Practice	PFMRISP	Public Financial Management Reforms for Institutional Strengthening Project
GSA	General Service Agency	PPR	Prevention, Preparedness, and Response
IDP	Internally Displaced Person	RRO	Rapid Response Option
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System	SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
IHR	International Health Regulations	SOE	State-Owned Enterprise
ILO	International Labour Organization	SPSC	Social Protection Steering Committee
IPC	Infection Prevention and Control		
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change		
JEE	Joint External Evaluation		
LHS	Liberia Hydrological Service		

TWG	Technical Working Group	VRAM	Vulnerability Risk Assessment and Mapping
UN	United Nations	WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	WBG	World Bank Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	WFP	World Food Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund	WHO	World Health Organization
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs		

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1.

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

Crisis preparedness is essential for preventing shocks from becoming crises. Investments in ex ante preparedness are especially relevant in countries like Liberia, which face high levels of exposure and vulnerability to a range of risks.

The World Bank is strengthening its Crisis Preparedness and Response Toolkit (CPRT) to further empower countries to better respond to and prepare for crises. IDA's 20th replenishment cycle (IDA20) identified crisis preparedness as a policy priority. Its goal was to enhance countries' understanding of key crisis risks, strengthen country capacity to manage a range of shocks, and inform IDA programming. Building on IDA20's investment in crisis preparedness diagnostics to inform country strategies, IDA21 will utilize the enhanced CPRT of the World Bank Group (WBG) to help governments allocate technical and financial resources for effective crisis response.

The Crisis Preparedness Gap Analysis (CPGA) assesses a country's capacity and systems to deal with crises across core sectors and provides priority recommendations. By identifying priority interventions and entry points, the CPGA can be useful in providing a framework to access opportunities under the CPRT. The assessment can also inform Country Partnership Frameworks (CPFs) and country programming. The CPGA aims to (a) provide a high-level assessment of crisis preparedness for various shocks, (b) identify gaps and opportunities to improve crisis preparedness at the country level, and (c) inform policy dialogue and technical and financial support on crisis preparedness in country and regional programming. The analysis builds on and complements sector- and crisis-specific diagnostics.

In seeking to identify opportunities to strengthen the capacity of the Government of Liberia (GoL) to prepare for crisis events in an effective and timely manner, this technical annex presents findings from the application of the CPGA in the country. Following a brief description of the CPGA methodology, the technical annex summarizes the findings from each CPGA component and identifies entry points and opportunities to strengthen crisis preparedness in the country.

The GoL and the World Bank are jointly undertaking the CPGA to enhance the government's ability to manage and mitigate the impact of crises. The country has a history of economic volatility, governance challenges, and external shocks, including the Ebola outbreak, COVID-19 pandemic, and climate-induced disasters. These events have exposed systemic weaknesses in crisis preparedness, necessitating an assessment and strengthening of existing response mechanisms. The CPGA will help identify gaps in institutional capacity, financial resilience, and service delivery, ensuring Liberia is better equipped to handle future crises.

The CPGA informs Liberia's CPF for FY25–30, which emphasizes resilience building as a core strategic objective. The CPF will include a focus on strengthening governance, improving fiscal resilience, and enhancing infrastructure to withstand shocks. The CPGA fits within this broader development strategy by providing evidence-based recommendations to improve crisis preparedness. It also aligns with Liberia's long-term vision under the Agriculture, Roads, Rule of Law, Education, Sanitation and Tourism (ARREST) Agenda for Inclusive Development (AAID), which prioritizes governance reforms, economic stability, and institutional strengthening. By integrating CPGA findings into CPF implementation, the World Bank can ensure that Liberia's development efforts are adaptive and resilient.

The CPGA is highly relevant for Global Practices (GPs) as it provides critical insights into sector-specific vulnerabilities. Key areas of focus include health and social protection, where strengthening emergency response capacity is essential; infrastructure and energy, which require resilience measures against climate-related disasters; and governance and public finance, which need enhanced transparency and efficiency in crisis management. For the Country Management Unit (CMU), the CPGA serves as a strategic tool to align financing decisions with Liberia's evolving needs. It helps ensure that crisis response is incorporated into development planning, facilitating proactive rather than reactive interventions.

The CPGA directly informs readiness for activating tools in the CPRT like the Rapid Response Option (RRO),

by providing assessments of readiness, early warning systems (EWS), and financial and fiduciary preparedness. By leveraging the recommendations in the CPGA, Liberia can strengthen institutional capacity, improve financial resilience, and enhance coordination among stakeholders. The CPGA findings will inform policy reforms and investment strategies, ensuring that Liberia's crisis response framework is robust and sustainable. This integration will not only safeguard development gains but also position Liberia as a model for crisis resilience in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

As the World Bank seeks to fortify countries like Liberia against a spectrum of crises, the CPGA offers a platform to identify key preparedness gaps, foster cross-sectoral collaboration, and inform strategic interventions. Through this lens, Liberia's CPGA will contribute to a broader understanding of its crisis preparedness

landscape, helping pave the way for a resilient and adaptive future.

Understanding the main drivers of crisis vulnerability through the CPGA's cross-sectoral focus provides an opportunity to integrate holistic crisis preparedness into the GoL's development plans. The CPGA allows for multisectoral risk analysis and cross-sectoral mitigation measures while integrating key conclusions from the Country Climate and Development Report (CCDR) and reform measures to enhance adaptation efforts. Notably, economic and financial crises have a different nature and impact on the country compared to disasters caused by natural hazards, anthropogenic hazards, and health emergencies. They also require different response and mitigation measures. Therefore, economic and financial crises are not within the scope of Liberia's CPGA.

ASSESSING CRISIS PREPAREDNESS: OVERVIEW OF THE CPGA METHODOLOGY

Crisis preparedness requires a comprehensive and cross-sectoral approach to risk management with targeted interventions across a range of sectors. While the scope and effectiveness of preparedness activities heavily depend on context—including exposure to hazards and the nature of underlying drivers of vulnerability—there are some elements of preparedness that are generally considered relevant in most country contexts.

To provide a holistic assessment of preparedness, the CPGA isolates five core components of crisis preparedness: Legal and Institutional Foundations, Understanding and Monitoring Risks, Financial Preparedness, Primary Response, and Social and Livelihood Support. Components correspond to foundational elements of crisis preparedness consistent with the World Bank's mandate, building on sector-specific frameworks and on operational engagements in this space. Each component is further broken down into subcomponents and indicators, resulting in a three-tiered system with 'maturity levels' assigned to each (see Table 1). Levels of maturity range from *unmet* (essentially 'little to nothing' has been done to actively promote crisis preparedness) to *advanced* (typically reflecting a regional leader in crisis preparedness, having a comprehensive and multisectoral approach with

significant resources and capacity). The framework does not evaluate past performance or attempt to predict how a country might fare in a crisis. It focuses on identifying entry points for targeted technical and financial support to strengthen crisis preparedness across its five components.

The CPGA builds on and supplements a range of sector and crisis-specific diagnostic tools. These include internal frameworks such as the Climate Risk Country Profile and the Disaster Risk Financing Diagnostic as well as external tools such as the Global Health Security Index and the World Health Organization (WHO) Joint External Evaluation (JEE)/International Health Regulations framework. The CPGA does not replace or duplicate these in-depth assessments. Rather, it offers users a holistic, high-level perspective on key country systems that contribute to crisis preparedness for different types of shocks and across sectors. These sector-specific diagnostics are the starting point of the CPGA in countries where they exist, with inputs and guiding questions in the CPGA matched directly with those used in established sectoral framework. In countries where other diagnostic tools are yet to be deployed, the CPGA can serve as an entry point for country teams to conduct more in-depth analyses.

2.

LIBERIA COUNTRY RISK PROFILE



OVERVIEW OF KEY RISKS FACING LIBERIA

Liberia is grappling with significant developmental challenges, including an economy heavily reliant on natural resources, constrained budgetary capacity, deteriorating infrastructure and services, and some of the poorest human development indicators globally. As Africa's oldest republic, Liberia has endured a tumultuous journey toward stability, facing civil unrest, economic fluctuations, and public health emergencies. The nation is still healing from the scars of civil conflicts, health crises, and various external shocks that have exacerbated poverty and hindered socioeconomic progress.

Despite over twenty years of peace, the shadow of past turmoil—including a brutal civil war and the 2014 Ebola outbreak—looms large over Liberia. Post-conflict progress and gains have been uneven, leaving a significant portion of the population in extreme poverty and vulnerable to shocks. Many people remain unable to access labor markets or essential services, posing a risk to Liberia's long-term stability, development, and economic growth. Per international poverty metrics, the poverty rate increased from 25.9 percent in 2014 to 27.6 percent in 2016.¹ The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated poverty, with the rate estimated to have increased to 33.2 percent by 2020. Despite a strong economic recovery in 2021, the poverty rate remained high at 27.6 percent.² From 2022 to 2024 there were signs of stabilization, but poverty levels remained elevated due to ongoing global uncertainties and commodity price shock.³

Liberia's economic standing, as indicated by its gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in 2021, is among the lowest globally. This is the result of a confluence of adverse factors: historical conflict, economic instability, public health emergencies, fluctuating global prices, and a sustained economic downturn, all occurring alongside

rapid population growth. This has led to a consistently low GDP per capita.

The majority of Liberians rely on agriculture for their subsistence, yet the sector has been experiencing slow and static expansion. The significant shift of the workforce from farming to services with low productivity highlights the urgency of prioritizing skills enhancement to combat poverty. Despite a growth in its contribution to the economy, the industrial sector's capacity to alleviate poverty is also constrained. Moreover, a growing number of young people with limited skills face narrow prospects outside of the agricultural and unskilled service sectors.

Liberia's health sector faces challenges in its ability to respond to growing risk from climate impacts, but the government has taken proactive steps to prioritize the sector, increasing government expenditures from 8 percent to 13 percent of the national expenditure. While the GoL developed a relatively robust surveillance system during the Ebola outbreak, further work is required to strengthen it from the central level. For example, while the surveillance system was somewhat effective during the COVID-19 pandemic, it was unable to detect differences in strains of COVID-19 to determine transmission rates of new strains. This was due to the absence of links between clinical data in the national COVID-19 database. Other gaps remain particularly in areas like infrastructure, staffing, and data processing.

Global climate change represents a critical challenge to the stability and economic well-being of Liberia. According to the projections from Liberia's 2024 CCDR, heightened temperatures, erratic rainfall, and an increase in natural calamities like floods, heatwaves, and disease outbreaks threaten to deepen poverty and destabilize the

¹ World Bank. 2013. *Liberia Poverty Assessment - Toward a More Inclusive Liberia (English)*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/099032124150035378>.

² World Bank. 2022. *Macro Poverty Outlook for Liberia : October 2022*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. <https://documentsinternal.worldbank.org/search/33917199>.

³ Tarwo, Gweh Gaye, Mamadou Ndione, Martin Elias De Simone, Paul Andres Corral Rodas, Mack Capehart Mulbah, and Binta Beatrice Massaquoi. 2022. *Liberia - Economic Update : Investing in Human Capital for Inclusive and Sustainable Growth*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. <https://documentsinternal.worldbank.org/search/33900795>.

country. Despite being one of the world's lowest greenhouse gas emitters, Liberia faces significant vulnerabilities to climate change. Therefore, Liberia's path to development necessitates a focus on adaptive strategies and sustainable management of its abundant natural landscapes to forge a low-carbon development trajectory, particularly in key sectors such as forestry, agriculture, mining, and energy. If no adaptive actions are taken, the economic impact of climate change could result in a reduction of Liberia's economy by 15 percent by 2050, mainly through negative effects on labor supply from heat stress and poor health, agriculture productivity, and infrastructure damages from flooding. These effects would potentially push up to 1.3 million individuals into poverty by 2050.⁴

The GoL's reliance on international assistance for post-disaster funding and its public budget is not a tenable strategy for disaster response. Instead, adopting a pre-emptive financing strategy through risk layering could offer a more sustainable financial safeguard for the national budget in times of crisis. The GoL recognizes this and recently approved a US\$20 million Catastrophe Deferred Drawdown Option (Cat DDO) to access immediate liquidity after a natural hazard-induced disaster or public health emergency. Liberia's limited adoption of further risk financing instruments is a significant vulnerability, given that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report from 2022 suggests that extreme rainfall and flooding are likely to become more frequent and intense in Liberia due to climate change.⁵ Change in annual precipitation remains uncertain. Furthermore, the GoL's deficit in baseline data for natural hazards such as floods, windstorms, heatwaves, and droughts hampers its ability to fully understand and prepare for climate shocks. To address these gaps, the GoL requires enhanced systems for monitoring, forecasting, and issuing warnings for weather-related and hydrological hazards.

Liberia's unique geographical features—its coastal belts, rolling plateaus, and dense rainforests—necessitate a tailored approach to crisis preparedness. It requires coherence with these environmental specificities to ensure effective readiness and response. While Liberia has not experienced the same scale of population displacement as neighboring Sierra Leone, its history of conflict and economic adversity has led to significant internal population movements. Crisis preparedness in Liberia must, therefore, be adaptable, with a strong emphasis on providing resilient social services and support systems for the most vulnerable and potentially displaced populations.

Liberia has been facing rapid urbanization particularly in the Greater Monrovia area. Liberia's urbanization is outpacing the government and local authorities' capacity to provide sufficient infrastructure and housing with over 60 percent of urban residents in Liberia live in informal settlements, in housing that is highly exposed to natural hazards. **Greater Monrovia faces increased climate risk,** in particular urban flooding, as people and assets expand into low-lying flood plains and wetlands. This is compounded by the illegal purchase of land and construction in protected wetlands and local authority's limited capacity to prepare and enforce land use plans.⁶

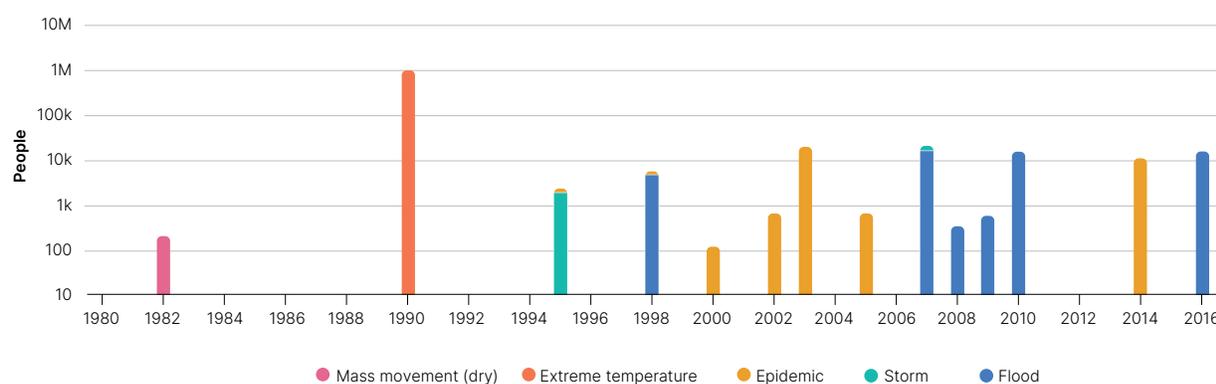
A first step in the CPGA process is gaining a detailed understanding of a country's risk profile. This is crucial in tailoring the evaluation to levels of exposure and sensitivity specific to the unique set of threats facing the country. See Table 1 for a summary of key risks and a detailed profile, as described below. Discussions on the country's capacity to prepare for these threats are further outlined in the section that follows.

⁴ World Bank Group. 2023. *Liberia - Country Climate and Development Report*. Washington, DC: World Bank Group. <https://documentsinternal.worldbank.org/search/34112560>.

⁵ IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). 2023. *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability: Working Group II Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK and New York, NY, USA. doi:[10.1017/9781009325844](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009325844).

⁶ Liberia Country and Climate Development Report 2024

Figure 1. Key natural hazard statistics for 1980–2020



Source: World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal.

Table 1. Summary statistics related to key risks in Liberia

Natural Hazards⁷ 	River flood	High risk
	Urban flood	High risk
	Wildfire	High risk
	Landslide	High risk
	Cyclone	No data
	Earthquake	Very low
	Extreme heat	Medium risk
	Water scarcity	Very low
	Coastal Flooding	Medium
Food 	Cereal import dependency ratio (2020–2022) ⁸	71.9%
	Prevalence of severe food insecurity (2021–2023 average) ⁹	37.3%
	Proportion of children under 5 affected by stunting (2022) ¹⁰	26.6%
	Food price inflation, average of monthly (2024) ¹¹	7.96%

⁷ World Bank Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) Think Hazard. <https://thinkhazard.org/en/report/144-liberia>.

⁸ Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO): Suite of Food Security Indicators. <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FS>.

⁹ FAO: Suite of Food Security Indicators. <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FS>.

¹⁰ FAO: Suite of Food Security Indicators. <https://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/FS>.

¹¹ World Bank Development Economics Data Group. <https://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/4498>.

Table 1. Summary statistics related to key risks in Liberia

Health 	Total expenditure on health, as a percentage of GDP (2021) ¹²	16.62%
	Physician density (per 10,000 population) ¹³	1.8
	Nursing and midwifery personnel density (per 10,000 population) ¹⁴	7.9
	HIV infection rate (2022) ¹⁵	1%
	Malaria rate (2022) ¹⁶	349.5
Macro-Fiscal 	GDP (US\$, billions) ¹⁷	4.24
	Total external debt stock, as a percentage of gross national income (2022) ¹⁸	50.8%
Socioeconomic Vulnerability 	Poverty headcount ratio at US\$2.15/day (2017) ¹⁹	27.6%
	Human Development Index Rank ²⁰	177
	Population covered by at least one social protection benefit (2020) ²¹	6.2
	Poor persons covered by social protection systems (2018) ²²	14.4
Fragility, Conflict, and Violence²³ 	Fragile and conflict-affected situations (FCS) status	Not FCS
	Conflict events (past 12 months)	43
	Political fatalities (past 12 months)	4
	Violence against civilians (past 12 months)	1

¹² World Bank. Open Data. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.XPD.CHEX.GD.ZS>.

¹³ WHO 2022. <https://data.who.int/indicators/i/CCCEBB2/217795A>.

¹⁴ WHO 2022. <https://data.who.int/indicators/i/B54EB15/5C8435F>.

¹⁵ <https://data.worldbank.org/country/liberia>.

¹⁶ World Bank. Open Data. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.MLR.INCD.P3?locations=LR>.

¹⁷ World Bank. Open Data. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=LR>.

¹⁸ World Bank. Open Data. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.DOD.DECT.GN.ZS>.

¹⁹ <https://data.worldbank.org/country/liberia>.

²⁰ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/LBR>.

²¹ International Labour Organization (ILO) Social Protection Platform 2020. <https://www.social-protection.org/gess/RessourceDownload.action?id=57535>.

²² World Bank. 2020. *Project Information Document*. Additional Financing For Liberia Social Safety Nets

²³ Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED). <https://acleddata.com/explorer/>.

FINDINGS FROM THE CPGA COUNTRY ASSESSMENT

Findings from the CPGA shed light on barriers and opportunities for promoting crisis preparedness in Liberia. Insights are based on information gathered from a

desk review and extensive interviews with sector experts across a range of World Bank GPs (see Acknowledgements for a list of experts consulted).

Table 2. Crisis preparedness maturity levels for components and subcomponents of the CPGA in Liberia

Component Summary		Unmet	Nascent	Basic	Good	Advanced
1. Legal & Institutional Foundations	Nascent	1.7				
1.1 Legislative frameworks, strategic plans and policies	Basic	2.0				
1.2 Governance and institutions	Basic	1.5				
2. Understanding & Monitoring	Unmet	0.5				
2.1 Risk assessment	Unmet	0.5				
2.2 Risk monitoring and early	Unmet	0.5				
3. Financial Preparedness	Unmet	0.3				
3.1 Crisis risk financing	Unmet	0.7				
3.2 Public Financial Management	Unmet	0.0				
4. Primary Response	Nascent	1.3				
4.1 Public health systems	Basic	2.0				
4.2 Critical infrastructure	Unmet	0.5				
4.3 Civil protection and Emergency Management	Nascent	1.5				
5. Social and Livelihood Support	Unmet	0.9				
5.1 Coverage and scalability of social protection	Unmet	0.5				
5.2 Food security and livelihoods	Nascent	1.0				
5.3 Continued access to education	Basic	2.0				
5.4 Crisis induced displacement	Unmet	0.5				

Note: Maturity Level: Unmet - 0, Nascent - 1, Basic - 2, Good - 3, Advanced - 4.
Source: Author's analysis

The key entry points for each of the five components have been summarized toward the end of the respective sections. While all entry points identified in the CPGA are critical actions to strengthen crisis preparedness, these

have been further classified considering their level of readiness and priority through the matrix in Table 3, to support sequencing and prioritization of actions.

Table 3: Entry point classification matrix

	PRIORITY	
READINESS	High: Needs immediate action to address critical crisis preparedness gaps and prevent additional risks	Medium: Needs action to address crisis preparedness gaps
High: Identified in existing plans, with good level of technical and financial readiness	High priority actions should not be postponed for crisis preparedness.	Actions with high level of readiness and moderate priority for crisis preparedness
Medium: Requires additional resources/dialogue to be ready for implementation	Urgent actions with risk of delayed implementation that require additional dialog and resources	Moderate priority actions that need additional resources to be implemented

 Policies, strategies, institutions  Investments

OVERVIEW OF CROSS-SECTORAL CHALLENGES IN PROMOTING CRISIS PREPAREDNESS

The GoL faces significant cross-sectoral challenges in promoting crisis preparedness, primarily stemming from resource limitations, weak infrastructure, and institutional fragmentation. Despite improvements since the civil war, many sectors, including health, education, and disaster management, struggle with inadequate funding and personnel, hampering effective planning and response.

The country’s vulnerability to natural hazards, including flooding and disease outbreaks, exacerbates these issues. For instance, the 2014 Ebola outbreak revealed critical gaps in health infrastructure and coordination among agencies. This lack of integration impedes the implementation of cohesive strategies that address multiple crises simultaneously. Reliance on external aid can undermine local capacity building, leading to a cyclical dependence that complicates sustainable development efforts. There is also a need for enhanced public awareness and community involvement in crisis preparedness initiatives, as local knowledge is crucial for effective response.

Promoting crisis preparedness in Liberia involves addressing several cross-sectoral challenges that require coordinated efforts across various domains. One of the primary challenges is the integration of climate

risk assessments and EWS into existing frameworks. Effective disaster risk management (DRM) in Liberia necessitates the improvement of baseline data and climate risk assessments for various hazards such as floods, windstorms, heatwaves, and droughts. This data is crucial for enhancing monitoring, forecasting, and warning systems that feed into early warning mechanisms, ensuring timely and accurate information dissemination.

Another significant challenge in Liberia is establishing and maintaining national multi-hazard contingency hubs. These hubs should be equipped with adequate stocks of response and recovery items to ensure a swift and effective response to crises. Limited funding often hampers adequate stocking of these facilities, stalling preparedness efforts. The absence of such a system impedes the government’s ability to prepare for and respond to climate shocks effectively.

Coordination among various stakeholders, including governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), exists but is heavily reliant on international partners. The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) is mandated to play a pivotal role in this regard by setting up and maintaining a national Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with regional logistics hubs, but lack of funding and staff capacity limit the NDMA’s ability

to coordinate with various levels of government and direct incident response. The success of crisis response depends on having adequate resources and establishing functional preparedness and response coordination mechanisms at every level of government.

Furthermore, the private sector's involvement is vital in providing and financing innovative solutions for crisis preparedness in Liberia. For instance, private sector participation in co-investing in renewable energies can scale up electrification and reduce emissions. Similarly, private

sector initiatives in waste collection and management can contribute to renewable energy production and improve urban environments. Partnerships between the public and private sectors in building shared transport infrastructures can also help preserve land and forest space while achieving development impacts. Promoting and enhancing crisis preparedness in Liberia requires addressing various cross-sectoral challenges, including improving data and risk assessments, ensuring adequate resources and coordination, and fostering private sector involvement.

3.

SUMMARY OF COMPONENT-SPECIFIC FINDINGS ON CRISIS PREPAREDNESS





1. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FOUNDATIONS - AGGREGATED SCORE: 1.7 (NASCENT)

COMPONENT	SUBCOMPONENT	INDICATOR	MATURITY LEVEL
1. Legal and institutional foundations	1.1 Legislative frameworks, strategic plans, and policies	1.1.1 Dedicated crisis preparedness laws and regulations are in place and well enforced, with preparedness plans mainstreamed into policy frameworks	
	1.2 Governance and institutions	1.2.1 Governance and institutional arrangements are in place, with defined mandates, roles, and responsibilities	
		1.2.2 Preparedness activities are coordinated across sectors and levels within government and external stakeholders	

Key Messages:

- 1. Strengthen Legal Frameworks for Crisis Preparedness Integration:** Liberia's current DRM policies and legal frameworks, such as the National Disaster Management Policy and the NDMA Act, provide a solid foundation for DRM. However, there is a need to update key acts and explicitly integrate crisis preparedness considerations into these frameworks to enhance resilience against natural hazards.
- 2. Enhance Coordination and Resource Allocation:** Effective crisis preparedness requires robust coordination among various government agencies and stakeholders. The NDMA's role in coordinating disaster management activities is crucial, but it faces challenges due to limited financial and human resources. Ensuring timely and adequate resource allocation, including operationalizing the National Disaster Management Fund, is essential for effective crisis response.
- 3. Promote Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Policies:** The National Disaster Management Policy emphasizes inclusivity and non-discrimination in DRM efforts. Policy makers should ensure that DRM strategies are gender sensitive and address the needs of vulnerable groups, including women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. This approach aligns with good governance principles and enhances community resilience.
- 4. Develop and Enforce Sectoral Preparedness Plans:** Liberia has developed sector-specific response plans for various hazards, including floods, epidemics, and coastal erosion. The GoL should focus on the enforcement and operationalization of these plans to ensure they are effective during emergencies. This includes establishing regional logistics hubs and ensuring they are adequately stocked with response materials.
- 5. Leverage International Frameworks and Best Practices:** Liberia's DRM policies should align with international frameworks such as the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. By adopting best practices and lessons learned from other countries, Liberia can strengthen its legal and institutional frameworks for crisis preparedness and build resilience against future disasters.

1.1 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS AND STRATEGIC PLANS AND POLICIES FOR CRISIS PREPAREDNESS

1.1.1 Crises Preparedness Laws and Regulations

The GoL has established policies and legal frameworks to address disaster risk reduction (DRR), which are critical given the country's susceptibility to climate-related disasters. Key initiatives include the Act to Establish the NDMA, the National Disaster Management Policy (2024), and the National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (2016–2021), which collectively form the legal and policy foundation for disaster management and risk reduction. Although the NDMA Act does not explicitly mandate periodic national climate risk and vulnerability assessments, it requires vulnerability assessments and hazard mapping, which can encompass climate-related hazards. The current legal framework facilitates collaboration with stakeholders and partners. It is recommended that the framework be revised to integrate crisis preparedness considerations more explicitly at both the statutory and policy levels of disaster risk reduction and management.²⁴

Liberia's constitution mandates the protection of the lives and assets of its citizens, a principle that is deeply embedded in the nation's approach to crisis preparedness and response. This constitutional mandate is reflected in the National Disaster Management Policy, which underscores the importance of reducing disaster risks at the national, regional, and local levels. The policy is designed to be inclusive, ensuring that DRM efforts are implemented without discriminating based on gender, creed, or race. It is committed to upholding the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Liberian people, as enshrined in the constitution, thereby aligning national disaster management efforts with constitutional principles.

According to the constitution of the Republic of Liberia, the provisions for declaring and terminating a state of emergency are clearly articulated to ensure a balanced approach involving both executive action and legislative oversight. The President of Liberia holds the authority to proclaim and declare the existence of a state of emergency in the Republic or any part thereof. This declaration is made in consultation with the Speaker of the House of

Representatives and the President of the Senate. Upon such a declaration, the President is empowered to suspend or modify certain rights, freedoms, and guarantees contained in the constitution and exercise other emergency powers as necessary to address the emergency. The declaration of a national state of emergency must be made through a proclamation in the Government Gazette, ensuring public awareness and transparency.

Legislative oversight is a critical component of the process. On declaring a state of emergency, but not later than seven days thereafter, the President is required to present the facts and circumstances leading to such a declaration before the Legislature. This can be done either at its regular session or at a specially convened session. The Legislature must then decide within 72 hours, by a joint resolution voted by two-thirds of the membership of each house, whether the proclamation is justified and whether the measures taken are appropriate. If the two-thirds vote is not obtained, the state of emergency is automatically revoked. If the Legislature deems it necessary to revoke the state of emergency or modify the measures taken, the President must act accordingly and immediately implement the decisions of the Legislature. These provisions ensure that the declaration and termination of a state of emergency are subject to a rigorous process involving both the executive and legislative branches of government. This balance of power is essential for maintaining democratic principles and safeguarding the rights and freedoms of citizens during times of crisis.

The National Disaster Management Policy (2012), which was revised in 2024, outlines priority activities for developing contingency plans, strengthening capacity for preparedness at the national and local levels, and coordinating among agencies working on DRM. This policy emphasizes the importance of institutional arrangements and the capacities of individuals, organizations, and systems in effectively implementing disaster and emergency preparedness and response. The National Disaster Management Policy aims to create a robust legal and institutional framework for effective DRM. It seeks to

²⁴ Liberia CDDR.

establish a foundation for sound national and local organization, enhance capacity, and clearly allocate roles and responsibilities. By providing overall direction for integrating DRR into development, recovery, and humanitarian response policies and plans, the policy ensures a comprehensive approach to managing disaster risks.

The National Disaster Management Policy emphasizes the integration of DRM aspects into key sectoral policies to enhance crisis preparedness across various sectors. This integration is crucial for building resilience and ensuring sustainable development in the face of potential disasters. The policy specifically recommends the incorporation of DRM principles into several key national policies, including the National Environment Policy, National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy, National Health Policy, and the National Rural Renewable Energy Efficiency Policy. Embedding DRM considerations into these sectoral policies helps create a comprehensive and cohesive approach to DRR across multiple areas of governance and development.

Implementing these recommendations is a significant challenge. Despite clear directives outlined in the National Disaster Management Policy, there are gaps in the actual execution and enforcement of these integrated strategies. The policy highlights the need for effective and functional legal and institutional systems to support DRM, which includes the development of gender-sensitive policies, strategies, and plans. It also underscores the importance of good governance characteristics such as participation, rule of law, transparency, equity, effectiveness, efficiency and accountability. To address these challenges, the policy calls for establishing well-functioning institutions at the central, county, district, and local levels. It stresses the importance of decentralizing DRM powers and ensuring community participation, particularly the involvement of women and vulnerable groups. The policy also advocates for the harmonization of all DRM strategies and policies to create a unified framework that supports risk reduction and resilience building across all sectors.

Moreover, the National Disaster Management Policy emphasizes the importance of strengthening disaster preparedness for effective emergency and recovery response. It aligns with international frameworks such as the Hyogo Framework for Action but needs to be updated to align with the Sendai Framework. It also aligns with the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, which

focuses on building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters. The policy also highlights the need for gender inclusion and proactive participation of vulnerable groups in DRM activities. By ensuring that all disaster and recovery needs assessments include gender-disaggregated data, the policy aims to address the specific needs of women, children, people living with HIV/AIDS, the elderly, disabled, and other vulnerable populations.

The NDMA is an independent body responsible for handling all disaster-related issues on a day-to-day basis. The NDMA is supported by a Board consisting of representatives from various ministries and organizations, including the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance (MoF), Ministry of Public Works (MoPW), Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Mines & Energy (MoME), the Liberian National Red Cross Society (LNRCS), the United Nations (UN) Country Team, and the Maritime Authority. The roles and responsibilities of the NDMA and its Board are clearly defined to ensure effective disaster management before, during, and after a disaster.

The National Action Plan 2016–2021 further calls for mainstreaming DRR and preparedness actions in sectoral strategies, frameworks, work plans, and budgets. This plan includes key priority actions under themes such as governance for DRR, preparedness and emergency response, risk identification and early warning, knowledge and information management, and risk management applications. These actions are consistent with the Africa Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Hyogo Framework of Action, which focus on building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.

Liberia's National Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan (MHCP, 2018–2021) provides comprehensive preparedness plans for six priority hazards: floods, windstorms, coastal erosion, fire, epidemics, and conflict. This plan addresses the country's risk profile by outlining specific measures and strategies to mitigate the impact of these hazards and ensure effective response mechanisms are in place.

In addition to the National MHCP, Liberia has developed Sector Priority Response Plans that offer an operational framework for priority preparedness activities. These plans include detailed indicators, targets, and timelines for responsible sector members or focal ministries and

agencies. The sectors covered by these response plans are diverse and encompass critical areas such as shelter and non-food items; food security and nutrition; health; overall logistics; water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); education; and protection against violence and abuse (including human rights, national laws, women, children, minorities, and disabled individuals).

Also, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Liberia has developed specific contingency plans for environmental hazards, such as oil spills and maritime incidents. These plans are part of the broader effort to

address hazard-specific risks and ensure that the country is prepared to respond to a wide range of potential emergencies.

Despite the existence of these comprehensive plans, enforcement is a significant challenge during disasters.

The effectiveness of these preparedness plans is often hindered by implementation and compliance issues. Ensuring that these plans are not only developed but also effectively enforced and operationalized during emergencies is crucial for enhancing the country's resilience to disasters.

1.2 GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONS

1.2.1 Governance and Institutional Arrangements

Liberia's National Disaster Management Policy clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities for financing, delivery, and oversight between key government agencies at both national and sub-national levels. The policy emphasizes the importance of creating a functional legal and institutional framework to support DRM. It outlines that lead ministries and agencies are responsible for preparing and implementing programs of intervention based on previously prepared sectoral DRM plans across specific hazards. Each line ministry or agency responsible for a specific disaster is required to budget for DRR every fiscal year, in conjunction with the NDMA. This structured approach ensures that there is a clear allocation of roles and responsibilities, enhancing the coordination and effectiveness of DRM efforts across various sectors.

The NDMA was established by an Act in 2016 and became fully operational in 2018. The agency is mandated to coordinate all disaster management activities, integrating both state and non-state actors at the national, county, district, and chiefdom levels. The NDMA is responsible for implementing national disaster policies; coordinating emergency responses; and working closely with ministries, agencies, and international partners. This centralized authority plays a crucial role in managing and responding to crisis events in Liberia.

The NDMA has the regulatory and convening power to manage and respond to crisis events in Liberia. The agency's responsibilities include implementing national

disaster policies; coordinating emergency responses; and collaborating with ministries, agencies, and international partners. The complete enforcement of the NDMA's regulatory and convening power is subject to authorization and approvals by the MoF, which can sometimes limit the agency's ability to fully execute its mandate.

Access to resources, both human and financial, for coordinating and managing crisis preparedness and response in Liberia is neither timely nor appropriate.

The need to build human resource capacity was highlighted in the National Action Plan for DRR (2016–2021). There is heavy reliance on partners to support with both human and financial resources. Although the GoL allocates a yearly budget for the NDMA, it is significantly less than what is needed to support its legislated roles. The NDMA is supposed to have access to a National Disaster Management Fund (NDMF), which has not yet been operationalized. The NDMA has established one regional office in Gbarnga, Bong County, but the overall resource constraints hinder its ability to effectively coordinate and manage crisis preparedness and response efforts.

1.2.2 Coordination of Preparedness Activities

In Liberia, mechanisms are in place to coordinate crisis preparedness and response among different government ministries and agencies, but enforcement is an issue. The National Disaster Management System, as outlined in the 2012 National Disaster Management Policy, provides a comprehensive framework for such coordination. This system includes the NDMA, which is the central body responsible for overseeing disaster-related activities

on a day-to-day basis. The NDMA is supported by the National Disaster Management Technical Committee (NDMTC), which is composed of various sectoral subcommittees. These subcommittees focus on specific areas such as food and agriculture, water and sanitation, education and child protection, health services, environment, shelter and refugees, early recovery, and infrastructure.

Each technical group within the NDMTC is led by a government line ministry or agency, with support from UN agencies, NGOs, and the private sector. This structure ensures that there is a dedicated lead agency for each specific hazard, allowing for specialized and efficient response efforts. The NDMA coordinates closely with the NDMTC and its subcommittees to ensure a cohesive and comprehensive approach to disaster management.

The NDMA Board, which includes representatives from various key ministries with responsibilities for health, social welfare, justice, finance, public works, defense, agriculture, and energy plays a crucial role in the effective implementation of disaster preparedness and response. This board is chaired by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and includes members from the LNRCS, the UN Country Team, and the Maritime Authority.

According to the National Disaster Management Policy, the NDMA plays a pivotal role in liaising with international entities such as UN agencies and international NGOs. The NDMA coordinates relief efforts, including registration, importation, warehousing, and distribution of relief materials, ensuring that international assistance is effectively integrated into national response strategies. This coordination is crucial for mobilizing resources, providing technical and policy advice, and ensuring a fair distribution of capacities and resources during emergencies.

The National Disaster Management Policy outlines the role of the LNRCS in supporting the government's social welfare program and providing immediate intervention during emergencies. The LNRCS receives support from its movement partners and participating national societies with financial, material, and human resources. The Red Cross Movement has global and regional tools, such as the Field Assessment Coordination Team (FACT), Emergency Response Unit (ERU), and Regional Disaster Response Team

(RDRT), which can be deployed within 48 hours during emergencies. The LNRCS can mobilize funds through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

Coordination mechanisms in Liberia are designed to be inclusive, involving national and local civil society organizations (CSOs) and NGOs in a meaningful way.

The National Disaster Management Policy highlights the significant role of these organizations in DRM activities. CSOs and NGOs are active members of the national disaster management system and participate in committees at both national and local levels. Their involvement is critical, particularly in remote areas where they can respond rapidly and effectively to community needs. These organizations complement government efforts, filling gaps left by limited government capacity and ensuring that DRM activities are comprehensive and community focused.

While the GoL leads sectoral coordination for crisis preparedness and response, the international community still plays a substantial role in delivering crisis response goods and services. The NDMA, supported by various government ministries and agencies, assumes overall coordination of disaster response. During emergencies, UN agencies and international NGOs often co-lead or co-chair sectors and clusters, providing essential support for emergency response and early recovery. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other bilateral donors contribute to humanitarian efforts by contracting CSOs and NGOs to implement relief and recovery efforts. This collaborative approach ensures that both national and international resources and expertise are leveraged to enhance the effectiveness of crisis management efforts in Liberia.

ENTRY POINTS FOR LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR CRISIS PREPAREDNESS

	Priority	
Readiness	High	Medium
High		
Medium		

Table 4: Entry points for Component 1

		IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
	Strengthening administrative and operational capacity of institutions by targeting the NDMA at the national level and sub-national branches as a starting point in the context of crisis preparedness	Short Term
 	Expansion, modernization, and decentralization of public safety services, women and children services, and immigration services and support for implementation of Priority 13 for public safety in ARREST	Medium Term
	Implementation of National Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan	Short Term
 	Expansion, modernization, and decentralization of fire services	Medium Term
	Improve the national disaster preparedness and response and community engagement, more specifically support the elaboration of county level (sub-national) contingency plans that link with existing community-level response mechanisms.	Medium Term
Strengthen technical/human resource capacities		
	Strengthen disaster management capacities of line ministries/government agencies tasked with leading sectoral preparedness and response activities for specific hazards.	Short-Medium Term
 	Reinforce the technical and financial capacity of sub-national government and disaster management and food security bodies, including sub-national disaster preparedness and funding mechanisms to support response.	Short-Medium Term

 Policies, strategies, institutions  Investments



2. UNDERSTANDING AND MONITORING RISKS - AGGREGATED SCORE: 0.5 (NASCENT)

COMPONENT	SUBCOMPONENT	INDICATOR	MATURITY LEVEL
2. UNDERSTANDING AND MONITORING RISKS	2.1 Risk assessment	2.1.1 National cross-sectoral and sector-specific risk assessments have been carried out using current and historical datasets	UNMET
		2.1.2 Government is able to identify vulnerable people without discrimination	NASCENT
	2.2 Risk monitoring and early warnings	2.2.1 Government has the capacity to monitor and analyze active threats in real time to inform national and sub-national level decision-making	NASCENT
		2.2.2 Risk information is communicated in accessible and relevant formats to all relevant groups	UNMET

Key Messages:

- 1. Enhance Data Collection and Quality:** Address the significant challenges in data availability and quality by investing in systematic collection of high-resolution local data on climate variables. This will improve the accuracy and confidence in projections of key climate risks and support effective risk assessments.
- 2. Strengthen Technical Capacity and Coordination:** Improve technical capacity by reducing staff turnover and providing adequate training for government staff involved in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Enhance coordination among agencies like the NDMA, Liberia Meteorological Service (LMS), and Liberia Hydrological Service (LHS) to build comprehensive risk assessments and EWS.
- 3. Develop Comprehensive Risk Assessments:** Conduct detailed sector-specific and cross-sectoral risk assessments to understand the vulnerabilities and exposures of the population to various hazards. This will enable the development of targeted interventions and effective resource allocation to mitigate the impacts of climate shocks.
- 4. Implement Robust EWS:** Establish and operationalize EWS, particularly for flood events, to enable proactive measures that reduce exposure and vulnerability. Ensure these systems are supported by reliable infrastructure, including internet connections and power supply, and managed by qualified system administrators.
- 5. Promote Interagency Data Sharing and Risk Communication:** Create an interagency data-sharing mechanism to ensure accessibility and use of data for future assessments. Develop a national risk communication system to effectively disseminate early warning information, advisories and engage communities in disaster preparedness and response activities.

2.1 RISK ASSESSMENTS

2.1.1 National Sectoral and Cross-Sectoral Risk Assessment

The GoL encounters several challenges in undertaking its own risk assessments. There are significant challenges around the availability and quality of data, and this impedes accurate risk assessments. Liberia lacks good baseline data on floods, windstorms, heat waves, and droughts, which are essential to understanding the risks it faces from climate shocks. Global modeling efforts with low resolution are insufficient; downscaling this information and systematically collecting local information on climate variables at high resolution are needed to increase confidence in projections of key climate risks. The lack of systematic data on historic losses and damages from disasters also hinders the development of a fiscal risk assessment from disasters, a necessary component to develop an optimal strategy for financial protection. The Central Bank of Liberia (CBL) recognizes the potential impacts of climate-related risks but has not yet conducted a risk assessment to identify sectors' vulnerabilities.

Technical capacity is low, largely because there is a high turnover of government staff tasked with preparing national inventories, vulnerability assessments, and other activities related to climate change adaptation and mitigation. While the NDMA is tasked with hazard risk assessments, it has limited budget to scale up and retain the staffing levels necessary to liaise with sector ministries to conduct risk assessments.

The National Disaster Management Policy calls for multi-hazard risk assessments among its priority activities, along with hazard and vulnerability mapping. In June 2021, a Vulnerability Risk Assessment and Mapping (VRAM) was conducted by the World Food Program (WFP), which informed six priority hazards affecting Liberia but did not capture population differences in vulnerability. However, it does spell out the impacts of the different

priority hazards to some extent and the VRAM gave a fair understanding of the geographical distribution of risk in Liberia and identified some hotspots.

The government's ability to undertake risk assessments has not yet been realized, indicating a significant gap in the ability to assess and manage risks across multiple sectors at the national level. National risk assessments in Liberia do not include quantification of the impact of priority hazards on the population. This gap highlights the need for assessments that can provide detailed insights into the vulnerability and exposure of the population to various hazards. Without such assessments, it is challenging to develop targeted interventions and allocate resources effectively to mitigate the impacts of these hazards.

Not much information has been collected on the impact of priority hazards or on historic loss and damage.

The NDMA has recently started compiling information on affected households, such as after the 2024 floods. The NDMA is working on populating such information in a centralized database. The 2022 Sendai Framework mentions hazard maps and risk profiles that capture vulnerabilities and profiles of the communities exposed to major hydro-meteorological hazards. These efforts indicate progress in capturing population differences in vulnerability and impacts, although more comprehensive data collection and analysis are needed.

The GoL has developed hazard maps and risk profiles for major hydro-meteorological hazards, including floods, windstorms, and coastal erosion. Sector-specific risk assessments across all strategic sectors of the government are not fully detailed. The LMS lacks strategic, operational, or risk management plans and does not generate data or perform functions related to its mandate, further highlighting the inadequacies in national sector-specific risk assessments.

2.2 RISK MONITORING AND EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS

2.2.1 Data Collection and Analysis

According to Liberia's CCDR, the country faces significant challenges in collecting real-time data to monitor threats related to key sectors and risks. The GoL lacks

comprehensive baseline data on critical climate-related threats such as floods, windstorms, heat waves, and droughts. This deficiency hampers the ability to understand and respond effectively to the risks posed by climate shocks. While global modeling efforts provide some

insights, their low resolution is insufficient for detailed local analysis. There is a pressing need to improve this information and systematically collect high-resolution local data on climate variables to improve the accuracy and confidence in projections of key climate risks.

The GoL encounters inadequacy in hydrological and meteorological information, such as rainfall and water levels, as well as spatial data on population characteristics, infrastructure, and economic activities. For example, the only detailed flood assessment available is for Greater Monrovia, leaving other regions without comprehensive flood risk data. Information on windstorms and droughts is mostly anecdotal, and no detailed country-wide assessments have been conducted for these climate shocks. Even historical data on past disasters, including flood extents, economic damages, and affected populations, are limited and scattered.

The NDMA has only recently started archiving occurrences of disasters into a centralized database. The 2022 census in Liberia collected detailed information on the locations of residential assets, which is a positive step. To enhance risk monitoring and early warning capabilities, it is crucial to leverage these efforts and establish an inter-agency data-sharing mechanism. This would ensure that datasets are accessible and can be used for future assessments, ultimately improving the government's capacity to monitor and analyze active threats in real time and inform decision-making at both national and sub-national levels.

At present, real-time risk monitoring activities in Liberia do not directly feed into advisory services and products feeding into crisis preparedness and response activities. Liberia would benefit from an EWS for flood events. This system would include community-level flood response plans and enable government agencies and residents to take proactive measures to reduce their exposure and vulnerability. This system could be coupled with a warning mechanism to alert relevant response agencies directly, such as the LHS for river monitoring, the LMS for weather monitoring and forecasting, the NDMA for flood response planning and coordination, emergency services, local government, and media.

The GoL has made some progress in risk monitoring and EWS, but there are still significant challenges and limitations. The National Early Warning and Emergency Operations Center (NEWEOC) is expected to serve as the

national hub for early warning information and operate 24/7. It has not yet fully operationalized its forecasting and warning system for climate-related disasters. The reliability of internet connections and power supply are major limiting factors for the effectiveness of EWS. There is a need for qualified system administrators to manage these systems. The effectiveness of NEWEOC depends on collaboration among various agencies, including the NDMA, the LMS, the LHS, and emergency services such as the police and local government.

Creating a flood EWS is considered critical for Liberia, especially given the catastrophic floods in 2024 and other annual flood events. Policy makers need to determine which agency should host, operate, and maintain the EWS and how the information from this system will be used. A good early warning and response system would help residents and agencies take measures to reduce their exposure and vulnerability. This could include community-level flood response plans and a flood forecasting system connected to a warning system. Disaster information is being collected and stored in a national disaster loss database, but there is a backlog of past events that still need to be processed. Liberia still faces significant challenges related to infrastructure, data management, and interagency coordination. In addition, there is also need for specialized technical skills (e.g., surveillance, calibration of meteorological equipment, system maintenance) and the funding required to sustain these systems.

The LMS and the LHS manage the hydrometric network and services, which have been gradually established since 2010. The government has partial access to forecasting services related to key hazards, but these services need significant support to improve monitoring, forecasting, and warning capabilities for everyday weather-related and hydrological hazards. The system primarily provides daily observations and lacks the ability to forecast rainfall or river discharge, which is critical for effective flood forecasting.

The GoL has limited capability to produce and analyze its own hazard forecasts. The LMS operates 8 out of 11 functional weather stations, but these do not disseminate forecasts to the public. Similarly, the LHS has 14 manual rainfall stations, one automatic rainfall station, and 16 hydrometric stations, which are used for observation rather than producing forecasts. Enhancing these capabilities would require significant investment in infrastructure and

technical expertise. **The LHS plays a critical role in providing observations related to hydrological conditions.** The LHS lacks the capability to forecast rainfall or river discharge, which are essential components of an effective EWS. No hydrometric stations have been installed along the coast to monitor sea levels, further limiting the ability to provide timely and accurate risk information. The absence of these forecasting capabilities significantly hampers the timely dissemination of risk information related to key hazards such as floods and coastal inundation. To improve the effectiveness of EWS, it is imperative to enhance the forecasting capabilities of the LHS and establish a comprehensive network of hydrometric stations.

The Liberia Hydromet report underscores several critical deficiencies in the country's capacity for climate and water risk assessment. This includes lack of preparedness for climate and water-related impacts, inadequate planning and governance, limited observational infrastructure, absence of data sharing and policy, dearth of forecasting capabilities, inadequate warning and advisory services, minimal contribution to climate services, nonexistent collaboration on hydrology, poor product dissemination and outreach, and absence of user feedback mechanisms. These deficiencies result in significant gaps in risk assessment and preparedness for climate-related hazards, severely limiting Liberia's ability to effectively mitigate and respond to extreme weather events and their associated impacts.

The GoL has partial capacity to conduct rapid needs assessments to inform response activities. While the government can list affected households and key household characteristics, it requires support from development partners for more specialized and technical tasks. This support is crucial for conducting comprehensive and accurate assessments, which are essential for effective response planning and implementation.

Sector-specific EWS in Liberia are partially developed. The health sector, for instance, has an extensive EWS that was developed due to the Ebola and COVID-19 crises. The EPA established an EWS in 2017 to collect and deliver weather information from 11 automatic weather stations. The reliability of internet connections, power supply, and the availability of qualified system administrators are

significant challenges. Creating a flood EWS could be beneficial for Liberia, but it would require careful planning and coordination among various agencies.

EWS in Liberia cover a broad range of relevant threats, but their effectiveness is limited by several factors. A comprehensive EWS would help residents and agencies take measures to reduce their exposure and vulnerability. Such a system could include community-level flood response plans and a flood forecasting system connected to a warning mechanism. Although disaster information is being collected and stored, there is a backlog of past events that need processing. The NEWEOC has been established but is not fully effective due to limited equipment, capacity, and logistics. The effectiveness of the NEWEOC depends on collaboration among various agencies, including the NDMA, LMS, LHS, emergency services, local government, and media.

The GoL has made progress in establishing multi-hazard EWS. The National Coordination Centre for Early Warning and Response Mechanism (NCCRM) was established with the support of the ECOWAS²⁵ Commission in 2018. The GoL, in collaboration with the EPA, launched the Enhancing Climate Information Systems for Resilient Development Project. This project aims to create a well-functioning Multi-Hazard Impact-Based Forecasting EWS (MH-IBF-EWS). The project includes training and equipping the LMS, LHS, EPA, and NDMA to collect weather and climate data, introduce and maintain modeling, forecast weather events, and provide EWS. These efforts are crucial for scaling up evidence-based, climate-informed decision-making, planning, and response actions across the country.

Meteorological services in Liberia fall under the Ministry of Transport, with a primary focus on aviation. In contrast, hydrological services, including hydroelectric power projects, are managed by the Ministry of Mines and Energy. There is currently one major hydro project in operation, highlighting the limited scope of hydropower development in the country. The Meteorological Department of Liberia lacks the capacity to issue timely early warnings for weather-related disasters. This limitation affects the country's preparedness for extreme weather events and natural hazards. Meanwhile, hydrological services manage

²⁵ ECOWAS = Economic Community of West African States.

river basins and are responsible for issuing early warnings related to potential flooding and water-related hazards. Strengthening coordination between these two sectors is crucial to improving early warning capabilities.

2.2.2 Risk Communication

Liberia has initiated efforts to establish a national risk communication system, as demonstrated by the launch of the National Disaster Communication Strategy alongside the Liberia Disaster Loss Database. This strategy aims to enhance the dissemination of risk information to various stakeholders, ensuring that they are well informed and prepared for potential disasters. The implementation status of this strategy remains unclear. More detailed information is needed to assess the effectiveness and operationalization of the national risk communication system. Successful implementation of this strategy is crucial for ensuring that risk information is accessible and relevant to all groups, enabling timely and effective responses to potential hazards.

The LHS plays a critical role in providing observations related to hydrological conditions. The LHS lacks the capability to forecast rainfall or river discharge, which are essential components of an effective EWS. No hydrometric stations have been installed along the coast to monitor sea levels, further limiting the ability to provide timely and accurate risk information. The absence of these forecasting capabilities significantly hampers the timely dissemination of risk information related to key hazards such as floods and coastal inundation. To improve the effectiveness of EWS, it is imperative to enhance the forecasting capabilities of the LHS and establish a comprehensive network of hydrometric stations.

The national risk communication system in Liberia faces significant personnel and resources challenges in scaling up its operations. The country lacks detailed data on past disasters, which hampers effective risk assessment and planning. While efforts to improve monitoring, forecasting, and early warning are progressing, they require substantial support, particularly in the areas of meteorological and hydrological services. Investment in EWS could yield significant returns by enhancing the country's ability to anticipate and respond to potential hazards. Current limitations include the absence of digitization, unreliable power supply, and the availability of qualified

administrators to manage these systems. Addressing these challenges is essential for building a robust and scalable risk communication system.

The GoL has made efforts to ensure that risk information is communicated clearly to the public. Significant challenges remain, particularly within the LMS. These challenges include the lack of data-sharing and international data reception as well as the absence of dissemination of weather forecasts and basic climate services to the public. The LMS currently does not provide even basic climate services to the citizens of Liberia, which limits the public's ability to prepare for expected trends and changes. To improve the clarity and accessibility of risk information, it is essential to establish a functional climate database, enhance data-sharing mechanisms, and ensure regular dissemination of weather forecasts and climate services to the public.

Risk information dissemination does not effectively reach all segments of the population in Liberia. The use of local languages and different types of media is limited, which restricts the accessibility of risk information to diverse population groups. Ensuring that risk information is communicated in a manner that is accessible to all segments of the population is critical. This includes using local languages, leveraging various media platforms, and ensuring that information is presented in a clear and understandable format. Enhancing the accessibility of risk information will enable more people to take proactive measures to protect themselves and their communities from potential hazards. As of 2020, Liberia's mobile phone penetration was approximately 90% suggesting that mobile telephony may serve as an important risk information delivery tool.

Efforts to tailor and target risk information to reach the most vulnerable communities, such as marginalized, isolated, displaced groups, women, and persons with disabilities, are currently lacking. These vulnerable groups often face additional challenges in accessing risk information and resources, making them more susceptible to the impacts of disasters. To address this gap, it is essential to develop inclusive communication strategies that specifically target these vulnerable communities. This includes conducting outreach activities, providing information in accessible formats, and ensuring that communication channels are available to all segments of the population.

ENTRY POINTS FOR UNDERSTANDING AND MONITORING RISKS

	Priority	
Readiness	High	Medium
High		
Medium		

Table 5: Entry points for Component 2

Support to improve risk assessment capacity

IMPLEMENTATION
TIMELINE

	Reinforce legislation to ensure risk assessments are performed at regular intervals at both national and sub-national levels for key hazards and risk information is used within sectors.	Short Term
	Strengthen data collection and management to understand and respond to potential threats, especially in food security.	Short-Medium Term

Strengthen risk monitoring and early warning systems

	Strengthen the forecasting capacity of LHS and LMS and public information dissemination through mass media or other appropriate channels to reach communities in disaster-prone areas by leveraging existing networks including Liberia Early Response Warning Network (LERN).	Short-Medium Term
	Support the implementation of the National Disaster Communication Strategy incorporating the use of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) to facilitate cascading of information from early warning systems to advisory systems for the provision of timely and accurate information.	Short Term
 	Strengthen the capacity of NEWEOC to collect and disseminate risk information from and to ministries and agencies tasked with preparedness and response.	Short-Medium Term
	Support partnerships with the private sector for the dissemination of risk information and advisory products or early warning using mobile telecom operators (a possible channel to also operationalize cash transfers under social safety net programs).	Short Term

 Policies, strategies, institutions  Investments



3. FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS - AGGREGATED SCORE: 0.3 (UNMET)

COMPONENT	SUBCOMPONENT	INDICATOR	MATURITY
3. FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS	3.1 Crisis risk financing	3.1.1 Government has put in place a dedicated strategy for the delivery of crisis and disaster risk financing	UNMET
		3.1.2 Government has access to a range of sovereign financing instruments	NASCENT
		3.1.3 Government ensures an enabling environment for insurance and other risk finance instruments	NASCENT
	3.2 Public Financial Management	3.2.1 Government has put in place crisis-related budget execution rules and procedures	UNMET
		3.2.2 Anti-corruption mechanisms are in place to ensure transparency, efficiency, and accountability in the provision of emergency services and financing at the national and sub-national levels	UNMET
		3.2.3 Coordination and close engagement takes place with international development and humanitarian stakeholders, including the management of post-crisis inflow of resources	UNMET

Key Messages:

- Data Scarcity and Risk-Informed Decision-Making:** The lack of systematic data on historic losses and damages from disasters in Liberia impedes accurate risk assessments and cost-benefit analyses. This data scarcity prevents the development of optimal risk-layering essential for making informed decisions on cost-effective and efficient disaster risk financing (DRF) instruments.
- Operationalization of Disaster Management Funds:** The NDMA Act includes provisions for a Disaster Management Trust Fund to finance disaster preparedness, emergency response, and mitigation. However, this fund has not been operationalized. Establishing and capitalizing this fund based on historical data and opportunity cost assessments is crucial for effective DRM.
- Leveraging Contingent Financing and Insurance:** Given Liberia's debt and fiscal constraints, concessional and semi-concessional finance, especially contingent financing, are essential. The government has access to US\$40 million in contingent financing through the World Bank's Cat DDO and several contingent emergency response components (CERCs) in World Bank investment projects. The insurance sector in Liberia is underdeveloped, with limited products and low penetration, highlighting the need for increased awareness and capacity building in insurance products.
- Developing Innovative Financial Mechanisms:** Policy makers should focus on leveraging more financing from climate funds and exploring innovative financial structures apart from traditional multilateral and bilateral sources. This includes issuing longer-term sovereign bonds to develop the local capital market, building investor confidence, and developing guidelines and regulations for green finance instruments, such as green and sustainable loans and bonds

5. Enhancing Sub-National Access and Financial Management: Ensuring sub-national governments have access to funds from sovereign crisis and DRF instruments. This decentralized approach will enhance the overall disaster response capacity of the country. Improving the government’s capacity to rapidly access, absorb, and disburse external financial assistance is crucial for efficient disaster response efforts.

3.1 CRISIS RISK FINANCING

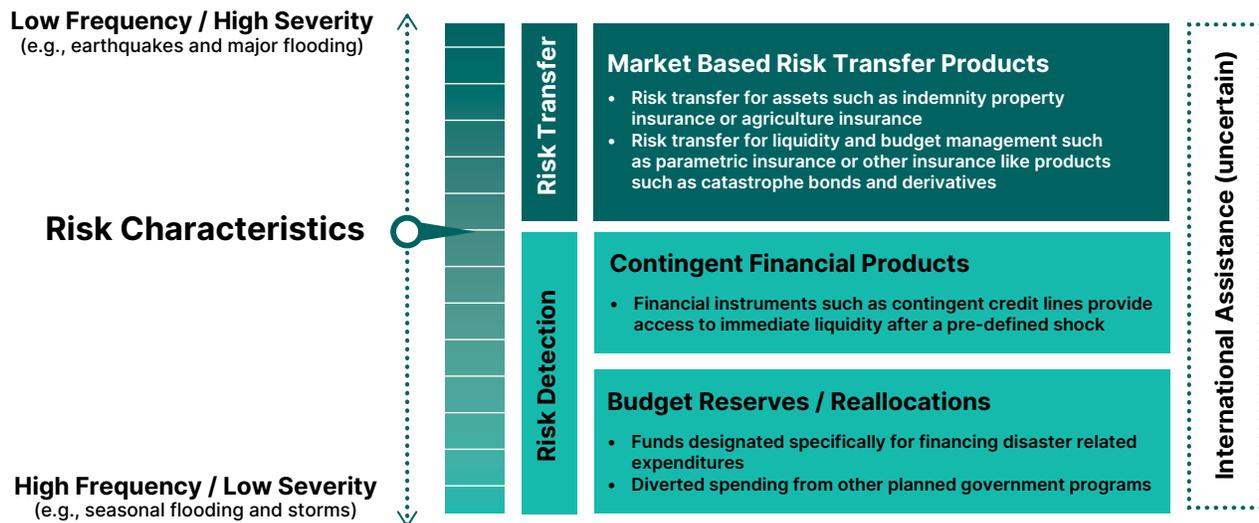
3.1.1 Crisis and Disaster Risk Financing Strategy

The gaps in crisis risk financing for Liberia are underscored by the scarcity of data, which prevents a risk-informed approach to make decisions on cost-effective and efficient DRF instruments. The lack of systematic data on historic losses and damages from disasters impedes accurate risk assessments, estimates of average annual losses, and cost-benefit analysis which would inform an optimal risk-layering DRF strategy (Figure 2).

At the lowest level of risk, or where disaster events are less severe but more frequent, countries should have

access to a limited amount of contingency reserves from the government’s own budget. Liberia currently has a contingency appropriation available in the budget of up to 5 percent of annual domestic revenues,²⁶ but funds intended for contingent purposes can be potentially reallocated for any unforeseen expenditure and so are relatively unreliable source of DRF. The National Disaster Management Act has provisions for a Disaster Management Trust Fund,²⁷ with the objective of financing disaster preparedness, emergency response, and mitigation, but it has not been operationalized. The size of such a fund is typically based on an assessment of opportunity cost for holding money in reserves and historical data on losses and damage on average annually, but that data

Figure 2: Indicative risk layering approach



Source: World Bank Treasury, <https://treasury.worldbank.org/en/about/unit/treasury/ibrd-financial-products/disaster-risk-management>.

²⁶ Liberia Public Finance Management Act 2009, <https://revenue.lra.gov.lr/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Public-Finance-Management-Act.pdf>.

²⁷ Liberia National Disaster Management Act, 2012, <https://www.mia.gov.lr/doc/Draft%20Act%20-The%20National%20Disaster%20Management%20Agency.pdf>.

is not available for Liberia aside from several low resolution and outdated global models such as the Global Assessment Report (GAR) 2015 model for global riverine flood risk.

Lack of a disaster reserve fund, combined with government commitments to debt reduction and fiscal consolidation, make concessional and semi-concessional finance, especially contingent financing, essential in the short term due to the country's debt and fiscal constraints. Fortunately, the government has access to US\$40 million in contingent financing through the World Bank's Cat DDO option, available as of December 2024. The GoL also has access to several CERCs in its World Bank investment projects, which allow undisbursed funds to be repurposed for crisis response.

For the higher layers of risk where risk transfer is cost-effective, the insurance sector in Liberia is small, underdeveloped, and dominated by a few foreign-owned companies, with limited products and low penetration. There is low awareness of and trust in insurance products and lack of capacity and experience related to catastrophe insurance. Flood risk insurance is virtually nonexistent, and insurance companies are generally reluctant to insure against climate-related events or natural hazards.

In addition to this, the government should focus on leveraging more financing from climate funds and exploring innovative financial structures apart from traditional multilateral and bilateral sources. For example, the government can implement strategies to issue longer-term sovereign bonds to develop the local capital market and build investor confidence. There is a need to develop guidelines and regulations for green finance instruments, such as green and sustainable loans and bonds, including a national green taxonomy to identify green assets and activities. Overall, addressing these challenges requires building institutional capacity, developing innovative financing mechanisms, and implementing policy reforms to create a more conducive environment for climate and crisis risk financing in Liberia.

3.1.2 Access to Risk Financing Instruments

The GoL has made strides in securing access to sovereign financing instruments, but significant challenges remain. These include the need for fully operationalizing

emergency public financing mechanisms, developing policies to leverage sovereign market-based financing solutions, ensuring sub-national access to funds, and enhancing the capacity to manage external financial assistance.

Recently, the GoL has made significant progress in securing access to contingent credit instruments, which are crucial for enhancing financial resilience against disasters. The country has secured a Cat DDO for 2024–2027. The Cat DDO is a financial instrument that provides immediate liquidity to the government in the aftermath of a disaster, enabling rapid response and recovery efforts. This instrument is particularly valuable as it allows the government to access funds quickly without the need for lengthy approval processes. Implementation of the Cat DDO demonstrates Liberia's proactive approach to DRM and its commitment to ensuring that financial resources are readily available to address emergency needs.

Although Liberia is a member of the African Risk Capacity (ARC), the country has yet to acquire a policy to fully leverage this membership for sovereign market-based financing solutions. The ARC is a specialized agency of the African Union that provides insurance against extreme weather events, offering financial protection and support for disaster response. By taking out a policy to utilize ARC's services, the GoL could enhance its financial preparedness and reduce its reliance on external aid. This would involve purchasing insurance coverage that provides payouts during extreme weather events, thereby ensuring that funds are available for immediate response and recovery efforts. Leveraging ARC's services could significantly strengthen Liberia's financial resilience and its ability to manage disaster risks effectively.

The GoL has established some emergency public financing mechanisms, but these are not fully operationalized. The NDMA Act of 2016 mandates the creation of a DRM multidonor fund. This fund is intended to provide financial resources for DRM and resilience activities. The fund has not been capitalized, and its scope is broad, encompassing the entire spectrum of DRM and resilience issues. There are no dedicated contingency instruments to finance immediate disaster response, and finances are often drawn from other project or sector programs, combined with heavy reliance on ex post donor support. This reliance on ad hoc financing mechanisms can delay response efforts and reduce their effectiveness.

The GoL is enhancing its access to a range of crisis and DRF instruments. In addition to the Cat DDO, with the support of the World Bank, the GoL is establishing an RRO. These instruments are designed to provide quick access to funds in a disaster, enabling timely and effective response efforts. The Cat DDO and RRO are critical components of a comprehensive DRF strategy, as they ensure that financial resources are available when most needed. Complete implementation and operationalization of these instruments is still in progress. Ensuring that these instruments are fully functional and integrated into the national DRM framework will be essential for improving Liberia's financial resilience and its ability to respond to disasters effectively.

There is no mechanism to ensure that sub-national governments have access to funds from sovereign crisis and DRF instruments. This gap highlights the need for a more decentralized approach to disaster financing, ensuring that local governments have the resources and capacity to respond to emergencies effectively. Sub-national governments are often the first responders in a disaster, and their ability to access financial resources quickly is crucial for effective response and recovery efforts. Conversations with the NDMA indicate that this is an area that requires further development and support. Establishing mechanisms to ensure that sub-national governments can access funds from sovereign financing instruments would enhance the overall disaster response capacity of the country.

The GoL can seek to access external financial assistance, such as official development assistance (ODA), in the event of a crisis. There is a lack of clarity on how financial assistance is executed through country systems. Most support is provided in kind rather than through direct financial transfers. Between 2018 and 2022, donors provided an estimated US\$25.7 million (in 2015 constant prices) in humanitarian and post-disaster recovery support to Liberia. While this support is valuable, the lack of clarity on financial execution can lead to inefficiencies and delays in the disbursement of funds. Enhancing the government's capacity to rapidly access, absorb, and disburse external financial assistance is crucial for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster response efforts. This would involve strengthening financial management systems, improving coordination with donors, and ensuring that financial assistance is integrated into national DRM frameworks.

3.1.3. Insurance for Risk Financing

The GoL is currently at an early stage in creating an enabling environment for developing insurance and other risk financing instruments. The country lacks comprehensive safety nets and deposit risk insurance schemes, which are critical components of a robust financial system. The absence of these mechanisms raises concerns about the resilience of the insurance industry, particularly in the face of stress tests. The CBL, which plays a pivotal role in regulating and overseeing the financial sector, is undergoing significant changes. The current governor is under investigation, and a new team, including a director from a commercial bank, has been appointed. These changes at the CBL could affect the stability and regulatory oversight of the insurance sector, highlighting the need for strengthened governance and regulatory frameworks.

Liberia's insurance sector is small and underdeveloped, providing limited protection against physical risks. It is dominated by a few foreign-owned companies, with most products insuring property (mainly against fire) and providing casualty coverage. The uptake of life and agriculture insurance is limited, and there is low awareness of and trust in insurance products. These challenges are compounded by a lack of capacity and experience within the sector. Although the government has tried to improve the regulatory environment and attract private sector investment, the market is underdeveloped compared to other countries in the region. For instance, flood risk insurance is virtually nonexistent, and physical risk mitigation mechanisms are limited. While some properties are required to have fire insurance if pledged as collateral, flood insurance is not mandated. Banks are considering the possibility of requiring flood risk insurance for their collateral, but insurance companies are generally reluctant to ensure against climate-related events or natural hazards.

The government has made some efforts to increase the accessibility of risk financing instruments to the poor and vulnerable populations. The disaster protection gap, which is the difference between insured and total losses, is significant. Missing systematic data on historic loss and damage from disasters impedes accurate estimates of total losses. The government is seeking to improve access to finance through initiatives such as the Liberia Investment, Finance and Trade (LIFT) project, which focuses on improving sources of financing for small

and medium enterprises (SMEs), building capacity, and establishing lines of credit for SMEs. The project includes the creation of a collateral registry for financial institutions and capacity building for both financial institutions and the CBL. The CBL has established a climate finance team and conducted a green survey to assess the preparedness of firms to finance risk. Despite these efforts, the financial sector faces challenges related to debt servicing and exposure to sovereign debt. The best estimates of economic costs from disasters in Liberia relate to the 2014 Ebola outbreak, which led to long-term costs totaling 11 percent of GDP by 2015.

Most Liberians lack access to affordable and comprehensive risk financing products. The insurance industry

3.2 PUBLIC FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

3.2.1 Crisis-related Budget Execution

The GoL's public financial management (PFM) system faces several challenges that hinder effective crisis preparedness and response. After years of civil conflict, the country has made strides in rebuilding its governance structures but significant weaknesses remain in budget planning, execution, and oversight. Despite progress, there are ongoing challenges related to human resource capacity within public institutions. This lack of capacity also affects interagency coordination, crucial for developing comprehensive crisis response strategies. Limited technical expertise can hinder effective implementation of PFM reforms and crisis response initiatives. Ensuring strict adherence to budgetary allocations and enhancing oversight mechanisms are areas needing improvement. Weaknesses in these areas can lead to misallocation of resources, undermining crisis response efforts.

The enactment of the Public Finance Management Act in 2009 established a solid foundation for fiscal discipline, transparency, and accountability. This framework delineates clear responsibilities and principles guiding

faces challenges in producing and delivering products that are both affordable and comprehensive in coverage. Affordability is a significant concern given the income levels in the country, and there is a need to balance affordability with optimal coverage. The limited range of insurance products available further exacerbates this issue, as there are few options tailored to different target groups, including households; micro, small, and medium enterprises; and large enterprises. The lack of tailored risk financing products highlights the need for the development of diverse and inclusive insurance solutions that cater to the specific needs of various population segments.

budgetary processes, which are crucial during crises.²⁸ Further, the implementation of the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) across numerous ministries, agencies, and commissions is underway, promising improved financial reporting and control. IFMIS facilitates real-time monitoring of expenditures, ensuring that funds are utilized efficiently, a critical factor during emergency response.²⁹ A key challenge is the lack of emergency procurement and budget execution procedures, which can delay timely responses to crises.

Supported by the World Bank and other international partners, the Public Financial Management Reforms for Institutional Strengthening Project (PFMRISP) helped to support enhanced domestic revenue mobilization and strengthened financial controls.³⁰ Mechanisms exist to disburse recovery and reconstruction funds in a timely manner following a crisis, but these mechanisms often rely on international partners rather than use of country systems. The inability to track disaster expenditures means that resources allocated for crisis management are often poorly monitored, leading to inefficiencies and misallocation. The absence of predefined options for budget

²⁸ International Monetary Fund PFM blog; https://blog-pfm.imf.org/en/pfmblog/2010/05/in-another-important-milestone-on-the-road-to-recovery-liberia-enacts-a-new-lega?utm_source=chatgpt.com.

²⁹ https://www.mfdp.gov.lr/index.php/media-center/press-release/government-reports-success-in-public-financial-management-reforms?utm_source=chatgpt.com

³⁰ https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2019/07/16/world-bank-supports-strengthening-of-public-service-accountability-in-liberia?utm_source=chatgpt.com

reallocation further complicates the government's ability to swiftly redirect funds in response to emerging crises.

A significant portion of the GoL's public investment is financed through external sources such as grants and concessional loans, which are often volatile and beyond the government's control. Unpredictability in funding can complicate crisis preparedness and response efforts. This reliance limits the ability to allocate resources effectively for crisis preparedness initiatives, leaving critical sectors, such as disaster management, underfunded and ill-equipped to respond to emergencies. Limited agreements with donors to use national systems for disaster response can impede effective collaboration. This lack of alignment can hinder the integration of international aid into local strategies, leaving gaps in preparedness efforts.

Liberia's national government does not have dedicated budget lines or reserve funds for crisis preparedness and response. The country relies on contingency lines that are not specifically designated for disasters. According to Section 13 of the Contingency Appropriation, the Legislature approves an amount not exceeding 5 percent of total annual domestic revenues to be used as a contingency fund. This fund is intended to cover urgent and unforeseen expenditures arising from emergency situations. The Minister of Finance is responsible for submitting proposals for the use of these funds to the President for approval, and the use of the funds must be reported in the next quarterly outturn. In 2024, the government allocated a budget for disaster preparedness and response for the first time.

Mechanisms exist to disburse recovery and reconstruction funds in a timely manner following a crisis, but these mechanisms often rely on international partners rather than use of country systems. The National Disaster Management Policy outlines the role of the LNRCS in supporting the government's social welfare program and providing immediate intervention during emergencies. The LNRCS receives support from its movement partners and participating national societies with financial, material, and human resources. The Red Cross Movement has global and regional tools, such as the Field Assessment Coordination Team (FACT), Emergency Response Unit (ERU), and Regional Disaster Response Team (RDRT), which can be deployed within 48 hours during emergencies. The LNRCS can mobilize funds through the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

Although there are clear procedures for budget reallocations, these are not specific to post-crisis needs.

As a result, they do not allow for timely access to funds required for effective post-crisis response. The GoL's PFM Regulations of 2020 provide general guidelines for budget reallocations, but there is a need for more flexible and transparent mechanisms that can be quickly activated in response to emergencies. The legal and regulatory frameworks in Liberia do not currently clarify dedicated emergency procurement measures. The Public Procurement and Concession Act of 2010 does not identify specific procedures for emergency procurement. A revised law outlining emergency procurement measures is currently awaiting approval in parliament. This revised law is expected to provide clearer guidelines and streamline the procurement process during emergencies. Mechanisms for accountability and transparency are built into the National Disaster Management Policy, which emphasizes core values such as integrity, accountability, transparency, honesty, and confidence in disaster management operations. Prevailing laws and policies do not provide specific procedures to prevent misappropriation or fraud during emergencies. While normal criminal laws apply in such circumstances, there is a need for more robust frameworks to ensure accountability and transparency in the use of emergency funds.

The NDMA is the lead agency responsible for coordinating disaster management operations in Liberia.

This includes relief operations and handling of disaster-related issues to reduce vulnerabilities to natural and human-induced hazards. The current legal framework does not provide a consolidated 'one-stop shop' approach to international disaster response nor does it establish a specialized unit for expediting the entry of international assistance. The engagement of multiple lead agencies without clear coordination procedures can hinder the efficiency of international disaster response efforts. There are currently no agreements with external stakeholders for emergency supplies, highlighting the need for improved coordination and formal agreements to enhance disaster response capabilities.

Strengthening PFM by improving budgetary processes, increasing transparency, and investing in capacity building should be a key priority. Developing a more resilient financial management system will enable the government to allocate resources more effectively, ensuring that critical sectors are better prepared to respond to future crises.

ENTRY POINTS FOR FINANCIAL PREPAREDNESS

	Priority	
Readiness	High	Medium
High		
Medium		

Table 6: Entry points for Component 3

Support to improve resource mobilization and allocation of crisis risk financing

IMPLEMENTATION
TIMELINE

 	Develop a contingency fund or operationalize the existing disaster management trust fund. This will serve as a dedicated contingency fund specifically for disaster response, enabling immediate access to resources when crises occur, which can also channel response funds from international partners.	Medium Term
	Foster partnerships with donors: Create agreements with international donors to utilize national systems for disaster response, ensuring alignment of resources and strategies.	Short Term
	Strengthen interagency coordination: Facilitate regular collaboration between government agencies, NGOs, and community organizations to ensure a cohesive approach to crisis preparedness and risk-informed resource allocation.	Short-Medium Term
	Promote public awareness and engagement: Raise awareness about the importance of financial preparedness for crises among citizens and stakeholders, encouraging community involvement in planning and response.	Short-Medium Term

Strengthen PFM Systems for Crisis Time Response

 	Create predefined budget reallocation protocols: Develop clear guidelines for reallocating funds in response to emergencies, allowing for swift adjustments to budgets based on changing needs.	Short-Medium Term
	Establish emergency procurement procedures: Develop and institutionalize streamlined procurement processes for emergencies to enable rapid acquisition of necessary goods and services during crises.	Short-Medium Term
	Implement robust budget tracking systems: Invest in financial management information systems that allow for real-time tracking of disaster expenditures, ensuring accountability and transparency.	Short-Medium Term
	Integrate crisis preparedness into national budgeting: Ensure that crisis preparedness is a key component of the national budgeting process, allocating specific resources for mitigation and response measures.	Short-Medium Term
	Conduct regular risk assessments: Implement ongoing assessments to identify financial vulnerabilities and prioritize investments in critical sectors that enhance resilience to crises.	Short-Medium Term
 	Enhance capacity building: Provide training and professional development for PFM personnel to improve their skills in crisis budgeting and financial oversight.	Short-Medium Term

 Policies, strategies, institutions  Investments



4. PRIMARY RESPONSE - AGGREGATED SCORE: 1.3 (NASCENT)

COMPONENT	SUBCOMPONENT	INDICATOR	ML
4. PRIMARY RESPONSE	4.1 Public health systems	4.1.1 The public health system has the capacity and resources to respond to key health threats and fully function during crises.	
		4.1.2 Government has capacity to detect and carry out surveillance of emergent and ongoing health threats in real time.	
	4.2 Critical infrastructure	4.2.1 Government maintains an inventory of critical assets and infrastructure.	
		4.2.2 Systems are in place to ensure infrastructure operation, maintenance, and post-incident response across infrastructure types.	
	4.3 Civil protection and Emergency Management Systems	4.3.1 Emergency management legislation and related policy instruments exist, allowing the emergency management services to function at the national and sub-national levels.	
		4.3.2 Emergency service systems are well resourced, maintained, and sufficient in responding to major threats.	

Key Messages:

- 1. Strengthen Health Infrastructure and Workforce:** Liberia's health system has been significantly weakened by prolonged civil conflicts and disease outbreaks such as Ebola and COVID-19. The government should focus on rebuilding health infrastructure, increasing the number and skills of health workers, and ensuring the availability of essential medical supplies and equipment.
- 2. Enhance Maternal and Child Health:** Maternal and child health outcomes in Liberia are among the worst in the world, with high maternal and neonatal mortality rates. Policies should prioritize improving maternal and child health services.
- 3. Improve Disease Surveillance and Response:** Liberia's vulnerability to disease outbreaks is exacerbated by gaps in public health functions and a weak health system. Strengthening disease surveillance; decentralizing testing capacities; and improving coordination between human, animal, and environmental health sectors are crucial for timely detection and effective response to health threats.
- 4. Increase Health Sector Funding and Sustainability:** Despite increased health expenditure, significant financing gaps remain. Policy makers should focus on securing sustainable funding for the health sector, reducing dependency on external donors, and ensuring efficient allocation and utilization of resources.

5. Develop and Implement Comprehensive Health Policies: Key policies and strategies, such as the National Health Policy and Investment Plan and the National Action Plan for Health Security (NAPHS), should be fully implemented and regularly updated. Emphasizing the One Health approach and ensuring collaboration across sectors will enhance the overall effectiveness of health interventions.

4.1 PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS

4.1.1. Responding to Health Emergencies

Liberia has a significant and rising burden of communicable and noncommunicable diseases and conditions, which are aggravated by adverse weather and climate change.

First, maternal and child health outcomes in Liberia are among the worst in the world with a maternal mortality ratio of 742 deaths for every 100,000 live births.³¹ The neonatal mortality rate is 37 per 1,000 live births and this accounts for one-third of all under-five deaths. In addition, owing to food insecurity at the household level, about 30 percent of children under the age of five are stunted³² and at risk of cognitive and physical limitations. Furthermore, Liberia's population is predominantly young, with over 70 percent under the age of 35, driven by high fertility rates and low life expectancy. Despite efforts to achieve a demographic dividend, as evidenced by an increase in the use of modern contraceptive methods, adolescent fertility was 10.3 percent in 2007 and 24.0 percent in 2024. Adolescent fertility remains significantly high, with 30 percent teenage women beginning childbearing.³³ This youthful demographic increases demand for jobs, farmland, infrastructure, and public services, straining the already limited healthcare and education systems.

Liberia's health system has been significantly weakened by repeated shocks, including prolonged civil conflicts and disease outbreaks such as Ebola virus disease and the COVID-19 pandemic. These crises have had devastating impacts on the health infrastructure and workforce. During the civil wars (1989–1997 and 1999–2003), 242 out

of 293 health facilities were destroyed, while migration and fatalities severely depleted the health workforce, resulting in alarming increases in maternal and infant mortality rates, particularly in rural areas. Between 2014 and 2016, the Ebola outbreak infected approximately 10,678 people and claimed 4,810 lives, including 375 health workers.³⁴ (Dahn et al. 2021). Efforts to manage the Ebola outbreak—and later the COVID-19 pandemic—further disrupted the provision of routine health and nutrition services.³⁵ In addition, recurrent and reemergent outbreaks of several disease outbreaks, such as measles, Lassa fever, meningitis, pertussis, yellow fever, and more currently mpox, continue to increase morbidity and mortality and strain the already weak health system.

Liberia's vulnerability to the emergence and re-emergence of disease outbreaks stems from widespread gaps in the implementation of public health functions and shortcomings in the broader health system. Systemic challenges affecting the health sector include poor health and WASH infrastructure, weak laboratory system, insufficient number and skills-mix of the health workers in post, insufficient funding to the health sector, and inadequate accountability, hindering the development of International Health Regulations (IHR) core capacities. In practical terms, these issues affect timely detection and effective response to outbreaks, leading to rapid escalation and severity of impact. Consequently, results from the 2023 JEE show that from the 56 JEE indicators, Liberia has demonstrated capacity in 17 (30.4 percent), developed capacity in 18 (32.1 percent), limited capacity in 10

³¹ Liberia Demographic and Health Survey 2019–2020.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Dahn, B., L. Kerr, T. Nuthulaganti, M. Massaquoi, M. Subah, A. Yaman, C. M. Plyler, C. Cancedda, R. E. Marshall, R. H. Marsh. 2021. "Liberia's First Health Workforce Program Strategy: Reflections and Lessons Learned." *Annals of Global Health* 87 (1): 95, 1–7. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/aogh.3242>.

³⁵ Liberia CCDR.

(17.9 percent), and no capacity in 11 (19.6 percent). Lack of capacity was observed in the areas of radiation emergencies, antimicrobial resistance, biosafety and security, infection prevention and control, human resources, health emergency management, and health services provision.

Key policies and strategies have been developed to address the abovementioned challenges, including the National Health Policy and Investment Plan (2011–21); its successor, the National Health Sector Strategic Plan (2022–26); and the NAPHS (2018–22). The upcoming NAPHS (2024–28) aims to further align efforts within the One Health framework, emphasizing collaboration with the animal and environmental health sectors. Furthermore, the GoL established the National Public Health Institute of Liberia (NPHIL) in 2016 with the mandate of advancing the health security agenda in the country and stewarding the country's public health functions of preventing, detecting, and responding to public health threats. This was in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH), the MoA, and other agencies on the prevention, preparedness, and response (PPR) agenda.

While the GoL has prioritized the health sector, increasing health expenditure from 8 percent of general government spending in 2007/08 to 13 percent in 2018/19, significant financing gaps affect the public health system. In response to the Ebola outbreak, the government strengthened PPR measures with support from the World Bank through projects such as the Ebola Emergency Response Project, the Regional Disease Surveillance Systems Enhancement Project, and the COVID-19 Emergency Response Project. These initiatives advanced the One Health approach, integrating human, animal, and environmental health, and bolstered disease surveillance and diagnostic laboratory systems. Nonetheless, significant funding and implementation gaps remain, particularly to strengthen the animal and environmental health sectors under the One Health approach, and the overwhelming majority of the IHR implementation heavily depends on external donor financing.

4.1.2. Surveillance of Health Threats

The GoL has demonstrated partial capacity to detect and carry out surveillance of emergent and ongoing health threats in real time. The national laboratory system is capable of detecting priority diseases and conducting core tests, including genomic sequencing. There are

frequent stockouts of reagents and commodities, there are gaps in human resources, and the testing capacities have not been fully decentralized, with low capacities in district laboratories. This indicates that while the central laboratories may be well-equipped, the peripheral laboratories, which are crucial for timely detection and response, are under-resourced. This centralization of testing capacity can lead to delays in diagnosis and response, particularly in remote areas.

Coordination between different levels of the laboratory network for sample referral and information sharing is good, but there is a lack of funds to fully decentralize testing capacity, finance logistics, and support in the counties. The animal and environmental sectors have more severe gaps in testing capacities. This lack of decentralization and funding constraints can hinder the effectiveness of the surveillance system, as samples may take longer to reach central laboratories, and the capacity to test and respond to threats in the animal and environmental sectors is limited.

The GoL has developed laboratory standards for all health levels, but these strategies have not been fully implemented due to a lack of funds and human resources. This suggests that while there is a framework for a comprehensive diagnostic strategy, implementation is hampered by financial and human resource constraints. This gap between policy and practice can undermine the effectiveness of the health surveillance system.

National Technical Guidelines for Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response include standard operating procedures for the surveillance and response to zoonotic diseases. Legislation needs to be developed and enacted to enshrine these functions under the MoA's purview and the list of priority zoonotic diseases needs to be revised and expanded. This indicates that while guidelines are in place, the legal and regulatory framework to support these guidelines is lacking, which can limit their effectiveness.

There are no legislative frameworks governing animal health services and the Phyto-Sanitary Services Committee of Veterinary Services, responsible for monitoring relevant animal health populations, is not active due to inadequate financing. Gaps in active monitoring and legislative support can lead to gaps in the surveillance of zoonotic diseases, which is critical for preventing

outbreaks that can affect both animal and human populations. Extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and habitat disruption further heighten the risk of zoonotic disease spillovers and reduce livestock productivity.

To address these risks, cost assessments of climate and health damages can provide policymakers with a clearer understanding of the challenges and encourage investments in strengthening health systems and implementing multisectoral interventions. A key priority will be to integrate climate-sensitive disease surveillance and environmental monitoring into existing systems. Enhanced modeling and data-driven decision-making are essential to improving Liberia's PPR efforts and ensuring resilience in the face of climate change.

The existing EWS includes both indicator- and event-based surveillance, with a toll-free emergency line and media scanning. While there are mechanisms for early detection of outbreaks, the integration of different surveillance systems and community involvement, which are crucial for a comprehensive surveillance system, still needs improvement.

The Electronic Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response (eIDSR) platform is being piloted to improve

the interoperability of human and animal surveillance sectors; currently, the systems lack interoperability. This can lead to delays in information sharing and response, as data from different sectors may not be easily integrated and analyzed.

Weekly epidemiological bulletins are generated and disseminated across sectors and internationally, but there is a lack of capacity for advanced surveillance data analysis, no electronic tools for analysis and dissemination, and limited digital infrastructure and capacity. This indicates that while there is regular reporting, the ability to analyze and use this data for decision-making is limited, which can affect the effectiveness of the surveillance system.

Initiatives such as the community health program aim to bridge gaps between peripheral and facility-level healthcare but are hindered by inadequate infrastructure, including roads, internet, electricity, and water access. These challenges are further exacerbated by systemic weaknesses in government leadership, inadequate accountability mechanisms, and poor coordination across sectors. Sustainable progress will require addressing these foundational issues to create a more resilient health system.

4.2 CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

4.2.1. Identifying Critical Assets and Infrastructure

The GoL has made partial progress in developing an inventory of critical public infrastructure and assets. While different agencies maintain their own inventories, these are not consolidated at the national level. The government maintains a register of fixed assets, but it does not collect comprehensive information on their usage and age. A national Fixed Asset Register (FAR) does not exist, and most ministries lack a complete inventory of their assets. This fragmented approach to asset management can lead to inefficiencies and challenges in maintaining and utilizing public infrastructure effectively. The Draft Budget for 2025 highlights the objective of the National Insurance Corporation of Liberia to enforce the mandate of the State-Owned Insurance Corporation by ensuring that all government assets, and those where the government has a 50 percent share or more, are insured. This initiative underscores the importance of having a comprehensive

and up-to-date inventory to ensure adequate insurance coverage and risk management.

The responsibility for collecting and maintaining asset inventories is clearly defined, with the GSA having the public works mandate. The WASH Commission is responsible for water-related infrastructure issues, while the GSA handles the maintenance of vertical government infrastructure. Major water infrastructure, including boreholes and popular pumps, is maintained by UNICEF and its partners. The GoL faces significant challenges in maintaining this infrastructure independently, and withdrawal of UNICEF's support and funding could severely affect the sustainability of these assets. Multiple water treatment plants exist; some are operational and others require rehabilitation. In the capital, water systems cover more than 50 percent of the city but do not extend to rapidly growing areas near the airport. This indicates a need for strategic planning and investment to expand and upgrade water

infrastructure to meet the demands of a growing urban population.

Despite having agencies responsible for asset inventories, the GSA and other ministries lack the financial and human resources necessary to fulfill their roles effectively. The Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability (PEFA) assessment in 2020 indicated that capacity building is required for development and maintenance of an effective inventory of public assets. The government does not conduct inventory controls with consistent periodicity, such as every 2–3 years. This lack of regular inventory controls can lead to outdated and inaccurate asset information, which can hinder effective asset management and planning. Regular inventory controls are essential for ensuring that asset information is up-to-date and accurate, which is critical for making informed decisions about maintenance, replacement, and investment in public infrastructure.

The comprehensiveness of the inventory is also lacking. While the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) prepares an inventory of selected capital assets, such as government vehicles, in line with the PFM Regulation, there is no comprehensive register of government-owned assets. The existing inventories do not include all necessary information, such as asset values, replacement costs, current condition, and maintenance history. This incomplete information can impede effective decision-making and resource allocation for the maintenance and replacement of critical infrastructure. A comprehensive inventory that includes detailed information about each asset is essential for effective asset management and planning.

The mapping of water and sanitation assets in Liberia is conducted partially, with UNICEF performing water point mapping every other year. This assessment covers both rural and urban areas, identifying hand-dug wells and boreholes. The government has the capacity to produce such reports, particularly through the WASH Commission. Monrovia has three water treatment plants, and each county has a capital water treatment plant, with six having been rehabilitated since the war. In smaller communities, NGOs have sometimes constructed mini water systems. Water infrastructure in Monrovia is functional and active but only serves about 50 percent of the city, with operations heavily reliant on power. In terms of disaster preparedness, there is no standby generator or contingency plan.

Currently, there are approximately 20,000 household water connections in Monrovia. Of these, 5,000 have been established through the Liberia Urban Water Supply Project and an additional 2,500 connections are expected from the Liberia Urban Resilience Project (LURP), both funded by the World Bank. In contrast, the power sector has over 100,000 connections, with an estimated population coverage of around 200,000 people (based on an average of 4.8 persons per household). While water pipes exist, many homes lack direct household connections and must rely on public water stations. This poses significant challenges during floods, as public water points become inaccessible, and there is no flood response plan to address such disruptions.

Sanitation infrastructure in Monrovia has not been significantly updated since the war. The system partially functions by gravity, with some waste flowing into the ocean, while another portion is directed to a sewage treatment plant in central Monrovia. The waste stabilization pond connected to this plant has not been functional since 2006. As a result, most households depend on on-site sanitation such as septic tanks. During floods, these septic tanks become submerged, leading to serious contamination risks. Updating city ordinances on septic tank maintenance has been identified as a necessary step to improve sanitation management. Ensuring that public kiosks have elevated access could mitigate disruptions during floods.

To strengthen water infrastructure resilience, it is crucial to maintain the functionality of water treatment plants during disasters, reducing dependence on power supply. Supporting the WASH Committee's information system would also be beneficial in establishing a clean, accessible online database that is updated annually. A notable strength in the current system is the ability to distribute water via trucks when treatment plants are down, thus ensuring emergency water supply. There is a critical shortage of fire hydrants, with only around five currently available in Monrovia, compared to the significantly higher number that existed before the war. Increasing the number of fire hydrants would not only improve firefighting capacity but also enhance overall WASH services.

Water and sanitation state-owned enterprises (SOEs) in Liberia face significant financial sustainability challenges. There are no financial incentives to improve water and sanitation services, and the operator-to-cost ratio indicates that these enterprises are not self-sufficient. As a result, they rely heavily on government funding, which

limits their capacity to expand and maintain essential services. A key intervention for improving water and sanitation services is the introduction of performance-based subsidies. These subsidies would provide financial support to SOEs based on service delivery outcomes, encouraging efficiency and sustainability. Performance-based funding could also be extended to solid waste management services to improve urban sanitation.

Liberia has a relatively low share of paved roads; just under 40 percent of the country's primary road network is paved, compared with 70 to 80 percent for benchmark groups. Liberia's road network remains underdeveloped, with 58 percent of the population estimated to live more than 2 km away from a paved road. The north-western and south-eastern parts of the country are substantially disadvantaged in road network penetration, where less than 20 percent of the population has access to a paved road. It is estimated that Liberia needs 800 km of roads to meet regional connectivity standards (linking Monrovia to the international frontiers), 1,500 km to meet national connectivity standards (linking all provincial capitals to the regional network), and a further 5,700 km to meet rural connectivity standards (linking land responsible for 80 percent of agricultural production value to the national network). Vulnerability to climate risks is also high, with an estimated 1,350 km out of the country's total 10,600 km of roads in flood-prone areas and in need of repair.

4.2.2. Operation and Maintenance of Critical Infrastructure

Public utilities for water and energy in Liberia are not self-sufficient and rely heavily on government funding. High rates of water theft contribute significantly to financial losses, undermining the financial stability and sustainability of these utilities. This dependency on government funding limits the ability of these utilities to invest in infrastructure improvements and maintenance, which is crucial for ensuring service continuity during and after crisis events. The financial instability of these utilities also affects their ability to respond effectively to emergencies, as they lack the necessary resources to implement contingency plans and maintain critical infrastructure.

The monitoring systems in place to ensure infrastructure operation, maintenance, and post-incident

response across different infrastructure types are fragmented. The WASH sector suffers from ineffective coordination with international partners due to unclear leadership among institutions. This lack of clear leadership complicates the enforcement of zoning laws and infrastructure maintenance, leading to inefficiencies and gaps in service delivery. The fragmentation within the WASH sector also hampers the ability to implement comprehensive monitoring systems that can provide real-time data on infrastructure performance and identify potential issues before they escalate into crises.

Critical public service and infrastructure providers in Liberia have partial plans to ensure service continuity in the event of a crisis. The Liberia MHCP, developed in 2021, addresses six common hazards but has not been fully implemented. Communities, especially those in slums and low-lying areas, are highly vulnerable to flooding. The lack of elevated water kiosks and sufficient water storage exacerbates the risk during disasters. Non-existent maintenance has led to nonfunctional stabilization ponds, and during flooding, sewage systems overflow, contaminating drinking water sources. Open defecation remains a significant issue, particularly in areas like West Point, further complicating public health during crises. The partial implementation of the contingency plan highlights the need for more robust and actionable strategies to ensure service continuity and protect vulnerable communities.

Backup systems for key infrastructure in Liberia are inadequate. The water systems rely on an irregular power supply from the Hydro Power Plant, and there are no standby generators available. This poses a significant risk during power outages lasting more than two days. Currently, there are approximately 20,000 household water connections in Monrovia, with plans to add 5,000 more. Household level engagement (HLE) connections are a major challenge, with current coverage at about 10–50 percent. Conventional sewage systems exist in less than 10 percent of Monrovia, with most of the city relying on on-site septic tanks that have not been maintained since 2006. The lack of backup systems and the reliance on outdated infrastructure highlight the vulnerability of Liberia's key infrastructure to disruptions and the urgent need for investment in more resilient systems.

4.3 CIVIL PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

4.3.1. Legal frameworks for Emergency Management

Liberia's emergency management system is in the early stages of development, focusing on enhancing technical capacity and interministerial coordination in a government function that has historically been heavily supported by international organizations. Floods, wind-storms, rising temperatures, and shifting rainfall patterns are already straining infrastructure and response resources and are expected to increase the disease burden.

The NDMA under the Ministry of Internal Affairs is the government body responsible for coordinating disaster management efforts in Liberia. The agency is tasked with overseeing the planning, preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation of disasters through its responsibility to formulate disaster response policies, develop disaster management plans, and coordinate with both national and international partners. In practice, the NDMA is not adequately staffed or resourced to take on these roles. The agency faces challenges in maintaining its coordination role when, for example, it does not have the budget to maintain its national EOC.

The LNRCS plays a critical role in disaster preparedness and response. As part of the International Red Cross Movement, it assists with emergency relief operations, including providing first aid, distributing supplies, and supporting recovery efforts. The LNRCS has a network of trained volunteers who assist during disaster situations and health emergencies like disease outbreaks and it is particularly active in mobilizing resources during health emergencies and providing services during floods and other disasters.

The MoH plays an essential role in managing health emergencies, particularly in the context of disease outbreaks. Liberia has faced several health emergencies in recent decades, including the Ebola outbreak (2014–2016), cholera, and other public health threats. The MoH coordinates health emergency responses, sets public health policies, provides medical supplies, and oversees health-related preparedness activities.

Liberia works closely with international partners, including the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), WHO, UNICEF, and various NGOs. These partners provide technical support, funding, and expertise during both floods and health emergencies. They assist with resource mobilization, capacity building, logistical support, and coordination during emergencies.

Community-based disaster management efforts involve local communities in disaster preparedness and response. Local disaster committees and volunteer groups are often mobilized to ensure that communities are equipped to respond to disasters. These committees often work in tandem with national efforts, helping with EWS, awareness campaigns, and first response efforts in their respective areas.

In the last few decades, Liberia has faced several major disasters, including floods and health emergencies like the Ebola crisis. Flooding is a recurring issue in Liberia, particularly in urban areas like Monrovia, where poor drainage systems and seasonal rains lead to widespread inundation. The NDMA and other agencies have been working on enhancing flood response by developing EWS, improving drainage infrastructure, and coordinating relief efforts. Multiple projects supported by international partners to develop these capacities have been universally quelled by a lack of government commitment to providing funds for continued operations and maintenance costs. The GoL is working on long-term strategies for flood resilience, including urban planning and infrastructure improvement.

The GoL's response to the Ebola outbreak (2014–2016) is a significant example of disaster management efforts in the country. The government, through the MoH, led the response, but it was a collaborative effort involving international organizations such as the WHO, USAID, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), and the Red Cross. The GoL declared a state of emergency, and the national task force, led by the MoH, was set up to coordinate efforts. The response included quarantine measures, public awareness campaigns, the establishment of Ebola treatment units, and the involvement of community-based

organizations for contact tracing and health monitoring.³⁶ Liberia worked to improve its emergency health response systems and built capacity through training, improved infrastructure, and strengthening health surveillance. The COVID-19 response benefited from reinforced community health structures and lessons learned from the Ebola epidemic so that COVID-19 impacts were minimized with an efficient and effective response.³⁷

4.3.2. Resources for Emergency Management

The GoL emergency services are only partially equipped to respond to key priority hazards. The country lacks a municipal fire department, which significantly hampers its ability to respond effectively to fire-related emergencies. Response times are very long, and the limited number of water trucks—only four—working alongside local police further hinders effective disaster response. Fire hydrants are scarce, with fewer than five operational ones across Monrovia. This severe shortage of essential firefighting infrastructure and equipment highlights the urgent need for investment in emergency services to enhance their capacity to respond to major threats. The absence of a dedicated fire department means that existing emergency services are stretched thin, often leading to delayed responses and increased damage during fire incidents. The limited number of operational fire hydrants further exacerbates the situation, as firefighters struggle to access sufficient water supplies to combat fires effectively.

Currently, the provisions to ensure that emergency resources can be rapidly deployed to respond to crises and minimize or mitigate their impact across the country are incomplete. Discussions are ongoing between the World Bank and the MoF on various ways to access contingent financing for emergency response through the Cat DDO, CERCs, or RRO. These financial mechanisms provide timely funding in the event of a disaster, thereby improving the government's ability to deploy resources quickly. The effectiveness of these provisions will depend on the successful conclusion of these discussions and implementation of the funding mechanisms. The Cat DDO and CERCs are critical tools for enhancing the GoL's disaster

preparedness, as they offer a financial safety net that can be activated swiftly in response to emergencies. Ensuring that these mechanisms are in place and operational will be crucial for reducing the time lag between the onset of a disaster and the mobilization of necessary resources.

There are currently no mechanisms to ensure accountability in the use and maintenance of emergency service equipment. The absence of such mechanisms raises concerns about the potential for misuse or neglect of critical emergency resources. Establishing robust accountability systems is essential to ensure that emergency equipment is properly maintained and ready for use when needed. This includes regular audits, transparent reporting, and clear protocols for the management and maintenance of emergency resources. Without accountability measures, there is a risk that emergency equipment may fall into disrepair or be diverted for nonemergency uses, compromising the effectiveness of the emergency response. Implementing accountability mechanisms will help build public trust in the emergency services and ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively.

Emergency communication systems in Liberia are not able to operate continuously under harsh conditions. This is a significant challenge during disasters, as effective communication is crucial for coordinating emergency response efforts and ensuring public safety. The lack of reliable emergency communication infrastructure exacerbates the difficulties faced by emergency services in responding to crises. Investing in resilient communication systems that can withstand extreme conditions is vital for improving the overall effectiveness of emergency response operations. Effective communication systems are the backbone of any emergency response, enabling real-time information sharing, coordination among responders, and timely dissemination of warnings to the public. The current inadequacies in the GoL's emergency communication infrastructure mean that during disasters, critical information may not reach those who need it most, leading to delays in response and increased risk to lives and property.

³⁶ WHO. 2016. "Ebola Virus Disease in Liberia." https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news/item/2014_03_30 Ebola_lbr-en

³⁷ WHO. 2021. "How Reinforced Community Health Structures and Capitalizing on Lessons Learned from the Ebola Virus Epidemic of 2014–16 Helped the Country Respond to the Challenge of its Second Major Disease Outbreak in Five Years". <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/liberia-how-reinforced-community-health-structures-and-capitalizing-on-lessons-learned-from-the-ebola-virus-epidemic-of-2014-16-helped-the-country-respond-to-the-challenge-of-its-second-major-disease-outbreak-in-five-years>

ENTRY POINTS FOR PRIMARY RESPONSE

	Priority	
Readiness	High	Medium
High		
Medium		

Table 7: Entry points for Component 4

		IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
Support asset mapping and spatial data		
	Complete a comprehensive critical asset inventory, including spatial data for roads, water infrastructure, and buildings, to improve disaster preparedness.	Short Term
	Update and utilize the Liberia Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan's infrastructure maps for decision-making and risk reduction.	Short Term
Support strengthening disaster coordination including acquisition of equipment		
	Provide support to acquire adequate equipment and facilities for the NEWOC to enhance its functionality as a disaster response hub.	Short-Medium Term
	Expansion, modernization and decentralization of fire services. Establish municipal fire departments and increase the fleet of fire trucks to improve response times and coverage.	Short-Medium Term
Strengthening community engagement and risk reduction		
	Strengthen communication strategies to raise community awareness and engagement in risk reduction initiatives. This can complement health/weather advisory systems that offer practical information on risk reduction or mitigation actions individuals or communities can take ahead of a disaster event.	Short Term
	Enhance coordination between government and stakeholders to prioritize resources for community-level disaster preparedness.	Short Term

 Policies, strategies, institutions  Investments



5. SOCIAL AND LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT - AGGREGATED SCORE: 0.9 (UNMET)

COMPONENT	SUBCOMPONENT	INDICATOR	ML
5. Social and livelihood support	5.1 Coverage and scalability of social protection	5.1.1 An adaptive social protection policy or strategy is in place with adequate financial commitments, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and coordination between social protection and DRM for crisis response.	UNMET
		5.1.2 Social protection programs and systems are in place, with adaptive design features to scale up and/or out timely and effectively during and after crisis events.	NASCENT
	5.2 Food security and livelihoods	5.2.1 The government has the capacity to safeguard the availability of food through comprehensive policies/plans alongside effective monitoring and forecasting of food-related outcomes.	UNMET
		5.2.2 The government has the capacity to ensure access to food supplies through the operationalization of policies and coordination mechanisms.	BASIC
	5.3 Continued access to education	5.3.1. Educational resources, infrastructure, and learning outcomes are safeguarded during crises.	BASIC
	5.4 Crisis induced displacement	5.4.1 The needs of existing and new internally displaced populations are taken into consideration in planning and responses.	UNMET
		5.4.2 Refugees and asylum seekers are included in crisis preparedness plans and responses.	BASIC

Key Messages:

- 1. Enhance Coverage and Targeting of Social Protection Programs:** Liberia's social protection system currently covers only 14.3 percent of the population, with significant gaps in reaching the most vulnerable groups. The GoL should prioritize expanding the coverage and improving the targeting of social protection programs to ensure that the poorest and most vulnerable populations, particularly in rural areas, receive adequate support.
- 2. Strengthen Institutional Coordination and Capacity:** The fragmented landscape of social protection programs, primarily donor-financed, highlights the need for better coordination among various stakeholders. Strengthening the institutional framework, including the roles of the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MoGCSP) and the National Social Protection Steering Committee (SPSC), is crucial for effective implementation and monitoring of social protection initiatives.

- 3. Promote Adaptive Social Protection to Address Climate and Economic Shocks:** Given Liberia's vulnerability to climate change and economic shocks, it is essential to develop an adaptive social protection system that can respond flexibly to these challenges. This includes integrating DRM and climate change adaptation into social protection programs to enhance resilience and reduce the impact of shocks on vulnerable households.
- 4. Increase Financial Commitment and Sustainability:** The GoL should commit to allocating a minimum of 8–10 percent of the national budget toward social protection initiatives. This financial commitment, along with efforts to secure long-term support from international development partners and improve PFM, will ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of social protection programs.
- 5. Address Gender Inequality and Empower Women:** Women in Liberia face significant barriers to economic opportunities and are disproportionately affected by poverty and climate change. There should be a focus on gender-responsive social protection measures that enhance women's access to credit, professional services, and job security. Also, introducing mechanisms to address gender-based violence and improving access to education and training for women are critical for promoting inclusive growth and reducing vulnerabilities.

5.1 COVERAGE AND SCALABILITY OF SOCIAL PROTECTION

5.1.1 (Adaptive) Social Protection Strategy

Poverty is prevalent in Liberia and increasing. In 2023, the country had a gross national income per capita of only US\$730, placing it among the 10 poorest countries globally. Data from the 2016 household survey indicated that over half of the population (50.9 percent) lived in poverty, with rural poverty (71.6 percent) being more than double that of urban areas (31.5 percent). Estimates by the World Bank in 2023 show that 6 out of 10 Liberians still live in poverty, with inherent spatial challenges. Poverty is also strongly linked to age. Children ages 0–9 years make up nearly one-third of the population, with 63.3 percent living in poverty. Among youth ages 10–19 years, 67.4 percent are affected; 66.3 percent of those over 60 years old live in poverty. These disparities highlight the need for targeted interventions to promote inclusive growth and reduce vulnerabilities across all demographics.

Liberia also faces significant challenges related to its young and rapidly growing population, with over one-third (35 percent) under the age of 25. A child born in Liberia today is expected to achieve only 32 percent of his/her full potential by age 18, which is below the average for low-income countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. This weakens the country's chances of positively leveraging its demographic dividend. Noncash measures of poverty, such as access to healthcare, education, and essential

services, are low, with pronounced rural-urban and gender disparities. Employment in Liberia is predominantly informal, with the informal sector accounting for 87 percent of all jobs. Informality is higher in rural areas, with most people being self-employed in agriculture or unregistered non-farm enterprises. Climate change further affects employment and livelihoods, with the country being highly vulnerable to rising sea levels, coastal erosion, unpredictable rainfall, and extreme weather events. These climate risks are particularly severe for rural populations reliant on agriculture for subsistence.

Female labor force participation and employment rates are high in Liberia, but compared to men, only one-third of the women are likely to have access to wage jobs. Nearly 94 percent of the women are informally employed, compared to 79 percent of men. Women are overwhelmingly concentrated in the agriculture and non-farm informal services sectors, with limited access to credit, professional services, and job security. Only 22.6 percent of women working in agriculture earn cash payments. Women-managed enterprises in the nonfarm sector are smaller in size than male-managed enterprises and concentrated in informal low-value activities such as food preparation in the trade sector. Although most women are entrepreneurs, they lack access to the credit and financial/business literacy needed to transition into more productive businesses. Lack of resources contributes to harmful

coping strategies, including transactional sex. Compared to men, women in Liberia have much less access to land and other property, which can be used directly for economic activities or serve as collateral for credit. Access to information also matters; many women in Liberia lack access to critical information on rules and regulations related to their businesses or work, land, or assets, health improvement, or education. Education and training are key determinants for accessing higher-earning jobs, whether as employees or entrepreneurs.

In rural areas, climate change shocks and climate variability are an increasing threat to women's livelihoods, as most women are concentrated in climate vulnerable sectors (for example, agriculture). Women carry an immense additional burden of household care, which is exacerbated by limited access to public infrastructure and services like roads networks, clean water, WASH facilities, and health clinics. The impacts of climate change also aggravate the risk of gender-based violence against women and girls in Liberia, especially in contexts where social norms have condoned such violence. These gaps are exacerbated by the government's constrained capacity to close gender gaps and address gender inequality.

The last five-year National Development Plan (NDP) of Liberia, known as the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD), identified social protection as a crucial long-term investment strategy for strengthening the country's human capital and building resilience. While efforts under the plan focused on building strong systems for addressing poverty, regional and gender inequalities are still prevalent in Liberia. The current NDP aims to leverage social protection investments to address regional inequality, unemployment, and underemployment; expand financial access for food-insecure and labor-constrained households; support microenterprises; and stimulate local demand and supply for goods and services provided by the local private sector. The government plans to use social protection to mitigate risks, vulnerability, and poverty through cash or in-kind transfers via both contributory and noncontributory programs.

The GoL is taking steps to build robust social protection systems to support future resilience at both household and community levels. This must be aligned with a National Social Protection Strategy and Policy that is adaptive and responsive to the diverse needs of the poor and vulnerable. The country's current social protection policy

and strategy, crafted in 2013, is outdated and needs to be updated by the MoGCSP.

Key components of the country's social protection interventions. Key components of the system include a social registry for data collection, household registration, and eligibility screening, and an integrated management information system with modules for enrollment, payment, and grievance redress. The system has also been endorsed as the primary tool for targeting social protection programs, aiming to harmonize poverty-reduction efforts and reduce redundancies. The registry currently holds data for about 20 percent of the population in Liberia, and the MoGCSP is working through its coordination structure to expand both use and coverage of the system. To further strengthen social protection system coordination, the National Social Safety Nets Secretariat (NSSNS) was established at the MoGCSP. The NSSNS collaborates with the National SPSC and various technical working groups (TWGs) to enhance coordination among social protection stakeholders. Irregular meetings and lack of documentation have been challenges.

The government has developed systems to identify vulnerable populations, primarily through the Liberia Household Social Registry (LHSR). This digital registry was established with the support of USAID and the World Bank to create a comprehensive database to facilitate targeted social protection interventions. The LHSR, initiated in 2021, was a significant step toward improving the identification and support of vulnerable groups. With intensive engagement over time, the Social Registry covered over one million Liberians as of December 2024. Collaboration with international partners proved instrumental for helping to develop a robust system for identifying and assisting vulnerable groups in Liberia.

Liberia's economic growth and development continue to be significantly challenged by global economic instability, pervasive poverty, a young and growing population with poor human capital outcomes, high informality in employment, and vulnerability to climate change. Strengthening the social protection system and improving coordination among various programs are crucial for addressing these challenges and enhancing the resilience of the population. Liberia's current social protection system is still nascent and not strong enough for managing multivariate shocks. Only about 14 percent of the population receives some form of assistance, and social

protection programs account for just about 3 percent of beneficiary households' expenditure. School feeding programs cover nearly 7 percent of the population but are among the least targeted safety nets. Most social safety programs are donor funded, leading to a fragmented landscape with numerous funders and NGOs implementing small-scale interventions. There is a need to enhance safety nets coverage and improve coordination within the social protection sector to increase the effectiveness and quality of services provided.

The GoL has made remarkable progress since the end of its civil conflict, which caused widespread devastation. These gains have been uneven, leaving a significant portion of the population in extreme poverty and vulnerable to shocks. Many people remain unable to access labor markets or essential services, posing a risk to Liberia's long-term stability, development, and economic growth.

5.1.2 Social Protection Programs and Systems

The Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) policy in Liberia is designed to create a comprehensive and responsive system that safeguards the most vulnerable populations against socioeconomic shocks. The policy is rooted in the principles of inclusivity, sustainability, and resilience building. By ensuring income security and enhancing economic opportunities for marginalized communities, the ASP policy aims to address poverty, food insecurity, and deprivation.

A fundamental aspect of this policy is its alignment with existing government systems and decentralization objectives. This ensures that social protection measures are well-integrated into national development plans, reducing redundancy and optimizing resource allocation. Furthermore, the policy promotes program integration, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Key stakeholders, including international development organizations, civil society groups, and the private sector, play a crucial role in supporting the implementation of these programs. This multisectoral approach ensures that Liberia's social protection framework remains adaptive, proactive, and sustainable.

The successful implementation of Liberia's Social Protection policy requires a strong financial commitment from the government and its development partners. Recognizing the fiscal constraints faced by the

country, the GoL has pledged to allocate a minimum of 8–10 percent of the national budget toward social protection initiatives during the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) period (2014–2016). These funds are intended to support key social safety net programs, improve public service delivery, and strengthen institutional capacity.

To ensure long-term sustainability of these efforts, the government has committed to gradually increasing its domestic revenue contributions over time. It seeks to secure long-term financial support from international development partners to bridge funding gaps and sustain ongoing programs. PFM reforms are also being pursued to enhance the efficiency of social protection expenditures. These reforms aim to improve transparency, accountability, and fiscal discipline, thereby fostering donor confidence and encouraging continued investment in Liberia's social protection sector.

Implementation of an effective social protection system in Liberia requires a well-structured institutional framework that fosters coordination among various government agencies. The MoGCSP is the lead coordinating body responsible for overseeing social protection initiatives. It houses the National Social Protection Secretariat, which plays a pivotal role in managing the overall strategy and ensuring alignment with national development goals.

The SPSC was established to facilitate policy development, resource mobilization, and interministerial collaboration. This committee comprises representatives from key line ministries, government agencies, and development partners, ensuring a holistic and integrated approach to social protection. The SPSC is responsible for making high-level decisions, providing strategic direction, and advocating for increased funding and support for social protection programs.

A Technical Task Team has been formed to provide technical guidance and oversee the operational aspects of social protection interventions. This team consists of experts from relevant government institutions, CSOs, and donor agencies, working collaboratively to enhance program design, implementation, and monitoring. This multitiered coordination mechanism ensures that social protection initiatives in Liberia are effectively managed, well-integrated, and responsive to the needs of the country's most vulnerable populations.

A 2008 UN study on social protection in Liberia highlighted the widespread prevalence of extreme poverty, driven by structural factors and compounded by the aftermath of civil conflict. Approximately 17 percent of households were extremely poor due to limited access to productive labor, particularly in households led by children, the elderly, people with disabilities, or caregivers. The remaining 83 percent faced poverty due to preexisting conditions exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure, education, and economic opportunities. The war deprived many, especially young people, of quality education and essential skills for productive employment. Informal sector workers lack access to financing and resources for sustainable enterprises. Rural areas suffer from scarce social services, such as education, healthcare, water, and sanitation, further deepening poverty cycles.

Vulnerable groups—including children, women, the elderly, and those with disabilities or HIV/AIDS—are disproportionately affected, facing risks of exploitation and exclusion. With low resilience to shocks, poor families often resort to negative coping strategies, such as child labor and reduced school attendance, perpetuating poverty across generations. Addressing these challenges requires targeted investments in social protection, education, infrastructure, and economic inclusion to break the cycle of extreme poverty.

Social insurance programs in Liberia play a crucial role in mitigating risks and ensuring financial security for workers and their families. These programs are designed to provide coverage for contingencies such as old age, disability, work-related injuries, and unemployment. The National Social Security and Welfare Corporation (NASSCORP) is the primary institution responsible for administering social insurance schemes, offering benefits such as pensions, employment injury coverage, and survivor benefits. These initiatives aim to protect individuals from falling into poverty due to unforeseen circumstances and ensure a stable income source for those affected.

A key feature of Liberia's social insurance programs is their contributory nature, requiring both employers and employees to make regular contributions. This model ensures sustainability and allows beneficiaries to receive financial support when needed. The government is also exploring ways to extend social insurance coverage to informal sector workers, recognizing that a significant portion of the workforce operates outside formal employment structures. Expanding access to social insurance programs is essential for enhancing economic resilience and reducing vulnerabilities among Liberia's working population. Liberia's social insurance schemes encompass various programs to provide financial protection against life's uncertainties. One of the most significant schemes is the National Pension Scheme, which offers retirement benefits to formal sector employees upon reaching the required age or in the event of disability. The scheme is structured to ensure that workers can maintain a reasonable standard of living post-retirement.

Another vital social insurance scheme is the Employment Injury Scheme, which provides compensation to workers who suffer job-related injuries or disabilities. This initiative supports affected individuals by covering medical expenses and offering financial assistance to compensate for lost income. Survivor benefits are also included within this framework, ensuring financial support for the dependents of deceased workers. The GoL continues to work on improving administrative efficiency, strengthening compliance mechanisms, and expanding coverage to more workers to enhance the effectiveness of these schemes. Collaborative efforts between NASSCORP, employers, and international partners are crucial in ensuring that social insurance schemes remain robust and adequately funded. By reinforcing these programs, Liberia aims to build a more inclusive and resilient social protection system that safeguards its workforce against economic and social vulnerabilities.

5.2 FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS

5.2.1 Food Security Policies and Plans

Liberia faces persistent risks of food insecurity driven by major shocks such as conflict, economic downturns, and natural hazards. These shocks disproportionately

affect the most vulnerable populations, perpetuating a cycle of heightened vulnerability to future crises. The political sensitivity surrounding staple commodities like rice further complicates the situation, as historical events such as the rice wars of 1978 have shown the potential

for food insecurity to lead to significant political instability. The government's limited capacity to implement comprehensive food security plans and the lack of up-to-date data exacerbate these vulnerabilities, making it challenging to respond effectively to emerging threats.

Food crises in Liberia often extend beyond localized issues to severe nationwide impacts. These crises threaten livelihoods and exacerbate existing chronic challenges, pushing communities into emergency and catastrophic levels of food insecurity. The lack of comprehensive early warning and forecasting systems hampers the government's ability to respond proactively to food security threats. The MoA's efforts to monitor imports and track food prices are crucial, but it does not have a structured plan for assessing food security emergencies.

Chronic underinvestment in Liberia's healthcare, education, and infrastructure exacerbates food insecurity. High levels of maternal and infant mortality and malnutrition among children under five reflect the insufficient capacity to address crises. The limited geographic coverage of monitoring systems and the outdated data further hinder the government's ability to identify and address food security issues at the sub-national level. Strengthening these systems and ensuring adequate support for local actors will be essential for building resilience against future crises.

Effective food security crisis preparedness in Liberia requires strong government ownership and leadership, supported by operational frameworks that coordinate efforts across humanitarian and development partners. The development of a national food security crisis preparedness plan, currently in draft form, is a step in the right direction. Its successful implementation will depend on the government's ability to mobilize resources and coordinate with international organizations such as the FAO and WFP. Preparation efforts must focus on scaling up actions to mitigate and prevent the impacts of acute food insecurity conditions, ensuring that the most vulnerable populations are protected. The inclusion of this plan in the President's 100-day deliverables underscores its critical importance. The World Bank has also established criteria for assessing the quality of the plan. The FAO and WFP recently convened a meeting in Dakar to evaluate the plan's quality. The government's capacity to implement the plan remains limited, and there is a significant lack of up-to-date data on food security in Liberia. The MoA has set a goal to

complete, validate, and adopt the Liberia Food Security Crisis Preparedness Plan in the FY2025 draft budget.

The draft plan aims to catalyze the involvement of various actors in the food security sector despite the current weak data capacity. The absence of updated data on food security in Liberia is a significant challenge to effective planning and response. The MoA's objective to complete and adopt the plan highlights the government's commitment to addressing food security issues, but successful implementation will require substantial support and coordination from both national and international stakeholders.

The MoA is actively working on launching a comprehensive agriculture and food security survey and is seeking donor support to enhance its efforts. ECOWAS has implemented programs to establish strategic grain reserves and has conducted assessments with recommendations to build new silos. Existing silos have been destroyed, and the government does not maintain these reserves. Instead, private sector importers, with demonstrated capacity to store three months' worth of rice, provide this buffer. The government subsidizes these importers but requires them to maintain the necessary storage capacity. The reliance on private sector importers for maintaining strategic grain reserves highlights the need for a more robust and sustainable approach to food security. The government's subsidy regime, while providing immediate relief, may not be a long-term solution. Strengthening the capacity of local actors and building resilient storage infrastructure will be crucial for ensuring food security in the face of future crises.

Coordination mechanisms between the government and external stakeholders, including regional bodies and the international community, are partially in place. There is significant government oversight of rice, a staple food in Liberia. The Ministry of Commerce ensures that importers can maintain a three-month supply of rice. Organizations such as the WFP, FAO, and UNICEF are involved in food security efforts, with the WFP playing a significant role in school feeding programs. The condition of storage facilities remains a concern, as many warehouses are not in good shape and are underutilized. Improving the condition of storage facilities and ensuring their effective utilization will be critical for maintaining food security and preventing political instability.

The MoA houses a Director of Food Security, and the Vice President heads the Food Security Commission to facilitate donor engagement. The 2008 Food Security Strategy was updated in 2015, reflecting the government's commitment to food security. The establishment of a dedicated office and the involvement of high-level officials indicate a structured approach to food security crisis preparedness. Having a designated office for food security crisis preparedness is a positive step toward institutionalizing food security efforts. The leadership of the Vice President in the Food Security Commission enhances the visibility and importance of food security issues, potentially attracting more donor support and facilitating better coordination among stakeholders.

The designated office leads engagement with external partners regarding food-related preparedness and response. The government is reconsidering its subsidy regime and is exploring ways to support local storage capacity. Efforts are being made to encourage start-ups and provide licensing to Liberians for storage despite existing capacity challenges. Endogenizing import processes and supporting local actors is a strategic approach to building resilience and reducing dependency on external sources. Engaging with external partners and rethinking the subsidy regime are critical steps toward sustainable food security. Supporting local storage capacity and encouraging start-ups will help build a more resilient food security system. Addressing the existing capacity challenges and ensuring effective implementation of these initiatives will require continuous support and monitoring.

The GoL lacks comprehensive early warning and forecasting systems related to food security and malnutrition. The MoA collaborates with the NDMA on flood insurance for agriculture, although flooding does not significantly affect rice production. Deforestation for rice cultivation and the absence of drainage systems are notable issues. The lack of real-time data and forecasting systems hampers the government's ability to respond proactively to food security threats. The absence of comprehensive early warning and forecasting systems is a significant gap in Liberia's food security framework. Developing and implementing these systems will be crucial for timely and effective responses to food security threats. Collaboration with international organizations and leveraging technology for data collection and analysis can enhance the government's capacity to monitor and forecast food security outcomes.

There is no formal food forecasting system in place, and current monitoring efforts are ad hoc. The MoA is responsible for monitoring imports but lacks the capacity to do so effectively. The absence of a structured plan for assessing food security emergencies is a significant gap. The ministry has a structure for monitoring imports, but lacks the capacity to implement it, with most personnel confined to office work rather than field activities. The ad hoc nature of food-related forecasting and monitoring systems highlights the need for a more structured and systematic approach. Building the capacity of the MoA and ensuring that monitoring efforts extend to field activities will be essential for effective food security management. Developing a comprehensive plan for assessing food security emergencies and integrating it with existing monitoring systems can enhance the government's preparedness and response capabilities.

Monitoring systems do not ensure adequate geographic coverage to highlight sub-national hotspots. FEWSNET and Cadre Harmonize lack updated data, and there are only 30 extension officers nationwide, with insufficient technical support to back them. The limited geographic coverage and outdated data hinder the government's ability to identify and address food security issues at the sub-national level. Ensuring adequate geographic coverage of monitoring systems is crucial for identifying and addressing food security hotspots. Expanding the network of extension officers and providing them with the necessary technical support can enhance the government's capacity to monitor food security at the local level. Updating data and integrating it with geographic information systems can provide a more comprehensive and accurate picture of food security across the country.

The Ministry of Trade and Commerce tracks food prices for key staples such as cassava and palm oil. This real-time tracking is crucial for understanding market dynamics and informing policy decisions. The availability of real-time data on food prices helps the government monitor price fluctuations and respond to potential food security threats. Real-time tracking of food prices is an essential component of food security monitoring. It provides valuable insights into market dynamics and helps the government make informed policy decisions. Expanding the scope of real-time tracking to include more staples and integrating it with other monitoring systems can enhance the government's ability to respond to food security challenges.

Addressing food insecurity in Liberia necessitates a holistic approach that includes monitoring risks, leveraging EWS (for example, FEWSNET, IPC), and ensuring coordinated responses that utilize the strengths of multiple stakeholders. The government's engagement with external partners and efforts to rethink the subsidy regime are critical steps toward sustainable food security.

5.3 CONTINUED ACCESS TO EDUCATION

5.3.1 Safeguarding Education Continuity

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has demonstrated commitment to ensuring the continuity of learning during crises, as evidenced by its response during the Ebola and COVID-19 pandemics. Activation of the Teaching by Radio program, which developed and aired lessons via radio, was a significant step in maintaining educational continuity. This approach revealed critical gaps in accessibility. Students from poorer households, who lacked radios, and students with disabilities were disproportionately affected. This highlights the need for more inclusive and diversified approaches to remote learning. Policy makers should consider investing in multiple platforms for delivering educational content, such as mobile applications, television broadcasts, and internet-based solutions, to ensure that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status or physical abilities, have access to education during crises.

The MoE's crisis plan includes activation of the education emergency cluster, which involves the MoE, development partners, and other stakeholders. This cluster is tasked with coordinating responses such as the Teaching by Radio program, distributing learning materials, and providing psychosocial support. The plan lacks detailed guidance for other stakeholders, including schools, teachers, and parent-teacher associations. Lack of clarity leads to delays in execution and poor coordination between the MoE and school administrators; developing comprehensive crisis response plans that clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders is essential. This could involve regular training and simulations to ensure that all parties are prepared to act swiftly and effectively during a crisis.

The Liberia COVID-19 Education Emergency Response Plan aimed to address out-of-school children and prevent dropout through its Teaching by Radio program,

Supporting local storage capacity, encouraging start-ups, and expanding the network of extension officers will help build a more resilient food security system. By integrating these efforts with comprehensive early warning and forecasting systems, the GoL can enhance its preparedness and response capabilities, ultimately reducing the vulnerability of its most at-risk populations.

which targeted children unable to attend school physically. The plan included community engagement and awareness campaigns to encourage parents to keep their children engaged in learning. The plan faced significant limitations in reach and implementation. Many children lacked access to radios, and the plan did not allocate sufficient resources to track out-of-school children or provide tailored support to prevent dropout. Policy makers should consider implementing more robust tracking systems to identify and support out-of-school children. Community-based interventions, such as local learning hubs and peer tutoring programs, could be explored to provide more direct and personalized support to at-risk students.

The private education sector was included in the preparedness plan through the provision of health and hygiene kits for all private schools. While this is a positive step, it is essential to recognize that private schools also play a critical role in the overall education ecosystem. Policy makers should ensure that private schools are integrated into broader crisis response plans, including access to remote learning resources, teacher training, and psychosocial support. Collaboration between public and private sectors can enhance the resilience of the education system.

Financial resources were made available through the activation of the World Bank's CERC, the Global Partnership for Education COVID funding, and support from USAID, among others. Some training on psychosocial counseling was provided for teachers. These funds and the scale of training were not enough to address the problem. There were also delays in deploying learning materials and health and hygiene supplies. Policy makers should prioritize the timely allocation and distribution of resources, ensuring that financial, human, and infrastructural support is scaled to meet the needs of the education system during crises. Establishing contingency funds and

pre-positioning essential supplies can help mitigate delays and ensure a more effective response.

Educational response plans included alternative means of education, such as the Teaching by Radio program, supplemented by the distribution of learning materials and psychosocial support for teachers. These measures faced challenges such as limited reach and infrastructure constraints. Policy makers should explore a range of

alternative education modalities, including mobile learning units, temporary learning spaces, and nonformal education programs. Investing in digital infrastructure, such as internet connectivity and devices for students, can also enhance the effectiveness of remote learning initiatives. Building partnerships with community organizations and leveraging local resources can help extend the reach of educational programs and ensure that no child is left behind during a crisis.

5.4 CRISIS-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT

5.4.1 Inclusion of Internally Displaced Persons in Crisis Preparedness and Response

The Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) is the primary agency responsible for conducting settlement activities for displaced populations. The historical reliance on partners such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the LNRCs indicates a potential gap in the national capacity to independently manage these activities. The lack of a clear, comprehensive national response plan guiding settlement activities raises concerns about the consistency and effectiveness of responses to displacement crises. Policy makers should consider developing and implementing a robust national response plan that clearly delineates roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms among all stakeholders to ensure a cohesive and efficient response to displacement crises.

Liberia's MHCP is a significant step toward managing large-scale population movements during crises. The plan's inclusion of risk profiles for flooding and windstorms, which estimate the potential number of internally displaced persons (IDPs), demonstrates a proactive approach. Absence of a national DRR strategy with specific provisions for preventing and addressing displacement highlights a critical gap. Policy makers should prioritize the development of such a strategy, incorporating comprehensive risk assessments, EWS, and preventive measures to mitigate displacement impacts. Integrating mental health services into crisis preparedness plans is essential to address the psychological needs of displaced populations.

The MHCP, developed by the NDMA in 2018, includes measures to manage large-scale population movements during crises. The MHCP addresses the six most common and dangerous crises in Liberia: flooding, fires,

coastal erosion, epidemics, storms, and conflict. It considers the potential displacement of populations. The GoL does not have a national DRR strategy with specific provisions for preventing and addressing displacement due to disasters. Existing crisis preparedness plans in Liberia do not adequately address the specific needs of existing IDPs, such as landlessness, absence of identity cards, and lack of access to financial resources. This oversight can exacerbate the vulnerabilities of displaced populations and hinder their ability to recover and rebuild their lives. Policymakers should ensure that crisis preparedness plans are inclusive and consider the unique challenges faced by existing IDPs. This includes providing legal and administrative support to secure identity documents, facilitating access to financial resources, and addressing mental health needs through targeted interventions.

The ability to record and monitor displacement related to ongoing crises is crucial for effective response and resource allocation. While the GoL relies on external support for this, building national capacity for displacement monitoring should be a priority. Policy makers should invest in developing a robust data collection and management system that can track displacement trends, identify emerging needs, and inform policy decisions. Strengthening partnerships with international organizations and leveraging technology can enhance the accuracy and timeliness of displacement data.

The 2002 Declaration of Rights and Protections of IDPs provides a legal framework for the protection of displaced populations. Absence of a specific policy for protracted displacement indicates a need for more comprehensive and long-term solutions. Policy makers should develop a dedicated policy that addresses the unique challenges of protracted displacement, including access

to durable solutions such as local integration, resettlement, and voluntary return. This policy should also outline mechanisms for providing continuous support and protection to IDPs, ensuring their rights and well-being are upheld.

The socioeconomic inclusion of displaced populations is critical for their long-term stability and integration.

While the LRRRC is mandated to support this inclusion, efforts have predominantly focused on refugees rather than IDPs. Policy makers should expand the scope of socioeconomic inclusion initiatives to encompass all displaced populations, ensuring access to education, livelihoods, employment, food security, shelter, and mental health services. This can be achieved through targeted programs, partnerships with local and international organizations, and the allocation of adequate resources.

The GoL's MHCP includes provisions for early solutions such as shelter, WASH, access to schools and health facilities, and protection.

Balancing early solutions with crisis response is essential to prevent prolonged displacement and facilitate recovery. Policy makers should ensure that early solutions are integrated into all stages of crisis response, from immediate relief to long-term recovery. This requires a coordinated approach that involves all relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, humanitarian organizations, and affected communities.

In times of emergency, the LRRRC, in collaboration with the GoL and international humanitarian community, provides mobile relief assistance to affected populations.

While these efforts are crucial for immediate relief, policymakers should focus on long-term impact mitigation to prevent the recurrence of vulnerabilities among IDPs and refugee populations. This includes investing in resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable livelihoods, and enhancing social protection systems.

5.4.2 Inclusion of Refugees in Crisis Preparedness and Response

The GoL has made commendable efforts in developing national policies and frameworks to assist asylum seekers and refugees during crises.

The Migration Governance Indicator (MiGOF), validated and launched in 2021, aims to present a coherent and comprehensive set of principles to govern migrants' rights and access to social services such as health, education, and social

security. Heavy reliance on partners like the LNRCS and the WFP for emergency food and nutrition assistance highlights a significant gap in national capacity. This reliance on external partners can lead to delays and inconsistencies in the provision of aid during crises. Policymakers should focus on building national capacity by allocating resources, training personnel, and establishing robust systems to manage and support asylum seekers and refugees independently. This will ensure a more reliable and timely response during crises.

The National Disaster Management Policy designates the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the LRRRC as the lead agencies at the national level for refugee crises, with the LRRRC's mandate extending to IDPs.

The 1993 Liberia Refugee Act established the LRRRC to assist refugees, asylum seekers, and IDPs. In earlier disasters, the LNRCS, supported by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), UNHCR, and WFP, often took the lead due to its greater financial and human resource capacity. This indicates a need for clearer delineation of roles and responsibilities and enhanced national capacity to manage refugee crises effectively. Policymakers should ensure that national and sub-national roles are clearly defined and adequate resources are allocated to the LRRRC and other relevant agencies to enable them to fulfill their mandates effectively.

The GoL's existing crisis preparedness and response plans, including the Liberia MHCP and the National Disaster Risk Reduction Plan 2016–2021, recognize the presence of IDPs, refugees, and asylum seekers in Liberia and their need for protection, shelter, and food during crises.

These plans do not outline specific measures directed at supporting these groups. This lack of specificity can lead to gaps in the provision of aid and protection during crises. Policymakers should ensure that crisis preparedness plans explicitly address the locations, living conditions, vulnerabilities, and needs of asylum seekers and refugees, along with the obstacles they may face in accessing assistance. This includes developing targeted interventions and ensuring that resources are allocated to address the unique needs of these populations.

These crisis preparedness and response plans do not have specific procedures to ensure that asylum seekers and refugees are protected from exploitation, discrimination, abuse, and violence throughout the crisis management cycle (prevention, preparedness, response,

and recovery). This gap leaves these vulnerable populations at risk during crises. Policymakers should develop and implement procedures to safeguard asylum seekers and refugees from harm and ensure their protection throughout all stages of crisis management. This includes establishing clear protocols for preventing and responding to incidents of exploitation, discrimination, abuse, and violence and ensuring that these protocols are integrated into all crisis preparedness and response plans.

The Liberia MHCP does not have specific procedures to ensure a policy of ‘do no harm’ and that asylum seekers and refugees receive the same assistance as the general population. Development partners like the WFP, which provide support to refugees during crises, have procedures to ensure that relief measures do not create or exacerbate tensions between hosting and hosted communities. Policy makers should incorporate a ‘do no harm’ policy into national crisis preparedness plans to ensure equitable assistance and prevent further vulnerabilities among asylum seekers and refugees. This includes ensuring that all aid and assistance provided during crises are distributed fairly and without discrimination and that measures are in place to prevent and address any tensions that may arise between different communities.

The LRRRC is the government’s lead humanitarian agency responsible for providing protection to refugees, stateless persons, IDPs, and other people of

concern. The LRRRC monitors the activities of asylum seekers and humanitarian workers, coordinates the activities of institutions working with people of concern, and formulates the policy framework under which these services are provided. The National Disaster Management Policy designates the Ministry of Internal Affairs and LRRRC as the lead agencies on refugee crises. The GoL adopted the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement into national legislation in 2004 and ratified the Kampala Convention on the protection and assistance of IDPs in 2014. These legislative frameworks provide a solid foundation for managing displacement issues, but their effective implementation requires adequate resources and coordination. Policymakers should ensure that the LRRRC and other relevant agencies are adequately resourced and supported to fulfill their mandates effectively. This includes providing training, resources, and support to ensure that these agencies can effectively manage and support displaced populations during crises.

ENTRY POINTS FOR SOCIAL AND LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

	Priority	
Readiness	High	Medium
High		
Medium		

Table 8: Entry points for Component 5

		IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE
	Increase the reach of social protection programs to cover a larger portion of the population, particularly targeting the poorest and most vulnerable groups.	Short Term
	Utilize the LHSR to better identify and target beneficiaries, ensuring that resources are directed to those most in need.	Short Term
	Enhance the coordination among various government agencies, donors, and NGOs through the National SPSC and TWGs.	Short Term
	Integrate DRM and climate change adaptation into social protection programs to create a system that can respond to economic and environmental shocks.	Short-Medium Term
	Implement measures that specifically address the barriers faced by women, including improving access to credit, professional services, and job security and focusing on gender-based violence.	Short-Medium Term
	Expand the use of digital systems, such as the LHSR and integrated management information system, for efficient targeting, enrollment, payment, and grievance redress.	Short-Medium Term

 Policies, strategies, institutions  Investments

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH EACH MATURITY LEVEL IN THE CPGA

MATURITY LEVEL	KEY CHARACTERISTICS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive efforts have been made to promote preparedness with few gaps. • Preparedness is prioritized and mainstreamed in key government documents and plans. • A (relatively) advanced plan, system, or institution is in place. While it may still have some shortfalls, it covers all planning and operational aspects needed to ensure holistic uptake of preparedness activities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear and dedicated efforts related to preparedness have been promoted. Solid gains have been made, though efforts to promote preparedness may not be fully comprehensive. • Balance of priorities that still favors response. • Has well-thought-through and dedicated plans, systems, or institutions. Most areas are well resourced and have decent capacity—though not across the board.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decent efforts have been made to promote preparedness, with a vision laid out in relevant policy or planning documents. Progress in implementation may be uneven or disjointed. • Priority is still often given to ex post response over preparedness. • Has a plan or system or institution in place. However, it may face shortfalls in capacity or resourcing. Design features are often good though inadequate to have meaningful effect.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some (or minimal) efforts have been made to promote ex-ante preparedness, though typically with little ability to follow through. • Ex post relief and response are typically the focus of government intervention. • Has a plan, system, or institution in place though it does not address crisis preparedness as a priority. System suffers from resource and capacity constraints, resulting in limited implementation/operationalization.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing (or very little) has been done to address aspects of preparedness OR country has little to no ability to promote preparedness activities. • No plans, systems, or institutions in place AND little to no ability to follow through/operationalize.

Note: For full details on distinctions between maturity levels and grading criteria, see the CPGA Approach Note.

