



Ensuring active local participation in FLEGT processes in Liberia

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This report provides a description of project activities, results and deliverable for the period starting January 24th 2012 and ending March 31st 2013.

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List of abbreviations

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CFDC	Community Forest Development Committee
CDA	County Development Agenda
CRL	Community Rights Law concerning Forestry
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FDA	Forest Development Authority
FLEGT	Forest Law Enforcement Governance and Trade
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
SAMFU	Save My Future Foundation
VPA	Voluntary Partnership Agreement

A. Introduction

The Liberian forest sector is in a big transition since the ending of the war in 2003. Logging and agricultural concessions have been granted by the government to multinational companies while the Forest and Land Laws are still in the reforming process.

In the reporting period the “Sanction +6 Roadmap” conference was held in Monrovia to discuss policies and regulations in the forest sector. A diverse range of stakeholders and actors in the forest sector presented challenges and possibilities for a way forward in the Liberian forest sector.

Despite well-crafted forest laws and policies capable of making sustainable forest management a reality in Liberia, the implementation of these forest instruments remain a challenge by the forestry governing body FDA. Additional challenges and weakening factors are that the FDA has an interim manager since August 2012 and that several people have been suspended since January 2013. Approximately 40% of Liberia’s forest has already been given out in concessions according to a research done by Global Witness. The biggest challenges that were expressed and identified were the overlap of different concessions and the different problems communities are facing in ensuring their benefits from natural resources.

Over the past years, the issuance of Private Use Permits to concessionaires some of whom already owed the Liberia governments in huge taxes claimed the attention of civil society organizations and concerned individuals even within the forestry agency itself. Early 2012 the NGO Coalition raised alarm about the issue which resulted to a moratorium by the FDA Board. A defiance of the FDA Board moratorium led in addition to proliferation of more PUPs exacerbated the problem.

The situation prompted SAMFU, Global Witness and SDI to draw the attention of the President of Liberia to the poor allocation processes, alleged fraud and corruption that engulfed the PUPs operation in Liberia. The president immediately requested an enforcement of the FDA Board’s regulation and commissioned an inquiry into the allegation. The FDA stopped all work in the PUPs on August 6th 2012. This was followed by a complaint of the Liberian Timber Union against the FDA to the Senate. SAMFU, SDI and Global Witness were asked to present their findings to the Senate on August 14th 2012. Finally on January 4th 2013 the President published an Executive Order and all companies holding a PUP license had to halt operations.

“The report issued by the Special Independent Investigating Body revealed that there have been massive fraud, misrepresentations, abuses and violations of the National Forestry Reform Law in the issuance of PUPs to the extent that this inter-generational asset has been severely threatened.¹”

B. Description of project activities, results and completed deliverables

This reports reflects on all activities implemented during the project life time from January 2012 to end of March 2013. SAMFU requested a no-cost extension of the project in December 2012

¹ Liberian President Issues Executive Order No. 44, Declaring Moratorium On Private Use Permits to Protect Nation’s Forests: http://emansion.gov.lr/2press.php?news_id=2472&related=7&pg=sp

and FAO agreed on this. Reason was that some trainings had to be postponed until after the rainy season and than a delay of payments in September 2012 caused adjustments in the timeline as well.

The main beneficiaries of this project were the Community Forest Development Committees (CFDCs). A CFDC is a ten member body, elected by community people within forest concessions. Their mandate is to communicate between the concession holder, local and national government authorities and the community members. Every CFDC must open a bank account in which 30% of the land rental fees are paid into, for which the effected communities are entitled to. They also mediate among the different stakeholders in case of any queries or community concerns regarding the companies operations. The CFDC should be part of negotiations of the Social Agreements, which is in reality not the case. In addition, they are also responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Social Agreements on which the company agrees with the community people. In most cases the ones signing these agreements are chiefs and elderly people. A huge Challenge is the illiteracy among those people. The signature is very often done by fingerprint and how well the content of the document is explained to the respective community people remains unclear.

The activities implemented include advocacy trainings for CFDC members in Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh and River Gee. These trainings were conducted in Buchanan and Zwedru cities. In Buchanan, the training was held on August 6th to 7th 2012. 20 members of two CFDCs in Grand Bassa were invited and 19 persons attended the training.

In Zwedru 39 persons from seven different CFDCs participated in the two day training. An experienced trainer facilitated the trainings together with SAMFU staff members.

The content of the training was to define advocacy work and the roles of an advocacy worker. The advocacy cycle was explained followed by the description of how to undertake a risk assessment. After the theoretical part the participants identified their own advocacy issues and developed a strategy including an action plan on how to address these issues. A detailed description of SAMFU's training methodology and how we ensured that theory was put into practice is attached as an annex to this document.

SGS held the training in Chain of Custody in Buchanan and Zwedru as well. The same number of participants who participated in the advocacy training participated in the CoC training in both locations. This training was highly appreciated by the participants and a lot of knowledge could be transferred. Next to this an important feedback was that the training needs to be longer than one day as the content is very complex and not easy too understand.

To support and promote the VPA process and raise awareness against illegal logging, 300 T-Shirts were printed with three different messages regarding the VPA:

- VPA = good forest governance. Stop illegal logging!
- VPA = benefit for all. Say no to illegal logging!
- VPA = good governance for the people. Ensure benefits from your forest!

The T-Shirts were distributed to the CFDC members, to advocacy groups in the three Counties and to local authorities. In addition, radio shows are raising awareness about the messages and the VPA process. The EU, FAO, ACP FLEGT and SAMFU logos are printed on all T-Shirts for visibility of donors and implementing partners.

SAMFU designed billboards in consultation with the field offices. The bill boards were produced locally in support of local businesses and planted in all three target Counties. They explain with

the help of graphics that communities have the right to benefit from forest resources and that the VPA will help to govern this process and that FLEGT licenses are combating illegal logging activities. The boards were highly appreciated by community members. CFDCs explained the message to them and this led to discussion about land and forest rights. Many confusions and questions could be answered in these sessions. SAMFU distributed 300 copies of simplified versions of the “Community Rights Law regarding Forests” to support the process of community knowledge on the subject of their rights concerning forest land. These copies are often used by CFDC members to explain community rights during meetings and to underline their mandate.

Description of project activities and results	
Overall Project objective: To support community, government and private sector participation in the implementation of the FLEGT / VPA process in three counties in Liberia	Summary list of results from the reporting period that contribute to the accomplishment of the overall project objective: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Information sharing about VPA / FLEGT processes between all relevant stakeholders on the Project Launch and stakeholder meetings 2. Awareness raising about VPA via T-Shirt messages, billboards and radio programs 3. Direct beneficiaries are mobilized by providing motorbikes and are able to disseminate information with all respective stakeholders 4. The wider population of the target counties receives continuous information about VPA processes through radio programs in English and local vernaculars. 5. CFDCs are strengthened in their advocacy capacities as well their monitoring skills and can perform according to their mandate
Objective 1: Community members are trained, have increased capacity and function as multiplier; trainees will forward information and their newly gained knowledge to other community members. Resources including motorbikes and gasoline are provided.	Motorcycles are provided to each head of CFDC and CBO in the counties. The focal person will be responsible to regulate the use of the motorcycle. This will be monitored through logbooks and monthly work plans developed with the focal person. All partnering CFDCs and CBOs signed the regulations about the motorbike usage and a waiver of liability. Platform meetings took place between CBOs to meet and to educate community members as well as other stakeholders concerning forest laws and development projects. The CFDC members in all three counties have been trained in advocacy skills, Chain of Custody process and monitoring and evaluation. They are able to plan, strategize and implement advocacy activities around community issues regarding the companies’ operation or social agreements.
Activity 1.1 Training of CBOs in advocacy.	Actions taken: The training manual is developed and available for all SAMFU staff members. The trainings took place in Buchanan on 6 th to 7 th August 2012 with 19 participants. The training in Zwedru included CFDC members from Grand Gedeh and River Gee as well as members of Arkondeh on 15 th to 16 th August 2012. In total 39 persons attended the meeting from seven different CFDCs. Small adjustments had to be made because in the period between proposal writing and project implementation two

	<p>more CFDCs in Grand Gedeh were established. SAMFU decided to include those groups into the project. In order to have enough financial means for this integration the training was only done in Zwedru and the participants from River Gee were transported to the training location.</p> <p>Results: Trainings are implemented successfully. The manual is available at SAMFU's office. Three project managers are experienced in facilitating the training course. 58 CFDC members are able to strategize advocacy activities. See training report attached. A strong advocacy strategy to engage companies and authorities for community benefit was developed in Grand Bassa.</p>
<p>Activity 1.1 Training of CBOs in chain of custody in partnership with the FDA and SGS</p>	<p>Actions taken: SGS conducted the trainings in Buchanan and Zwedru. In Buchanan 19 persons attended on August 8th and 39 persons in Zwedru on 17th August 2012. Topics were chain of custody process, pre- and post-felling steps as well as tax collection.</p> <p>Results: The training is implemented successfully. The participants gained a general understanding of the chain of custody process and the necessary steps around felling.</p>
<p>Activity 1.3 Training of CBOs in project management, monitoring and evaluation of projects</p>	<p>Action taken: The training took place in Buchanan from 21st to 22nd November 2012. In Zwedru the training was conducted from 5th to 6th December 2012. In total 48 people benefitted directly from this activity. The training was closely connected to the activities that were developed during the advocacy trainings. Until the time of the M&E training, the actions were implemented and these two days were used to reflect on the process and to evaluate the activities. It was a big learning success for the participants to directly monitor and evaluate their own activities and it helped to put the theoretical knowledge about M&E into practice, using their own experiences and examples.</p> <p>Results: A training manual is developed and the training course can be facilitated by three of SAMFU's project managers. Even in case of staff turn over the knowledge will stay within the organization. The participants know the basic principles of monitoring and evaluation. They are aware of critical issues and typical mistakes that often happen during planning stages (underestimated budgets for example).</p>
<p>Activity 1.4: Support platform meetings between CBOs to meet and to educate community members as well as other stakeholders concerning forest laws and development projects.</p>	<p>Action taken: The different CFDCs organized various community meetings to inform community members about their advocacy campaign, about their constitution or the process of opening a bank account. These meetings were supported and partly attended by SAMFU.</p> <p>Results: SAMFU provided motor cycles and gasoline on a monthly basis to assist heads of CFDCs to meet and educate other community members. By attending some of the meetings SAMFU supported the CFDCs engagement of local authority and underlined the partnership with CFDCs. The CFDCs are now meeting on a regular basis. They spread information among themselves and forward them to community members to ensure an active participation of the whole population.</p>
<p>Objective 2: Community members know about their rights concerning forests and natural</p>	<p>CFDC members are continuously forwarding their knowledge via radio programs in all targeted counties. They were informed about the current status of the VPA during stakeholder meetings in the counties and in Monrovia. Copies of the Community Rights Law concerning Forestry</p>

resources and can advocate for equal benefits.	were distributed and disseminated to community members. The messages of VPA as a process leading towards good forest governance and community benefits are reflected on T-Shirts and billboards. The CFDC and CBO members are well informed about VPA processes and about community rights concerning forestry. The wider population of communities within concession areas has access to information via radio programs and copies of the CRL. Sensitization is ensured through T-Shirt messages and big billboards which are placed at strategic locations.
Activity 2.1 Awareness rising about community rights concerning forest and land issues.	<p>Actions taken: Awareness was carried out through the Project Launch and the first stakeholder meeting. The CFDCs do awareness rising through the monthly radio program. 300 T-Shirts were distributed in all three Counties. The motorbikes are supporting the advocacy activities of the CFDCs and their community information meetings.</p> <p>Results: All relevant stakeholders (representatives of GoL, EU, target communities, partnering NGOs and local counterparts) are aware of the VPA and SAMFU's project. The people in the rural communities of the project counties are getting informed about their community rights concerning forest and land issues through the radio programs, T-Shirts and community meetings held by CFDCs.</p>
Activity 2.2 Coalition building will take place on County level between the targeted CBOs and as well on national level when representatives from the three Counties will come together.	<p>Actions taken: The Project Launch and stakeholder meetings in the counties and in Monrovia as well as the project closure were conducted. They gave time and opportunities for CFDC and CBO members to get to know each other and FDA representatives on county and national level. The advocacy and Chain of Custody trainings were very useful for an exchange of experiences among the different CFDCs.</p> <p>Results: A vivid experience sharing is taking place. The different beneficiaries are building coalition among themselves especially in Grand Gedeh, where six CFDCs are spread around the county. The relationship between local counterparts and government officials led to information sharing and an exchange of opinions.</p>
Activity 2.3 Four meetings with representatives of all major stakeholder groups to share information and lessons learned	<p>Action taken: Stakeholder meeting in Zwedru took place on April 28 2012. 22 persons attended the meeting. In Fishtown the meeting took place on April 30 2012. 13 persons attended the meeting. The meeting in Buchanan took place on June 7 2012. 16 persons attended. For the last stakeholder meeting participants were invited to Monrovia where CFDC members from the various counties will join other stakeholders (local authorities, FAO/EU implementation partner) to share information.</p> <p>Results: Information about VPA process and implementation is shared with all CFDC and CBO members. Each group develops a work plan which will be monitored by SAMFU's field staff in Zwedru, Fishtown and Buchanan.</p>
Objective 3: Community members have access to information about	Information is shared over radio in the three target counties. The CFDC members are assigned to forward information given during the presentation to their community members.

FLEGT	
Activity 3.1: Rephrasing all legal documents to a simplified version concerning the forest sector in Collaboration with FDA and other ACP-FLEGT implementing partners.	<p>Action taken: On three meetings between FAO, EU and implementing partners it was agreed that Green Advocates provides a simplified version of the New Forest Law which will be provided under this project. Green Advocates provided a first draft of the document to all implementing partners on the third networking meeting but never finalized the document. SAMFU requested a change of project deliveries with FAO because the non-availability of the simplified version caused delays in our project implementation. We produced 300 copies of the simplified version of the Community Rights Law instead and shared it with CFDC members.</p> <p>Results: The simplified New Forest Law is not provided by Green Advocates until the end of this project. In exchange, the simplified CRL is accessible to communities in Grand Gedeh, River Gee and Grand Bassa Counties. CFDC members are able to educate their community people about what is written in this law.</p>
Activity 3.2: Printing and distribution of 500 simplified versions	<p>Action taken: Printing of 300 copies of the simplified CRL. Results: Copies are produced and distributed among the beneficiaries.</p>
Activity 3.3: Monthly radio programs in all three Counties to inform about FLEGT processes to reach illiterate community members	<p>Action taken: Radio stations are chosen in all three counties. Information programs are done by the various CFDCs and CBOs on regular basis.</p> <p>Results: Information about FLEGT processes is available for illiterate community members. They are delivered in English as well as the local vernaculars. Radio is still the main channel of information distribution. Through the continued information over one year time SAMFU was able to educate community people about VPA FLEGT processes. People are calling during the program and their questions are enriching the dialogue and are a clear sign for community interest and participation on logging and natural resource management in Liberia.</p> <p>The radio was also used by the CFDCs to promote their specific activities during the advocacy work. As many communities are not reachable by mobile phone the information about meeting dates and places could be forwarded by radio.</p>
Objective 4: Monitoring, evaluation and visibility framework developed	<p>A logical framework was developed and is used as the basic monitoring framework. Evaluation forms are designed and handed out to participants after the trainings.</p>
Activity 4.1: Organize a project inception and close-out meetings with the EU Delegation and FAO representatives responsible for FLEGT activities as well as with relevant stakeholders.	<p>Action taken: The Project Launch was held on 29th February 2012. 25 persons attended the meeting including representatives from FAO, EU, government officials, other implementing partners, local CBO and CFDC member. The project closure was on March 21st 2013. 36 Persons attended.</p> <p>Results: All relevant stakeholders were informed about the activities and ongoing status of the VPA implementation and about SAMFU's project. The meetings helped to strengthen our network and to discuss general questions around the VPA implementation. The CFDC heads used the chance to talk about their challenges and obstacles. At the closing</p>

	meeting they also presented their success stories of their advocacy activities.
Activity 4.2: Final presentation of the project to relevant stakeholders during a one-day meeting.	Action taken: During the project close-out meeting the most relevant results of this project were presented to all stakeholders. Results: Representatives of EU, FAO, FDA, partnering NGOs, beneficiaries and selected guests are informed about the outcome of this project.
Activity 4.3: Establish a monitoring framework with specific criteria to measure project impact.	Action taken: A logical framework with verifiable indicators is established. A work plan is designed to monitor timely delivery of project activities. Results: Most of the planned activities are implemented in time. Delays in delivery become easily obvious and regulating measures could be taken in time.
Activity 4.4: Evaluate all workshops, seminars, trainings, or informational events sponsored through the project by providing qualitative evaluation forms for all participants as part of the impact monitoring framework.	Action taken: All trainings are evaluated by written evaluation forms and oral feedback. Results: The trainings were evaluated by the participants. The organization, venue, logistics and food as well as the facilitation and content of the training was rated as very good. The participants expressed their satisfaction with the delivered trainings.
Activity 4.5: Complete awareness raising and visibility activities	Action taken: Visibility was ensured on the Project Launch as well as on the stakeholder meeting. The motorbikes are marked with SAMFU and FAO and EU logos. The T-Shirts have the FAO, EU and ACP FLEGT logos as well as SAMFU logo on it. It was stated at every event that all activities were sponsored by FAO. Results: All actions are accompanied with visibility. It is obvious for the local population that SAMFU's activities are sponsored by EU through the FAO.

C. Contribution to national FLEGT objectives

The weakness and challenges of the CFDCs became very obvious during all meetings with the different stakeholders and as well on the “Sanction +6 Roadmap” Conference. This project is specifically designed to support and strengthen these groups. The main challenges identified were:

1. Bureaucratic obstacles: SAMFU is supporting the CFDCs in the process of opening the necessary bank account. Because they are doing this as a community group it requires much more administration and bureaucracy than it is to open an account for an individual. They have to write a constitution, bye-laws and statutes and inform the various communities within the concession area about it. Once the communities approve these documents, the CFDC members have to go to different Ministries to receive certificates. This cannot be done in the County Capital but must be done in Monrovia. Additionally to the difficulties for CFDC members to draft the documents they are facing

the challenge of not having access to any financial resources until the bank account is open. All activities that lead to the opening must be pre-financed. SAMFU assisted with technical advice during the process and was able to support one CFDC in Grand Bassa financially under a different project.

2. Little knowledge about the VPA process: The CFDC members were chosen by their community members. Some of them are illiterate and access to information is not sufficiently provided. SAMFU educated all CFDC members in Grand Gedeh, River Gee and Grand Bassa about the VPA process and its importance for the Liberian forest sector. Information about VPA is regularly updated and the next steps presented. The Community Animators are ensuring regular updates on the radio programs.
3. Insufficient and inadequate information about the operating companies (e.g. stumpage fees, export fees, land area fees, social agreements, and concession contracts): The CFDCs need regular information about the operational activities of the companies in their FMC or TSC. Unfortunately this information is not shared on a regular basis by FDA and sometimes the information provided is incorrect. These challenges were expressed by CFDC members during the stakeholder meetings. FDA staff explained about their procedures and promised to undertake more effort in providing data on time. SAMFU is providing the SGS statistics to the CFDCs every month for their information. This proved to be very helpful as their information is reliable.
4. Transportation: At the start of this project, the CFDC members had no means of transportation. They live in very remote areas in 4-5 hours walking distance from each other. With the help of this project SAMFU could provide one motorbike per CFDC including monthly allowances for gasoline and maintenance. This enables the groups to communicate among themselves, the different communities in the concession area and the respective stakeholders on company and authority side. In the long term the motorbikes have to be financed from the money the CFDCs are receiving from the companies once a bank account is opened.
5. Communication (among each other, to other CFDCs): Mobile communication to spread and share information is hardly possible. Network coverage is only given in bigger towns but not available in those areas where the CFDC members are living and operating. This is a huge challenge because all communities have to be informed about any legal step in processing the bank account and have to participate in any decision done by the CFDCs. Therefore, communication can only take place via community meetings. The motorbikes are an important positive change to mobilize people and to make the work of CFDC members more effective.

The direct beneficiaries of the project are members of 9 CFDCs in Grand Gedeh, River Gee and Grand Bassa. As each CFDC has 10 members there are 90 direct beneficiaries. From the date of proposal writing until project implementation two more CFDCs were established in Grand Gedeh. SAMFU decided to include them as they also needed support and to avoid conflict and unfair treatment among the CFDCs. This has led to more direct beneficiaries than we first planned. Not every single individual could participate in the training but we ensured to have at least three members of each CFDC in the trainings.

The indirect beneficiaries include all communities within the concession areas. This is an area of approximately 780,000 ha². SAMFU has been working for several years with community based organizations including Arkondeh in Grand Gedeh and River Gee Forest and Natural Resource Protectors in River Gee. They are benefiting directly as well.

Throughout the implementation phase until the moment of report writing many important relationships are built up. SAMFU could strengthen the network to other implementing partners. Synergies in this project but also in other activities are identified and a stronger cooperation is the result.

The relationship with EU and FAO representatives has intensified.

D. Description of lessons learned

During the project implementation SAMFU realized that CFDCs need a high level of sustained support to work effectively. Except for small support received under the AJWS project with SAMFU, most of the CFDCs are expected to operate without starting capital. They receive no support in the process of making them active. Not all CFDC members are literate and only few enjoyed higher education. This requires special attention during the trainings.

A general lesson learned is that the CFDCs have no contact among each other. It provides a great value of this project to give them the opportunity to meet with each other. The ToRs of the CFDC Facilitator are very useful and SAMFU considers it as a necessary position to increase communication among CFDCs and to establish a CFDC Union. However the resources provided to the Facilitator are too small to make him effective.

SAMFU attended the partner meetings and shared lessons learned with the other implementing partners.

The CFDC members expressed the need for trainings in accounting and bookkeeping. As soon as they receive money on the community bank account they are responsible for accountability and transparency of these funds. SAMFU will design a training module for their needs and include it in the next proposal.

The main stakeholder groups within this project are the CFDCs and FDA. It becomes obvious in every County and every community that FDA is not able to fulfill its mandate. This is due to several reasons including lack of resources and capacities. FDA staff was attending the advocacy training in Zwedru and many complaints from the CFDCs against the FDA were expressed. As FDA is the official body responsible for the forest sector in Liberia they must be involved in all mayor stakeholder meetings. In addition, local authorities are identified as a stakeholder group as well. The authorities on community level like Paramount Chiefs, Town Chiefs and Clan Chiefs are making the decisions in the name of the community. In this position they need necessary information to be able to make decisions for the benefit of the local population.

Other implementing partners of the ACP FLEGT program are stakeholders on national level in the implementation of the VPA. The EU and FAO are stakeholders on international level.

E. Visibility actions

²This data is the area of concessions which are connected to the different CFDCs.

All activities were designed according to the visibility guidelines. All presentations on the Project Launch, Closure, Stakeholder Meetings and trainings had the ACP FLEGT, EU and FAO logos on them. All handouts and minutes were marked with them as well.

The sponsorship of FAO and EU is mentioned in every radio show. The trainings were covered by local journalists from radio and as well from print media.

The T-Shirts and billboards are marked with all logos on them .

The motorbikes are clearly marked and they have the information of sponsorship on their number plates.

F. Actions not completed and reason for non-completion.

With the small above explained adjustments all action were completed as planned.

G. Summary of expenditures

Provide a summary of the budget used to date. Explain any changes in the budget expenditures relative to the budget forecasted in the Letter of Agreement.

Describe any proposed or required budget modifications.

Was the project able to leverage any additional co-financing or additional partnerships through the initial funding?

Budget summary: (example format)

Description	Total Budget	Expenditures during reporting period	Remaining budget
<i>Budget heading and budget lines – (use the same budget as defined in Annex 1 of the Letter of Agreement)</i>			
<i>(add more lines as necessary)</i>			

H. Annexes

Case study: SAMFU's training strategy: Put theory in practice!

The participants learned about the basics of advocacy including different tools like raising awareness, networking and lobbying. After a short problem analysis the group decided on one mayor problem, that both CFDCs were faced with. A huge challenge in the communities is due to bad roads especially the primary roads caused by operations of logging companies. The heavy trucks are damaging the road which is resulting in worse living conditions for the citizens in and around the concession area. The stakeholder analysis showed who is involved and which party has which interest and position. The participants identified the company as the target group of their advocacy. Local authorities, youth and women groups were noted as possible allies.



Stakeholder	Interest, Position
National gov.	- generate revenue - collect taxes
Ministry of Public Works	- want good roads - provide money, we'll supervise
Concessionaire	- transport of logs - as long as our trucks can pass we are ok
Superintendent District	- personal interest in good roads - I'm in line with nat. gov. will collapse any minute
County Superintendent	- personal interest - responsibility has district super
Commissioner	- personal interest to keep job - keep quiet
Chiefs	- personal interest in job - keep quiet
traditional leaders	- interest in good roads - we want to help in develop
Community groups	- good road - concessionaire 2m req for it - good road development - support community efforts
NGOs	

Stakeholder Analysis and mapping of interest and position of the identified stakeholders.

A joint strategy was developed including different activities to raise awareness about the issues within the communities. The training participants decided on the following awareness rising activities:

- Carry information about the road situation to local authorities and explain the negative impact on community people to them

- Play a drama through media and on community meetings to highlight some of the most influencing impacts
- Use media (radio and newspaper) to inform the public about the road condition
- Do announcement through the town crier
- Organize a sport event and use it to spread information
- Written communication about the negative impact will be send to local authorities (Superintendent, Community leaders, District representatives)

The group discussed how to manage a network with possible allies. Responsibilities and tasks were distributed among the participants and connected with a timeline.

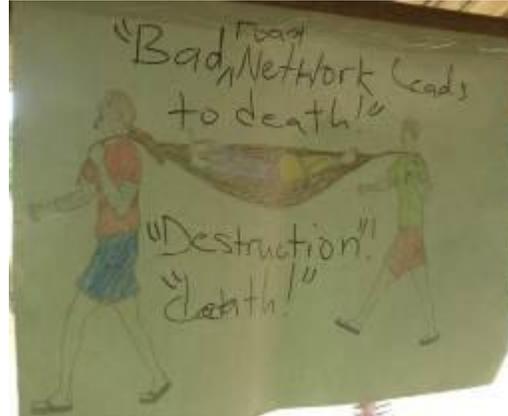
Info needed	Responsible
1. Lengths of the road	Morris/Alex
2. Number of bridges	Morris/Alex
3. Very bad places	Morris/Alex
4. Narrow places	Morris/Alex
5. Operating trucks	Harris
6. Frequency of trucks	Harris
7. How many people couldn't go to clinic in time?	Matilda - Worin Nora - Doe clan Alfred - Gorrwien Morris - Gish clan
8. Market product → how did the situation change?	Emily - Worin Marie - Doe clan Annie - Gish clan



Part of the road. Even 4 wheel drive vehicles could not pass.

The CFDC members had complete ownership over the process and took all responsibilities for the success of this advocacy campaign. They organized three mayor meetings. The first one took place in one of the communities along the road and representatives of all affected communities

joined the meeting. General information about the campaign was shared and the drama was presented. To illustrate the negative results of the road condition, posters were painted and could be seen all around the palava hut.



After the first information meeting, a second one was conducted and local authorities were mainly targeted. The District representatives understood the importance of the issue and positioned themselves on the side of community people. The sport event was used to reach a wider population. Again the drama was played and the posters used to illustrate the problem. Although the company was invited to all meetings and events, they did not participate. But after the CFDC raised awareness throughout all affected communities and the voices were getting louder and the local authorities were on the community side, the pressure on the company increased. As a final act the CFDC members together with community people went to the companies' office. Finally the company agreed to rehabilitate and maintain the road. The CFDS are monitoring these activities on a daily basis using the motorbikes.

Advocacy training in Buchanan, August 6-7, 2012
Training by James Tellewoyan, Robert Nyahn, Maria Bongard
Report by Maria Bongard

Agenda for the two days training:

Day 1:

1. Welcome, Introduction of trainers and participants
2. Introduction of SAMFU and the FAO funded project “Ensuring active local participation in the VPA FLEGT implementation in Liberia”
3. What is Advocacy? Definition of advocacy, roles of an advocater
4. Get started: The advocacy cycle
5. Define the problem and collect information.
6. Risk assessment regarding your advocacy plans
7. What does SMART means? Define your SMART advocacy objective
8. Stakeholder Analysis
9. Define your target group

Day 2:

1. Recap day 1
2. Advocacy tools: Awareness raising, networking, lobbying
3. Presentation from group works
4. How to write a good position statement?
5. Example of position statement for real life case
6. Collection of necessary information: identification, responsibilities, timeline
7. Communication skills for group work

Participants:

Number	Name	CFDC TSC A-2
1	Emily Baryogar	A-2
2	Mery P. Dolo	A-2
3	Ruth Gbaynkah	A-2
4	Oretha Robert	A-2
5	Roland Moore	A-2
6	Morris Foster	A-2
7	Stephen Krangar	A-2
8	Annie Glagbo	A-2
9	Alfred B. Gaye	A-2
10	Famata Johnson	A-2

Number	Name	CFDC TSC A-3
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11	Garsaweh B. Harris	A-3
12	Patricia Naleh	A-3
13	FanthBulbah	A-3
14	Morris Wheatoe	A-3
15	Norah Gibson	A-3
16	Alex Norris	A-3
17	Mary Gbasgee	A-3
18	Teddy Handson	A-3
19	Matilda Gbakelay	A-3

After the introduction of trainer, participants, SAMFU and the project the training started with the collection of expectations from participants. The following hopes and wishes for the training were expressed:

- What is learned should be implemented
- To learn how to ensure equal benefit sharing
- How to protect natural resources?
- How are resources exploited?
- How can we protect our rights?
- How can we access information from FDA/SGS?

It was explained that the training would partly cover all issues but focus mainly on teaching how to advocate for community rights and equal benefit sharing from natural resource exploitation.

Introduction to advocacy work

The definition of Advocacy was given, explained and discussed. The different possible roles of an advocater were presented and in detail discussed. What are advantages and disadvantages of the different roles? When is it useful to use which role? The participants actively engaged in discussions.

The participants were divided into four groups, joining always members of the same CFDC. They identified the biggest problem in their communities and answered the following questions to it:

1. Who caused the problem? Who is contributing to the issue/problem
2. What interests and motivations are the involved parties having?
3. Since when is the issue/problem occurring?
4. Who/what is affected by the issue/problem?

It turned out that all four groups identified the same road as their mayor problem. This road is leading from Boakey to Teemor Chiefdom and is heavily affected by huge logging trucks from Akewa and Tapeh companies.

The answers of the whole group were consolidated to joined problem identification. Both CFDCs want to advocate for a rehabilitation of this road as the current situation is causing multiple negative effects on the whole community living standard. The Government of Liberia was identified as a contributor to the problem with the interest of gaining revenue from forest resources and generating taxes. The companies' motivation to use the road is to transport logs to the harbour in Buchanan for export. The problem is occurring since the signing of the concession

agreement in 2008. The communities of Worrwien, Saywien, Doe Clan and Giah Clan are affected by this problem. Direct effects are that the road condition is very bad. Normal cars have problems to travel on the road and at times it is impossible to pass at all. This causes multiple negative effects on the community people:

1. As there is no clinic in the area, people have to be transported. Due to the bad road condition people cannot always be transported there in time. This is a problem especially for pregnant women.
2. Community people used to sell their own products on markets in other communities. Their income generated by these activities decreased because transportation is getting more expensive, sometimes transportation is not possible at all and markets cannot be visited as frequently as it used to be.
3. Transportation is getting more expensive. Due to the bad road condition the taxi companies are charging more money to transport goods and/or passengers. The maintenance need is higher and they therefore need to request higher prices.

Risk assessment

Advocacy work can be accompanied with certain risks to people engaged in advocacy but also to people around them. SAMFU staff gave some examples and own experiences of risks that come along with advocacy. The participants identified the following risks for their own advocacy aim:

Risks for you personally:

- People with different interests will have strong feelings about you
- Life can be taken away/threatened
- One can be jailed illegally
- One can be attacked physically
- Fear of moving around might be the effect

Risks for people around you:

- Children could be kidnapped
- Community will be frightened
- People around you feel different because of their position
- Family members will lose contact because of the advocacy

Defining SMART objective, Stakeholder Analysis and identification of the target group:

The meaning and importance of SMART of explained. Together a SMART objective for the advocacy case was developed:

In the next six months (August 2012 to January 2013) the road between Bokay and Teemor including the communities Geoweien, Doe Clan, Giah Clan, Saywien, Worrwien will be in a good condition for all seasons and vehicle use.

After the problem is clearly defined and the aim of advocacy work is stated in an objective, a stakeholder analysis must be done. Who has any interest in the particular issue? Who is making decisions?

The following stakeholders were identified:

1. Companies: Akewa, Tapeh, Lonestar Global Trade and Investment
2. Legislative

3. Government bodies: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Land, Mines and Energy, FDA, Ministry of Public Work
4. Local authorities: District Superintendent, County Superintendent, Commissioner
5. Authorities on community level: Clan chief, Paramount Chief, Town Chief, traditional leaders
6. Community Based Organisations: CFDCs, Youth Groups, Women Groups, local advocacy groups, elders
7. National and international NGOs

The different identified stakeholders were further analysed according to their interest and position in the case:

Stakeholder	Interest	Position
Companies	Transportation of logs, profit	As long as our trucks can pass, we are ok
National government	Generate revenue, collect taxes	We want quick impact and personal benefit
Local authorities	Personal interest in job safety	I will keep quiet, don't want to blame national government, because I want to be appointed again
Authorities on community level	Personal interest in job safety	I will keep quiet
Traditional leaders	We want good infrastructure	We are willing to support development
Community groups	We want good roads	Companies are responsible for maintaining the road
National and international NGOs	Community development	We will support community efforts if it fits in our programmatic focus

From the listed interests and positions, the target group could be identified. Also, possible allies and partners are noted.

Main target group: Akewa, Tapeh, Lonestar Global Trade & Investment, Global Logging
 Secondary targets: Legislatures, FDA, Agriculture Ministry, District Superintendent, Ministry of Public Works

Allies: Civil Society, County Superintendent, all legislators, chiefs, elders, youth, women groups

Advocacy tools:

Three advocacy tools were explained and discussed in detail: awareness rising, networking, lobbying. The meaning of each tool was discussed and the area of possible intervention.

Awareness rising can be achieved through different approaches. Media plays an important role. In Liberia especially radio is the number one medium to reach people even in remote areas. Newspaper, flyer and billboards were identified as possibilities for written communication.

Equally important are town hall meetings, face to face information, drama, music and dances. These forms of awareness bringing the advocater closer to the target groups and allow interaction.

The importance of networking was explained and positive examples of SAMFUs advocacy work in networks given.

Lobbying is possibly the most difficult advocacy tool for local community groups like CFDCs. Nevertheless the meaning and strategy of lobbying was described. The biggest challenges for CFDC members in the field of lobbying are access to decision makers and to relevant information.

To get familiar with the different tools and to develop an advocacy strategy, the participants worked in small groups with each of the tool. They developed different strategies on how to apply awareness raising, networking and lobbying in their own case:

1. Awareness rising about the identified issue (the bad road condition between Bokay and Teemor)

Group 1:

- Carry information, data, evidence about the road including responsibilities and timelines to local authorities
- Explain the importance of the road for security and health situation of the local population and access to markets
- The results of the bad road conditions must be made clear
- Poste a billboard
- Perform a drama to inform people

Group 2:

- Use the media (radio) provide information about the results of the bad road condition
- Inform the newspaper (Daily News)
- Announcement through town crier
- Organise a sport event to spread information
- Written information to government officials (District Superintendent, District Commissioner)
- Use music. Create an own song
- Use drama and perform it in der palava hut

2. Networking with other organisations

Group 1:

- Government officials on County and community level
- Strategy: first written communication about problem, causes and results. Secondly meeting
- Possible allies: youth groups, elders, women groups
- Use written letters, radio and newspaper to inform the general public and attract possible partners
- Contact Grand Bassa Civil Society Network as well as Liberian NGOs on Monrovia level (SDI, SAMFU)

Group 2:

- Ally with Clan officials and community leader as well as County officials and traditional leaders. Inform them first through written communication, than meet with them in person
- Youth, women and elders should be contacted and invited to network

3. Lobbying:

Group 1: Lobby for community participation in the drafting of Social Agreements

- The issue is that it is stated in the current Social Agreement that communities have to start own initiatives in community development projects. The company will then provide additional money to complete them. The problem is that the communities have no resources to start any development project.
- Allies could be the legislature, local authorities on community and County level, NGOs and County Focus Groups
- Target group are Akewa , FDA and Ministry of Agriculture

Group 2: Lobby for community participation in the drafting of Social Agreements

- Through face to face meetings with community representatives and company

Challenges for CFDCs in general and in advocacy work:

How to organise community meetings without resources?

The group had a discussion about how to organise community meetings without any available resources? According to norms and traditions in Liberia the host has to offer at least some small food to the guest. Some people are required to walk for several hours in order to attend these meetings and some beverages must be provided.

We developed the following solution to this widely discussed topic:

1. The CFDC members could travel from town to town to avoid long distance walks for the people. To provide food to for the participants, everybody should bring one cup of rice and about 25.-LD to cook a soup.
2. Meetings could be coordinated with town chiefs who have the necessary authority. He/she can tell the people to bring their contribution to the meeting
3. CFDCs resources must be transparent: all members are working on a voluntary basis. The financial means provided by the logging companies are meant to be spent on development projects and on food for community meetings

How to write a position statement?

The general use and meaning of a position statement was explained (detailed information in the hand-out). A possible position statement for the specific advocacy goal was discussed.

1. Summary of the most important points: the already SMART formulated sentences can be used. It is the purpose of the statement and all advocacy efforts:

In the next six month (August 2012 to January 2013) the road between Bokay and Teemor including the communities Geoweien, Doe Clan, Giah Clan, Saywien, Worrwien will be in a good condition for all season and vehicle use.

2. Causes and responsibilities will be explained:

- Bad road condition endangers community people in need of medical treatment. Especially pregnant women suffered in the past.

- Access to markets is getting more difficult. Community people used to provide their products on markets in other communities. Due to the road condition this is not possible in the same frequency. Community people have less income and markets fall short on products and services
- Transportation fees are increasing. Taxi drivers are charging higher fees because their cars need much more maintenance and repair work due to the bad road condition.
- The logging companies Akewa and Tapeh are responsible for the worsening road condition. The heavy trucks used to transport timber are transforming the road into muddy way full of deep potholes. This makes it impossible to pass by for smaller cars at times.

3. Propose solutions/recommendations

- What needs to be done? Who will be responsible for it?
- What arguments might be used against your proposal and how can you defend it?

4. Background information on the CFDCs.

At the end of the training we developed a list of necessary information to carry out the advocacy work successfully.

Information needed	Responsible
Exact length of the road	Morris/Alex
Number of bridges and their condition	Morris/Alex
Narrow parts of the road	Morris/Alex
Whose trucks are operating on the road?	Harris
Frequency of trucks traveling on the road	Harris
Number of people who couldn't reach the clinic in time due to the road condition	Matilda, Alfred, Nora, Morris
Market products: how did the situation change?	Annie, Mary
Impact on taxi business	Annie

Advocacy training in Zwedru, August 15 -16, 2012

Report by: James F. Tellewion,

Training by: James F Tellewion,

Agenda for the two days training:

Day 1:

10. Welcome, Introduction of trainers and participants
11. Introduction of SAMFU and the FAO funded project “Ensuring active local participation in the VPA FLEGT implementation in Liberia”
12. What is Advocacy? Definition of advocacy, roles of an advocate
13. Get started: The advocacy cycle
14. Define the problem and collect information.
15. Risk assessment regarding your advocacy plans
16. What does SMART means? Define your SMART advocacy objective

17. Stakeholder Analysis
18. Define your target group

Day 2:

8. Recap day 1
9. Advocacy tools: Awareness raising, networking, lobbying
10. Presentation from group works
11. How to write a good position statement?
12. Example of position statement for real life case
13. Collection of necessary information: identification, responsibilities, timeline
14. Communication skills for group work

Participants: A total of 39 persons participated in this workshop.

Number	Name	CFDC –FMC-F
1	George P. Desuah	FMC F
2	Solomon S. Kesseh	FMC F
3	D. Godfred Weah	FMC F
4	Ophelia Doture	FMC F
5	Edward S. Quayee	FMC F
6	Skinner W. Swen	FMC F
7	Oliver Toe	FMC F
8	Isaac T. N. Wayleemis	FMC F
9	Samuel G. Dunner, Sr	CFDC F
10	Quidan S. Breeze	F
11	P. Barjibo Nyepan	I
12	Kennie J. Wollow	F
13	Harry G Teaway	F
14	S. K. Soobue-Wulue	I
15	Othello S. Neoh	I
16	Betty Tarwo	F
17	Harrison Dweh	F
18	Thomas Z. Barleh	F
19	Henry N. Karmie	F
20	Cecelia Gerlay	CFDC F
21	Edward Teah	CFDC-K
22	Fatu Morris	K
23	James Bayon	K
24	James Borboi	K
25	David Garty	I
26	Jefferson Wyllice	F
27	Aloysius Farley	R
28	Abednego Zweh	R
29	Tailey N. Pouse, II	R

30	Alfred M. Tarley	G
31	Habakkuk Smeah	F
32	James G. Borbor	F
33	Rev. Moses Monroe	Arkondeh
34	Isaac K Jedo	Arkondeh
35	David K. Bowon	Arkondeh
36	Nathan Piah	Arkondeh
37	Amos Totaye	Arkondeh
38	John W. Teah	FDA
39	Soko Koryon	FDA

The training started at 9:30 AM with the singing of Krahn and Grebo songs by participants followed by prayer by one of the participants. Prayer was followed by self-introduction of participants, SAMFU staff and the project. Next was the collection of expectations from participants. Expectations of participants were:

- To get clear information on advocacy
- To learn and do information sharing
- Training will have impact on participants and communities
- Facilitators will be patient during the training process
- Facilitators will be audible
- Hand-outs will be given for the training

Following the collection of participants' expectations, trainers took some time to address each of those expectations. They promised to be audible, patient, and to give out hand-outs that were already prepared and available. They also hoped that participants would learn from the training and apply those learning in their advocacy for community rights and benefit sharing from natural resources exploitation.

Participants insisted on the setting up of ground rules. The following ground rules were set up:

- Phones on silent or switched off
- Respect time
- "No meeting in meeting" or side conversation
- Respect others' views
- Be recognized before speaking
- No sleeping in sessions

It was agreed that violators of the rule simply stand up and apologize to the rest of the participants.

Introduction to advocacy work

The definition of Advocacy was given, explained and discussed. The different possible roles of an advocate were presented and in detail discussed. The advantages and disadvantages of the

different roles, and when it is useful to use which role were explained. Participants were actively engaged in those discussions.

The participants were divided into four groups: CFDCs from River Gee and R/Gee Forest Protectors, Arkondeh, and CFDCs Group I and CFDC Group of II of Grand Gedeh County. Participants from Grand County were divided into two groups to promote participation. As much as possible, members of the same CFDCs were put in the same group. Two regional officers from the FDA also participated in the workshop. They provided clarity on the FDA operations during the discussions.

The following questions were then given each group to help them identify critical problems/issues for advocacy in the forest sector in their communities:

5. Who caused the problem? Who is contributing to the issue/problem
6. What interests and motivations are the involved parties having?
7. Since when is the issue/problem occurring?
8. Who/what is affected by the issue/problem?

The following problems were identified by each group:

1. River Gee FMC F, P, and Forest Protectors: No boundary lines demarcation of FMCs, TSCs and community forest. This problem is caused by the FDA and concession holders. The FDA has interest in raising more revenues from concessionaires while concessionaires' interest is to make more profits. The problem occurred since 2006. Communities adjacent FMCs F and P are affected because they are not getting their just benefits provided for in these concessions. Additionally, the lack of demarcation is causing conflict between concession holders and affected communities. As a result of this conflict, some concession holders are forced to suspend operations resulting to unemployment and poverty.
2. Arkondeh: Middle Island failure to sign social agreement (SA) with Gborbo citizens. The Ministry of Lands Mines and Energy contributed to the problem by giving license to Middle Island Inc., to operate in Gborbo community. The company has a business interest of exploiting minerals from the communities. It has delayed the signing of a SA until it has identified enough mineral (gold, diamond, etc.) to mine. The problem occurred since February 2012.
3. Grand Gedeh CFDCs Group I: Breach of social agreements (SAs) signed with communities. This problem is caused by Geeblo Logging Company, Euro Logging, International Consultant Capital Inc., (ICC) are not living to the terms of SAs signed with communities. For examples, Geeblo has stopped holding quarterly meetings and payment of benefits for human resource development. This is also the case with ICC since it signed SA with affected communities. Managers pay royalties to members of management team and local authorities and deny communities of their rights and benefits. These problems have existed since the signing of social agreements with affected communities. Communities that signed social agreements with these companies

are affected. Employment and development packages covered under SAs are not achieved resulting to lack of development in these communities and poverty.

4. CFDCs Group II Grand Gedeh County: Logging concession holders' failure to hold quarterly meetings with CFDCs. The problem is caused by Euro and Liberia Logging companies Inc. These logging companies are generating huge profits from which they pay royalties to some local officials and avoid living up to the terms of SAs signed with communities. Among other things, the SA calls for employment of 75% of work force (skill and unskilled) from affected communities, construction of an office in affected communities. This problem has existed since the signing of SAs with affected communities. Because these companies are not holding these meetings with CFDCs, the terms of the SAs are not being carried out. This is contributing to the underdevelopment and poverty in those communities. Members of the various communities that signed these SAs are affected.

Following the presentation of the four (4) groups, the presentation of the two CFDC groups of Grand Gedeh was consolidated. The consolidated version of the problem became: **Logging companies (Geeblo, EURO and ICC) breach of social agreements (SAs) signed with communities.**

Risk assessment

Advocacy work can be accompanied with certain risks to people engaged in advocacy but also to people around them. SAMFU staff gave some personal examples of such risk when he participated in advocacy work about the illegal and unsustainable exploitation of timber in Liberia during the regime of for President Charles G. Taylor. Those examples provided the basis for participants to identify the following risks to themselves and their families:

Personal risks:

- Those who are receiving royalties may mark us and want to get even with us
- Chances for employment with those companies in the future is very slim
- Physical attack
- Law suit and possible jail sentence

Risks to people around you:

- Family members could be harmed in any way
- Family name could be stigmatized
- Family members are denied jobs with that company

Definition of SMART objective, Stakeholder Analysis and identification of target group:

Before talking about SMART objective, the definition of "objective" was first provided with examples. Using those same examples, the meaning of "SMART objective" was then explained by the facilitator, followed by the development of several sample objectives in plenary. For example: Within 2 years (2012 -2013) all FMCs, TSCs and community forests in Webo and Glaro Districts, River Gee County would be clearly demarcated.

After the problem is clearly defined and the aim of advocacy work is stated as an objective, a stakeholder analysis must be done. Who has any interest in the particular issue? Who is making decisions?

The following stakeholders were identified:

8. Companies: Geeblo, EURO, ICC,
9. Legislature: Representatives and senators of Grand Gedeh and River Gee Counties
10. Government bodies: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Land, Mines and Energy, FDA, Ministry of Public Work
11. Local authorities: District Superintendent, County Superintendent, Commissioner
12. Authorities on community level: Clan chief, Paramount Chief, Town Chief, traditional leaders
13. Community Based Organisations: CFDCs, Youth Groups, Women Groups, local advocacy groups, elders
14. National and international NGOs

The different identified stakeholders were further analysed according to their interest and position in the case:

Stakeholder	Interest	Position
Companies	Wants to make more profits, evade payment of benefits to communities if possible	As long as they remain in business, they are ok.
National government	Generate revenue, collect taxes	We want quick impact and personal benefits
Local authorities	Personal interest in job safety	If I talk too much I may lose my job and royalties I am receiving from the companies
Authorities on community level	Personal interest in job safety	I will keep quiet and try to push for personal benefits
Traditional leaders	Wants to see infrastructural development in their communities	We will work with anybody willing to bring development in our communities
Community groups	Wants to work with companies to bring jobs and development to their communities	FDA is not doing much to bring logging Companies that are not respecting SAs signed with communities
National and international NGOs	Want community to develop and experience better standard of living	We will support community efforts if it fits in our programmatic focus

From the listed interests and positions, the target group could be identified. Also, possible allies and partners are noted.

Main target group: Geeblo, EURO, ICC, Middle Island, and FDA.

Secondary targets: Legislatures, Ministry of Land Mines and Energy, Agriculture Ministry, District Superintendent

Allies: Civil Society, County Superintendent, all legislators, chiefs, elders, youth, women groups

Advocacy tools:

Three advocacy tools were explained and discussed in detail: awareness rising, networking and lobbying. The meaning of each tool was discussed and the area of possible intervention.

Awareness rising can be achieved through different approaches. Media plays an important role. In Liberia especially radio is the number one medium to reach people even in remote areas. Newspaper, flyer and billboards were identified as possibilities for written communication. Equally important are town hall meetings, face to face information, drama, music and dances. These forms of awareness-raising bring the advocate closer to the target groups and allow interactions.

The importance of networking was explained and positive examples of SAMFUs advocacy work in networks given.

Lobbying is possibly the most difficult advocacy tool for local community groups like CFDCs. Nevertheless the meaning and strategy of lobbying was described. The biggest challenges for CFDC members in the field of lobbying are access to decision makers and to relevant information.

Following the discussion of the 3 advocacy tools in plenary, participants went back into their old groups to develop advocacy strategies for problems/issues identified earlier. Each group developed different strategies for each strategy (awareness-raising, networking and lobbying) for each problem:

1. Awareness rising about issues identified

River Gee FMC F, P, and Forest Protectors: Lack of clear demarcation of boundaries between FMCs, TSCs and community forest:

- Hold town hall meetings in major towns of affected communities
- Explain some of difficulties caused by lack of clear demarcation of FMCs, TSCs and community forest
- Explain the laws/procedure regarding FMCs, TSCs and Community forest demarcation

Arkondeh: Middle Island's failure to sign SA with Gborbo citizens

- Hold town hall meetings with citizens of Gborbo
- Explain the implications of not signing SA with Middle Island
- Gather citizens' views on this issue
- Build consensus on what to do about the issue

Grand Gedeh CFDCs Group I & II: Logging companies (Geeblo, EURO and ICC) breach of social agreements (SAs) signed with communities.

- Hold town hall meetings with all affected communities on this issue

- Explain the effects of this situation to citizens
- Explain the danger of not arresting the situation in a timely manner
- Explain that development packages under the SAs are delayed
- Build consensus on next course of action

2. Networking with other organisations

River Gee FMC F, P, and Forest Protectors:

- Government officials on County and community level
- Strategy: Write letter of complaint to the FDA outlining problem, causes and results asking for a meeting to find possible solution to problem
- Possible allies: youth groups, elders, women groups
- Create awareness on radio to inform community members and to rally their support as well as other partners
- Write SAMFU and Sustainable Development Institute (SDI) for support

Arkondeh:

- Government officials on county and local levels
- Strategy: Write a formal letter of complaint to the Superintendent outlining implications of Middle Island's operation in Gborbo communities without SA with citizens and suggest a meeting with the management of Middle Island
- Write SAMFU and SDI providing carbon copies of the above letter and asking them for support
- If first strategy does not work, do another letter of complaint to the Minister of Lands Mines and Energy and CC Legislative Caucus of Grand Gedeh County

Grand Gedeh CFDCs Group I and II:

- Government officials on county and local levels
- Strategy: Write a formal letter of complaint to the FDA complaining logging (Geeblo, EUROs, ICC)
- Create awareness on community radio to rally citizens' support
- Write SAMFU, SDI and Green Advocates for advice and support
- If first strategy does not work, do another letter of complaint to Legislative Caucus of Grand Gedeh County

3. Lobbying:

River Gee FMC F, P, and Forest Protectors: The issue is that in River Gee FMCs, TSCs, and Community forests are not clearly demarcated. FDA and concession holders excluded community representatives from the demarcation process resulting to overlapping concession boundaries/confusion. Community members are asking for re-demarcation of FMCs, TSCs and community forests. This may lead to the renegotiation of SAs where necessary.

- Allies could be the legislature, local authorities on community and County level, NGOs and other CBOs
- Target group are EURO, FDA, and Ministry of Agriculture

Arkondeh: The issue is that Middle Island is delaying the signing of SA with Gborbo citizens for nearly a year under the pretext that it is still exploring for large deposit of gold before it decides on the signing of SA. The lobby will be about bringing pressure to bear on Middle Island to negotiate and sign SA with Gborbo citizens.

- Allies could be the legislature, local authorities on community and County level, NGOs and other CBOs
- Target group: Middle Island

Grand Gedeh CFDCs group I & II: Logging companies (Geeblo, EURO and ICC) breach of social agreements (SAs) signed with communities.

- Allies could be the legislature, local authorities on community and County level, NGOs and other CBOs
- Target group are: Geeblo, EURO, ICC, FDA and Ministry of Agriculture

Challenges for CFDCs in general and in advocacy work:

While it is true that CFDCs in other counties lack resources to organize meetings, the situation with those in Grand Gedeh and River Gee Counties is different. Their main challenge is that they walk long distances to meetings from various villages not connected by motor roads. The project bikes are helpful in places connected by motor roads. For now, these CFDCs receive support from the American Jewish World Service (AJWS) to facilitate meetings and purchase of stationery. All CFDC members are now volunteering while advocating for community benefits from which they could be compensated in the future. Funds generated from logging companies are mainly for development projects and holding of community meetings.

How to write a position statement?

The general use and meaning of a position statement was explained (detailed information in the hand-out). Possible position statements for the advocacy goals were discussed.

1. Summary of the most important points: the already SMART formulated sentences can be used. It is the purpose of the statement and all advocacy efforts. Take for example, River Gee FMCs F, P and Forest Protectors' SMART objective statement: After 2 years (2012 to 2014) most FMCs, TSCs and Community forests in River Gee County will be clearly demarcated.

2. Causes and responsibilities will be explained:

- FDA and forest concession holders in River Gee County excluded representatives of affected communities from the surveys and boundary demarcation process
- Forest concessions are overlapping resulting to confusion and lack of community benefits
- Poor/lack of implementation of SAs signed with communities
- High unemployment rate among community resulting to poverty
- Concession holders (EURO Liberia and others) are responsible

3. Propose solutions/recommendations

- What needs to be done? Who will be responsible for it?

- What arguments might be used against your proposal and how can you defend it?

4. Background information on the CFDCs.

At the end of the training we developed a list of necessary information to carry out the advocacy work successfully.

Lack of clear demarcation of boundaries between FMCs, TSCs and community forest	
Information needed	Responsible
Which FMCs overlaps?	George Desuah, Edward
Which TSCs overlap?	Solomon Kesseh, D, Godred Weah
Which community forests overlap with FMCs/TSCs?	Aloysius Farley, Eward Quaye, Jefferson Wyllice
Why communities were not part of the demarcation process?	Beatrice Chede, Oliver Toe
How many SAs were signed?	Skinner Swen, Habakkuk Smeah
Middle Island failure to sign social agreement (SA) with Gborbo citizens	
Information needed	Responsible
Why is Middle Island still delaying to sign SA?	Rev Moses Monroe
Has Middle Island any plan to sign SA? If so when? If not why?	Nathan J. Piah
Is middle Is actually mining gold or prospecting?	David K. Bowah
How extensive are Middle Island activities?	Isaac Jedo
Logging companies (Geeblo, EURO, ICC) breach of social agreements (SAs) signed with communities	
Information needed	Responsible
Make available copy of SA	Edward Teah, Samuel G. Dunner
Number of quarterly meetings not held?	Thomas Baleh
Results of delay of quarterly meetings	Quidan S. Breeze
Aspects of SAs not being delayed	Abenego Zweh, Ophelia Doerue
Copies of earlier communications made on this issue without redress	Sobue Wulu, P. Barjibo Nyepan

Training report

Training: Monitoring and Evaluation

Location: Buchanan

Date: 21st-22nd November 2012

Trainer: James Tellewoyan, Maria Bongard, Abraham Kollie

Agenda day 1:

10:00	Welcome, introduction, agenda, expectations from participants
11:00	What is monitoring?
12:00	What do we monitor/evaluate?
12:30	Lunch
13:30	Exercise
15:30	Why do we evaluate?
16:30	End of day 1

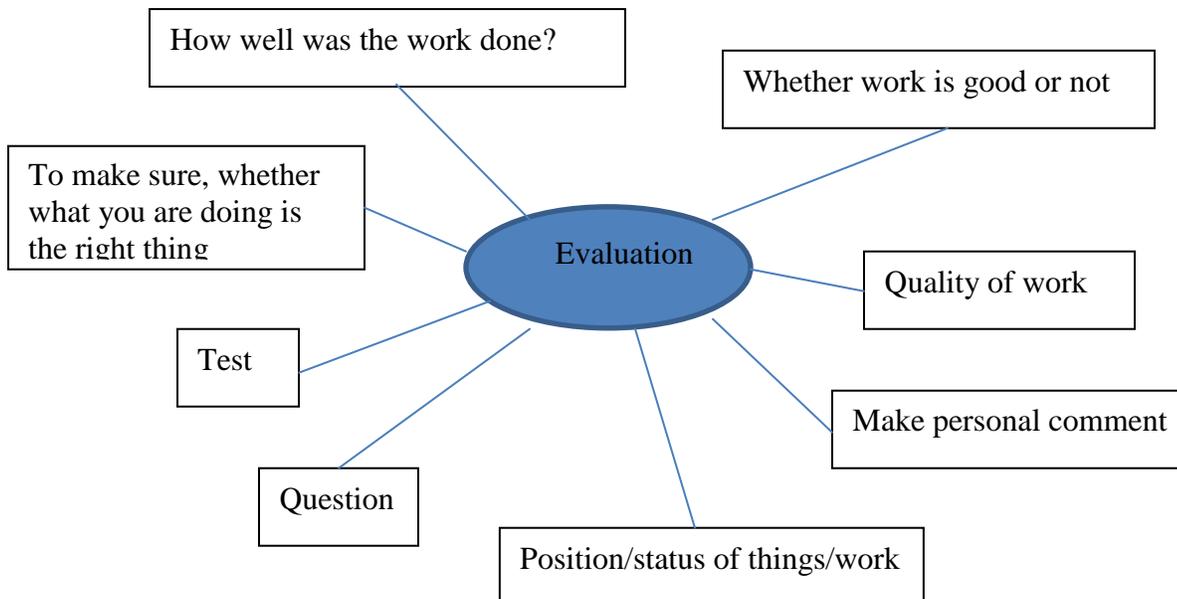
Agenda day 2:

9:00	Methods of evaluation
10:00	Evaluation of the advocacy project
12:30	Lunch
13:30	Evaluation of the advocacy project
15:00	Rich picture drawing/visioning
16:30	End of day 2

Day 1

After the introductory exercise the participants were asked to brainstorm about the word “evaluation”. What do they associate with it? Anything could be named whether it was a description or a feeling.

These were the answers:



The definition and importance of participatory evaluation was explained to the participants with help of the hand-outs.

What is participatory evaluation?



Participatory evaluation requires the participants of a project to take an active part in its evaluation. The people themselves examine the strengths and the weaknesses so that they can contribute more to the success of their own work.

All the information that you share is for you own benefit. The main purpose of the evaluation is to have a positive effect on your project and therefore on your own lives and on your community.

Monitoring is the systematic and continuous assessment of the progress of a **PIECE OF WORK** over time. It is a basic and universal management tool for identifying strengths and weaknesses in a program. Its purpose is to help all the people involved make appropriate and timely decisions that will improve the quality of the work.

Monitoring covers a wide variety of techniques and methods and applies to the management of finance, personnel, vehicles and buildings, as well as to the progress of **PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES** and the way the activities are carried out.

There are five strategic M&E questions to manage the impact of your project. During the evaluation you will formulate questions to check whether your project is relevant, effective, efficient and what the impact is and whether the whole project is sustainable.

Relevance - Is what we are doing now a good idea in terms of improving the situation at hand? Is it dealing with the priorities of the target groups? Why or why not?

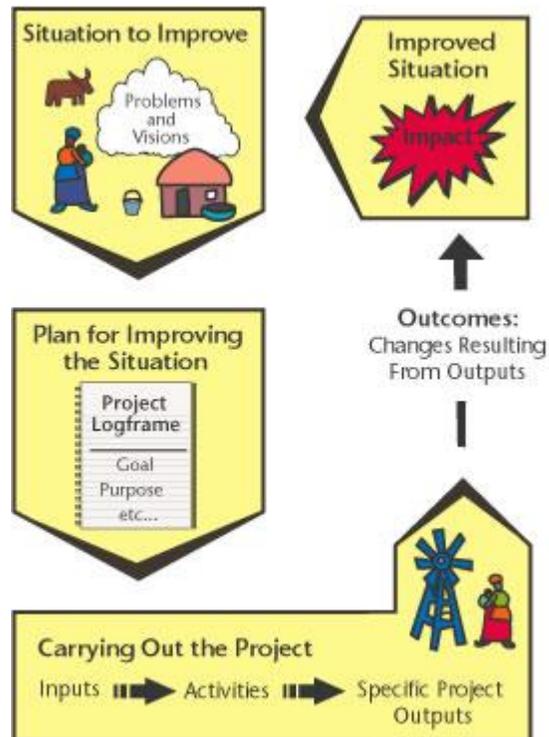
Effectiveness - Have the plans (purposes, outputs and activities) been achieved? Is the intervention logic correct? Why or why not? Is what we are doing now the best way to maximise impact?

Efficiency - Are resources used in the best possible way? Why or why not? What could we do

differently to improve implementation, thereby maximising impact, at an acceptable and sustainable cost?

Impact - To what extent has the project contributed towards poverty reduction (or other long-term goals)? Why or why not? What unanticipated positive or negative consequences did the project have? Why did they arise?

Sustainability - Will there be continued positive impacts as a result of the project? Why or why not?



What do we evaluate?

There are several aspects of projects which need to be taken into consideration for an evaluation. All of those were explained in detail with different examples given by the trainer.

We need to evaluate:

- Results
- Outputs/activities
- Sustainability
- Gender
- Lessons learned
- Risks
- Satisfaction
- Use of budget
- Next steps
- Implementation process

The group split into three subgroups to do a small exercise about evaluation. The groups were asked to think of several evaluation questions to the following topics:

1. Transportation to this training
2. Introductory exercise
3. Venue of the training

After collecting evaluation questions the group members had to write down an evaluation statement on flipchart paper. The five strategic issues relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability were on the mind of the participants while they formulated their questions.

All evaluation statements were presented to the plenum. The other participants could give suggestions which questions might have led to the specific evaluation statement. The learn effect was to realise that before any evaluation, the evaluator needs to gather information and to carefully formulate questions to receive important information.

The group was asked to express their lessons learned from the exercise and the following aspects were mentioned:

1. To ask questions to get useful information
2. Working tool to be effective
3. New ways of asking questions
4. How to formulate questions
5. How to evaluate
6. How to talk for people
7. To be exact
8. To go straight to the point
9. To now good and bad things of an issue
10. How to gather information
11. How to deal with community people

After the exercise, the trainer explained in plenum, why an evaluation is necessary and helpful in the first place:

- Achievement (seeing what has been achieved)
- Measuring progress (in accordance with the objectives of the programme)
- Improving monitoring (for better management)
- Identifying strengths and weaknesses (to strengthen the programme)
- Seeing if effort was effective (what difference has the programme made?)
- Cost benefit (were the costs reasonable?)
- Collecting information (to plan and manage programme activities better)
- Sharing experience (to prevent others making similar mistakes, or to encourage them to use similar methods)
- Improving effectiveness (to have more impact)
- Allowing for better planning (more in line with the needs of people, especially at community level.)

Day 2

The second day was mainly used to evaluate the advocacy projects which were designed by the CFDCs during the advocacy training. Most of the activities were already implemented so this training gave a good opportunity to evaluate the own project with a critical eye and to adjust the last implementation phase if necessary.

First, several methods of evaluation were explained:

There is a high variety of methods you can use for your evaluation. Each of them has its own advantage and disadvantage. You have to decide when which of the methods will be most effectively.

- **Written questionnaires:** the advantage is the standardised procedure. The collected data is easy to compare. But this method cannot be used for illiterate people or people who find it difficult to express themselves in writing.
- **Informal/oral interviews:** very useful to get an insight of what is happening on the ground. Individual people have the opportunity to tell you their story and you might use them as a case study to show the impact of your project. But the information from informal interviews is difficult to report and to compare.
- **Structured interviews:** the questions are prepared and the answers written down immediately. This allows good comparisons but leaves space for further explanations from the interviewees as well.
- **Group discussion:** saves time, as you can get the opinion of many people at once, but need to be facilitated well. Otherwise you might get not useful information or the group has too long discussions.
- **Observation:** needs good observation skills to ensure that you are following a situation as unbiased as possible. Can deliver a good insight and very useful data.
- **Case studies:** if you know of a particular person whose life was changed by the project implementation you could use his/her story for a case study. It gives life to your evaluation but needs to be supported by other methods which are more measurable and provide hard facts
- **Regular record keeping:** Some information about activities is recorded on a regular basis. Forms are often used for recording quantitative and qualitative information.

The following factors are important:

- Good form design will facilitate the accurate recording of information.
- Clear instructions on how to use forms should always be available. Instructions should include clear definitions of terms used on the forms.
- The form should contain enough information to be useful to the people collecting the data.
- The people collecting the data need to understand how the information will be used.
- The information needed to complete the form should be available without too much extra effort.

The format should be the same in the different forms and registers used.

The analysis of data

Analysis refers to the way the information is interpreted and how the meaning of the results is assessed. In a monitoring system, analysis can be done continuously, periodically, or irregularly, depending on the use of the information. The most important thing is to ensure that the analysis

is accurate and relevant, that it is understood by the people using the findings, and that results are available when they are needed.

Participants were asked to define possible problems that come along with evaluation:

1. There will be dissatisfaction
2. Crisis about leadership
3. Cheating
4. Bring confusion
5. Evaluation can discover mistakes
6. Not respecting other views
7. People are not honestly answering to questions
8. Personal interest affects process
9. Community people might hide information

To bring the theory directly into praxis, the group started to evaluate their own advocacy project. Three subgroups were formed and each group was looking into one of the following project parts:

1. Planning phase
2. Implementation phase
3. Budgeting

Before people started to work in the smaller groups, the aim of the whole advocacy was defined again clearly to make sure everybody is focussing on the same goal:

“The aim is to improve road condition from Bokeh town through the AKEWA concession and to have it well maintained by the companies and the government.”

The groups defined what was done in the different stages and what kind of challenges occurred.

Group 1, Planning:

- Planning is important, it is about what you want to do and how you want to do it
- Awareness is to get other people involved and to share information about your plans
- Different were used in the planning phase: meeting, stakeholder and situation analysis. The analysis was very useful to ensure that no stakeholder is left out of the process and that all key decision makers are involved
- All stakeholders were informed about the advocacy goal during the process
- All CFDC members were involved in the planning process. Everybody could give input, comments and recommendations
- At the planning stage, the costs were taken into consideration, but no detailed budget was done

Challenges:

- The input of CFDC members was weak, only few people actively participated.

Recommendation:

- The CFDC members need education and information about issues to enable them to participate more actively. A better preparation of meetings is necessary.

Group 2: Activities and results:

- The activities educated people

- Members of local government know about the impact of the bad road condition on community people (no access to markets, illness and death because no access to hospitals in time, higher transportation fees)
- People are now aware of the value of natural resources
- People are able to speak for themselves
- The drama educated them about the impact of the bad road

Results:

- The activities led to a reaction from local government. Local authorities are now engaging the company to fulfil their obligation
- The activities opened the minds of the people
- The football game united the youths, they know that they are part of the process and they feel involved
- Objective 1 is achieved: many people attending the meetings, they are informed about the issue
- Objective 2 is partly achieved: duty bearers are engaged on side of local government. They add their voices to those of the communities. But still law makers are anxious to come. More effort has to be done to engage company representatives. A peaceful atmosphere has to be created to discuss a way forward.

Challenges:

- Lack of funding (= insufficient planning)
- The bad road condition caused people to be late at meetings
- Company representatives were invited but did not come to the meetings
 - Next time they will receive written invitation with cc to SAMFU, FDA, EU, FAO, Superintendent, civil society

Group 3: Use of budget

- The budget was shared and discussed with community representatives and input was given
- The budget was managed well, it was audited by women and youth leaders
- There was no risk analysis done to ensure for contingency
- All the money was used correctly
- Receipts for all expenditures were given to SAMFU
- Additional money was requested twice by SAMFU which is a clear indicator, that budget planning has to improve

SAMFU's Community Animator translated the whole training into Bassa.



CFDC members are discussing and evaluating their advocacy activities



Billboard design for Grand Bassa:



Billboard design for Grand Gedeh and River Gee:

