

## END of YEAR PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT 2024

<b>Name of beneficiary of grant contract</b>	Efficient Research and Development Institute (ERDI)
<b>Name and title of the Contact person</b>	Daniel Nyan Gboe, Executive Director
<b>Name of Partner Organization</b>	Girls and Women Foundation (GWOFO)
<b>Title of the Project</b>	'Strengthening Local Structures to Increase Awareness and Sustain Interventions that Promote Women and Youth Land Ownership and Decision-making in Land Administration and Management' in Grand Gedeh County.
<b>Contract number</b>	300010006
<b>Start date and end date of the reporting period</b>	July 2024 – December 2024
<b>Project Duration</b>	July 2022 – August 2025
<b>Project Location</b>	Grand Gedeh County: B'hai, Cavalla, and Tchien Administrative Districts.
<b>Final beneficiaries &amp;/or target groups<sup>1</sup> (if different) (including numbers of women and men)</b>	1,682 Beneficiaries (Female – 911 & Male 771)

## **I. Project Description:**

ERDI with funding from ForumCiv is implementing a Land Rights project in Grand Gedeh County titled Strengthening Local Structures to Increase Awareness and Sustain Interventions that Promotes Women and Youth Land Ownership and Decision-making in Land Administration and Management. This project is intended to aid the achievement of ForumCiv's 5-year program Outcome – 3 specifically Outputs 3.1 and 3.2. The intervention will run from July 2022 to August 2025. The activities of the project are geared towards increasing awareness on women and youth land ownership, management, and governance in 5 communities of 3 administrative districts of Grand Gedeh through the activities that include Community Entry and Rapid Assessment; mobilization and training of beneficiaries; establishment of district land advocacy groups (DLAGs); joint project progress monitoring; DLAGs engagements activities; Awareness raising campaigns; and a host of smaller activities. The project aims to strengthen local structures in B'hai district (Toe Town), Cavalla district (Gboleken Town), and Tchien district (Kudah-Bye Pass Disco Hill Community, Toteyville Community, and Johnsonville Community) of Grand Gedeh County to increase awareness and sustain interventions that promotes Women and Youth Land Ownership and Decision-making in Land Administration and Management.

The goal of the project is that by 2025, targeted rural communities would have had transformed and inclusive customary system in which women and youth are effectively participating in land ownership, governance, and management in Grand Gedeh County. The strategic objective is to enhance communities and local structures knowledge and approach in promoting women and youth ownership, governance, and sustainable management of land. The project will reach 97 direct beneficiaries and 1200 indirect beneficiaries during the project period.

## **II. Executive Summary:**

For the period 2024 under review, the project commenced July 2024 to December 2024 (Quarters 9 & 10) which caused a set back for project implementation creating a gap in the chain of intervention at the community level. During this period, key activities for the intervention during the period included and not limited to Land Conflict Resolution using the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR); Local Authority Engagement on Women and Youth Land Rights; 16 Days Activism on Gender Base Violence; and Annual Joint Project Monitoring by various project stakeholders.

### **1. *Roundtable Discussion on Land Conflict Resolution: Alternative Dispute Resolution:***

The land conflict dispute resolution discussions using the alternative dispute resolution brought together representative from the Youth group, Women groups, Liberia Land Authority, Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Traditional Leaders. This occasion was used to settle Land dispute cases that were brought before the DLAGs in our project communities as it is also one of the keys functions of the DLAGs work plan. There were four Land dispute cases that was brought before the DLAG in three project districts, out of these four cases, two were successfully settled which is the case between( Mr. Wilmot Togeda and Madam Betty Kantue of Toe Town and Mr. Moses Dweh and Mr. Josiah Vorjolo of Todeyville Community), while two of these pending cases involved ( Joyce Saydee and her Siblings in Cavalla District, and the Monroe's Families in Toe Town, B'hai District, which is settled but waiting for Survey by the LLA) in B'hai, (Toe Town) Tchien(Todeyville) and Cavalla (Gboleken) these cases were held at the following locations, Toe Town Hall, Hope Alive Church of Christ Building in Jensenville and Gboleken School Auditorium respectively, with the total of 136 participants (female 79, and male 57), B'hai (female 35, male 23), Cavalla (female 39, male 15) and Tchien (female 5, male 19). The project successfully facilitated land conflict resolution through mediation and community engagement. It addressed disputes that often resulted in violence and social unrest, leading to agreements and a more peaceful coexistence. However, some land disputes proved more complex due to overlapping land claims and lack of clear documentation, requiring ongoing attention. A few cases were unresolved, indicating the need for sustained intervention.

However, ERDI recommends that the pending ADR Bill once passed into law by the 55th legislature be reproduced in simple Liberian English version and shared amongst community structures in to enhance their land conflict resolution efforts. It is also important for the project to survey and register few crucial land cases for women and youth and strengthen communities to amplify same for affected members especially women and youth.

### **2. *Local Authority Engagement on Women and Youth Land Rights:***

ERDI, Gwofo & DLAG, held a successful local Authority engagement in B'hai, Cavalla, and Tchien Districts (Toe Town, Gboleken and Jensenville, B'hai District commissioner compound, Gboleken School Auditorium and Hope Alive Church of Christ building in Jensenville respectively. The Local Authority engagement brought together representative from the Youth group, Women groups, Liberia Land Authority, Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Traditional Leaders, with the total participants of 199 ( Female 119, male 80), B'hai (Female 37, male 28), Cavalla ( Female 41, male 26) and Tchien ( Female 41, male 26). The project made significant strides in engaging local authorities to address issues surrounding land ownership for women and youth.

By fostering dialogue between community leaders and marginalized groups (women and Youth), the initiative aimed to break down traditional barriers that hindered land access for these groups. This led to the inclusion of women and youth in land ownership discussions, ensuring that their voices were heard and considered in decision-making. However, entrenched cultural norms and existing legal frameworks posed challenges to the full realization of land rights for these groups.

For future interventions, efforts should focus on strengthening policy advocacy and creating more targeted awareness campaigns about land rights, coupled with practical training on land ownership procedures for women and youth. Additionally, engaging legal experts to support land law reforms would accelerate progress.

### **3. *16 Days Activism on Gender Base Violence:***

The official launch marked the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism campaign. The event featured speeches from government officials, ERDI representatives, Book Before Boys Inc., and ForumCiv program officer, stressing the importance of collective action against GBV. Cultural performances(parade) and the unveiling of the awareness campaign materials were highlights of the launch, with 154 participants grant the occasion of the 16 days during program, with (female 90, male 64). While over thousand people gat the messages through radio show, community discussions and social media posts.

### **4. *Right Way Forward Methodology Refresher Training***

ERDI and GWOFO conducted Right(s) Way Forward Methodology refresher training, in Cavalla District and Tchien District. The Right(s) Way Forward Methodology was held on August 16-17, August 20-23 and it's brought together Representative from the Youth group, Women groups, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Traditional Leaders, etc. The Right(s) Way Forward refresher training was held in Cavalla, and Tchien Districts brought together 111 Participants, Cavalla District (Female 11, Male 7) and Tchien District (Female 60, male 33) attended the training which was held in Gboleken School Auditory, while Tchien training was held at AG Calvary Temple School Auditory and Mike Tuleh Wilson School Campus.

The "Right Way Forward" refresher training was conducted in Cavalla and Tchien Districts to enhance the skills and knowledge of local participants, focusing on improving community engagement, project implementation, and effective problem-solving strategies. This training aimed to reinforce the lessons from the initial sessions, addressing key gaps identified and ensuring that community leaders, educators, and community facilitators are better equipped to handle challenges within their respective communities.

Based on the RWFM, communities in cavalla administrative district are now constructing household latrines which were part of their community development plans developed. To date, there are 2 latrines constructed within cavalla administrative district as a result of the RWFM. As side from these construction works, the communities also engaged into hygiene and clean up initiatives within the communities which are critical aspects of improving public health, dignity, and sanitation in the area. ERDI recommends more community engagement with community stakeholders of B'hai and Tchien administrative districts to encourage and strengthen their efforts towards the implementation of their community plans using the RWFM approach.

Joint Project Monitoring

### **III. ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS**

During the period under review, the project experienced a major set back due to the prolonged time in the approval of funds for activities in 2024. Instead of 12 months, the intervention was rolled out for 6 months thereby creating limited time for project implementation. This situation seriously affected the quality of implementation and result against the 2024 annual planned submitted for the project.

However, below are the key activities and results realized throughout 2024.

#### ***1. Roundtable Discussion on Land Conflict Resolution: Alternative Dispute Resolution:***

There were four Land dispute cases registered with the DLAG in three project districts. Out of these four cases, two were successfully settled which is the case between Mr. Wilmot Togeda and Madam Betty Kantue of Toe Town and Mr. Moses Dweh and Mr. Josiah Vorjolo of Todeyville Community, Zwedru City. These cases were resolved in collaboration with the Liberia Land Authority and currently pending official survey. The remaining two cases pending resolution involve Joyce Saydee and her siblings in Cavalla District and the Monroe's Families in Toe Town, B'hai District. During the period, there were a total of 6 disputed meetings held funded by ERDI where each district conducted 2 alternative dispute resolution meetings within their respective district. During these meetings there were a total of 136 participants with female – 79 and male – 57. Statistically per district, B'hai administrative district (female – 35, male – 23); Cavalla administrative district (female – 39 and male – 15); and Tchien administrative district (female – 5 and male – 19).



**FIGURE 1:** LAND CONFLICT RESOLUTION BETWEEN MADAM BETTY KANTU AND MR. WILMOT TOGEDA HELD AT THE TOWN HALL IN TOE TOWN ON SEPTEMBER 7, 2024.



**FIGURE 2:** STAKEHOLDERS AT THE LAND CONFLICT RESOLUTION BETWEEN MRS. JOYCE SAYDEE AND HER SIBLINGS HELD AT GBOLENKEN SCHOOL ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2024.

Roundtable Discussion on Land Conflict Resolution: Alternative Dispute Resolution			
Beneficiary by Gender		Representations of Local Structures and Government Official	
Description	Total	Description	Total
Women	41	Traditional Leaders	5
Youth	66	Religious Leaders	4
Person with disabilities	3	Other Influential Leader	11
Men	26	Ministry of Internal Affairs	4
		Liberia Land Authority	2
		Ministry of Gender	1
		Community Based Organization	106

		Radio Journalists	3
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>136</b>

## ***2. Local Authority Engagement on Women and Youth Land Rights:***

The DLAGs supported by ERDI/GWOFO held 6 successful local Authority engagements in B'hai, Cavalla, and Tchien administrative Districts. Each district held 2 local authority engagements at the locations of Toe Town (Commissioner Compound), Gboleken (Gboleken School Auditorium), and Jensenville, Zwedru City (Hope Alive Church of Christ Compound). The Local Authority engagement brought together representative from the Youth group, Women groups, Liberia Land Authority, Ministry of Gender, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Traditional Leaders, with the total participants of 199 with female – 119 and male – 80; B'hai administrative districts female – 37 and male – 28; Cavalla administrative district female – 41 and male – 26; and Tchien administrative district female – 41 and male – 26. The project made significant strides in engaging local authorities to address issues surrounding land ownership for women and youth. By fostering dialogue between community leaders and marginalized groups especially women and youth. This led to the inclusion of women and youth in land ownership discussions, ensuring that their voices were heard and considered in decision-making. Currently, in these districts, there are increased call amongst community stakeholders for women and youth participation on land structures, governance, and ownership. Some of the local authorities include Commissioner Hon. Kelvin Kaye, of B'hai District, Hon. Madison Neewary, B'hai District Inspector and Johnson Dagbay senior advisor to B'hai District commissioner alone with local government officials who are now amplifying the importance for women and youth land rights.





**FIGURE 3: COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS AT THE LOCAL AUTHORITY ENGAGEMENT ON WOMEN AND YOUTH LAND RIGHTS HELD AT THE COMMISSIONER COMPOUND IN TOE TOWN B' HAI DISTRICT ON SEPTEMBER 24, 2024**



**Figure 4: Community Members and Stakeholders at the Local Authority Engagement on women and youth land rights held at the Gboleken school auditorium in Gboleken, Cavalla District September 26, 2024.**

<b>Local Authority Engagement on Women and Youth Land Rights</b>			
<b>Beneficiary by Gender</b>		<b>Representations of Local Structures and Government Official</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Total</b>
Women	60	Traditional Leaders	8
Youth	97	Religious Leaders	6
Person with disabilities	4	Other Influential Leader	16
Men	38	Ministry of Internal Affairs	6
		Liberia Land Authority	2
		Ministry of Gender	2
		Community Based Organization	155
		Radio Journalists	4
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>199</b>

### ***3. 16 Days Activism on Gender Base Violence:***



The 16 days of activism on gender base violence was officially launch on November 25, 2024. This activity was conducted in commemoration of the United Nation's global campaign aimed at raising awareness and advocating for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls in Grand Gedeh County with focus on Zwedru, Tchien administrative district. In line with the United Nations' global agenda on the 16 days activism against women and girls was launched under the theme: "Towards Beijing +30: UNiTE to End Violence Against Women and Girls". The launch was done in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender of Grand Gedeh County, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the National Civil Society Council of Grand Gedeh Chapter, the Rural Women of Grand Gedeh County, the Ministry of Justice, the Liberia Peace Building Office, ForumCiv Grand Gedeh Field Office, the DLAG of Tchien Administrative District, the Ministry of Education of Grand Gedeh County, etc. The Keynote Speaker of the launch was Miss. Dianna Decontee Tehn, County Coordinator for Book Before Boys Incorporated.

The launched was further by series of activities ranging from awareness raising campaign, media engagements, through the DLAGs routine community meetings and other community engagement activities as factored below.

***a. Launch Event (November 25, 2024):***

The official launch marked the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism campaign. The event featured speeches from government officials, ERDI representatives, Book Before Boys Inc., and ForumCiv funders, stressing the importance of collective action against GBV. Cultural performances, a panel discussion, and the unveiling of the awareness campaign materials were highlights of the launch, with 154 participants grant the occasion of the 16 days. With this total of 154 stakeholders who participated in the program, with (female 90, male 64).

***b. Community Discussion:***

A series of discussions were held across various regions to educate local communities on recognizing, responding to, and preventing GBV. These sessions provided participants with practical knowledge on supporting survivors and promoting gender equality.

***c. Public Awareness Campaigns:***

Throughout the 16 days, ERDI launched a multi-channel public awareness campaign, including radio broadcasts, social media posts, and distribution of posters and flyers in public spaces. The campaign targeted a wide audience, emphasizing the importance of ending GBV and promoting respect for women's rights.

***d. Educational Programs in Schools:***

Schools were engaged through educational programs aimed at young people, highlighting the importance of healthy relationships, respect, and gender equality. These programs encouraged students to become active advocates against GBV in their communities.

***e. Media Engagement:***

The media played a key role in amplifying the message of the 16 Days of Activism. Interviews with survivors, experts, and campaign organizers were broadcast on television and radio, and articles were published in newspapers and online outlets.



**FIGURE 5: PHOTOGRAPHS OF STUDENTS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS COMMEMORATING THE LAUNCH OF THE 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM IN ZWEDRU, GRAND GEDEH COUNTY ON NOVEMBER 25, 2024.**

<b>Local Authority Engagement on Women and Youth Land Rights</b>			
<b>Beneficiary by Gender</b>		<b>Representations of Local Structures and Government Official</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Total</b>
Women	46	Traditional Leaders	6
Youth	76	Religious Leaders	5
Person with disabilities	3	Other Influential Leader	12
Men	29	Ministry of Internal Affairs	5
		Liberia Land Authority	2
		Ministry of Gender	2
		Students / CBOs	120
		Radio Journalists	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>154</b>

#### ***4. Right Way Forward Methodology Refresher Training***

ERDI and GWOFO conducted Right(s) Way Forward Methodology refresher training, in Cavalla District and Tchien District. The Right(s) Way Forward Methodology was held on August 16-17, August 20-23 and it's brought together Representative from the Youth group, Women groups, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Youth and Sports, Traditional Leaders, etc. The Right(s) Way Forward refresher training was held in Cavalla, and Tchien Districts brought together 111 Participants, Cavalla District (Female 11, Male 7) and Tchien District (Female 60, male 33) attended the training which was held in Gboleken School Auditory, while Tchien training was held at AG Calvary Temple School Auditory and Mike Tuleh Wilson School Campus.

The "Right Way Forward" refresher training was conducted in Cavalla and Tchien Districts to enhance the skills and knowledge of local participants, focusing on improving community engagement, project implementation, and effective problem-solving strategies. This

training aimed to reinforce the lessons from the initial sessions, addressing key gaps identified and ensuring that community leaders, educators, and community facilitators are better equipped to handle challenges within their respective communities.

Based on the RWFM, communities in cavalla administrative district are now constructing household latrines which were part of their community development plans developed. To date, there are 2 latrines constructed within cavalla administrative district as a result of the RWFM. As side from these construction works, the communities also engaged into hygiene and clean up initiatives within the communities which are critical aspects of improving public health, dignity, and sanitation in the area. ERDI recommends more community engagement with community stakeholders of B'hai and Tchien administrative districts to encourage and strengthen their efforts towards the implementation of their community plans using the RWFM approach.

<b>Right Way Forward Methodology Refresher Training</b>			
<b>Beneficiary by Gender</b>		<b>Representations of Local Structures and Government Official</b>	
<b>Description</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Total</b>
Women	33	Traditional Leaders	6
Youth	54	Religious Leaders	3
Person with disabilities	3	Other Influential Leader	9
Men	21	Ministry of Internal Affairs	3
		Liberia Land Authority	2
		Ministry of Gender	0
		Community Based Organization	86
		Radio Journalists	2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>111</b>



3.0	3.1	Right(s) Way Forward Methodology refresher training in Cavalla and Tchien.	71	40	111	0	2	56	41	97	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
3.0	3.1	Establishment of the DLAGs Leaderships in both B'hai and Cavalla Administrative District.	0	0	0	0	0	7	11	18	0	0	4	5	9	0	0
3.0	3.1	Mobilization & Training of Project Stakeholders in women and youth land rights Promotion.	0	0	0	0	0	19	31	50	1	2	20	27	47	2	1
3.0	3.1	Annual Refresher Training for the DLAGS Leaderships	0	0	0	0	0	16	17	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			<b>359</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>1,592</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

### ***6. Joint Project Progress Monitoring***

ERDI supported the joint progress monitoring by key stakeholders of the project's implementation. The joint monitoring was conducted in the 3 administrative districts to include B'hai (Toe Town), Cavalla (Gboleken), and Tchien (Disco Hill and Todeyville communities). Participating in the joint monitoring were Hon. P.J. Freeman, the Land Commissioner of Grand Gedeh County (Liberia Land Authority), Mr. Aaron Garziah the Monitoring Evaluation and Learning Officer of ERDI, and Jessica David of GWOFO. The joint monitoring assessed the level of community participation in the project; their ownership of the project; linkages of the project beneficiary with responsibilities government parties; achievements made so far; as well as the potentialities of the sustainability of the project. The joint monitoring was led by 3 key monitors (female – 1 & male – 2) which lasted for the period of 3 days (November 26 – 28, 2024). A total of 23 District Land Advocacy Group (DLAG) members were present during the study, which constitute 85% while 4 District Land Advocacy Group (DLAG) members were absent during the study which constitute 15% due to some busy engagement as stated by those chairpersons. Reflecting the geographical distribution of the groups across the three Districts in the County, A total



of 23 District Land Advocacy Group (DLAG) members were interviewed in Cavalla, Tchien and B-hai Districts (9, 5 and 9 respondents respectively from the 3 administrative Districts).

The District Land Advocacy Groups (DLAGs) were trained and mentored and have developed and implementing their own community plans including creating awareness, peer to peer, house to house effective engagement on women and youth inclusion on land governance and management at family and community levels which have helped in fostering their access, ownership and control for sustainable use of their land.

The findings revealed that 87% of the training and mentorship provided, helped District Land Advocacy Group (DLAG) members effectively used the training and the mentorship to engage community dwellers on women and youth land rights, how women and girls should be equally treated with their male's counterpart. Due to the training and mentorship provided for the District Land Advocacy Group (DLAG) in Cavalla, Tchien and B-hai Districts, the District Land Advocacy Group (DLAG) has now been seen as the lead in resolving land matters/conflicts in the project districts. They explained resolving many land cases among women, youth and other community members since the establishment of the District Land Advocacy Group where some women were being called by their family members for their own share of the family land (e.g. Senewen and Boa towns). As a result of ERDI and the Liberia Land Authority (LLA) taking actions to addressing women and youth land rights, gender equality and sustainable use of their environment, women and youth are now placed on land committees for example, Todeyville community in Zwedru City, Tchien District have 5 women, and 5 youth placed on the 15 members land committee established. The research finds out that there were not much done in addressing the issue regarding generating income to support their works and to keep the involvement of community dwellers by



establishing and supporting their Village Savings Loan Association (VSLA) and their continuing engagement with community dwellers (on women and youth land rights as the means of sustaining their strategies advocacy plans developed).

#### IV. APPROACH EFFECTIVENESS



**FIGURE 8: THE CONDUCT OF THE JOINT PROJECT PROGRESS MONITORING EXERCISES IN GBOLEKEN, CAVALLA ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT (LEFT) AND TODEYVILLE, TCHIEN ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT (RIGHT).**

We want to thank ForumCiv so far for the high level of partnership. The tools such as the RWF, methods, and strategies (community-led) effective and beginning to meet the desired outcome of the project or approach as seen with the Gboleken Community where the community is now leading the construction of latrines and increasing awareness on hygiene practices.

We have realized that the DLAGs are taking the project to another level by using the ADR approach while engaging in land dispute resolutions. Currently, there has been 4 successful land conflict resolutions involving women and youth parties conducted by the DLAGs in collaboration with the Liberia Land Authority. The DLAGs are now considered as a hub for community land conflict resolution and a channel for improved awareness raising on the Land Rights Act of 2018 by the Liberia Land Authority Grand Gedeh Office.

## **V. Cost Effectiveness**

The cost effectiveness of the project considering the resources budgeted proportional to the achieved result needs to be revisited for ERDI. Over the last 20 months of actual project implementation, we continue to observe the heightening of cost of goods and services which continue to reduce community visitations, awareness activities, follow-ups, etc.

- a. ERDI staff salaries remain very low coming from 2022 and this is a factor for violation of the labor law of Liberia against the minimum wage of US\$150.00 per staff member. This is also seen as a continued demotivational instrument for our staff who have dedicated themselves towards the implementation of this project amidst the high cost of living especially in the tougher terrain of Grand Gedeh since 2022. This situation sometimes contribute to staff absenteeism to seek additional sources of income. There's a need to increase staff salaries based on the time they are providing and considering the tough environment they find themselves.
- b. The quantity of gasoline and costs for motorbikes repair needs to be reconsidered. In 2024 there was 16 gallons of gasoline allotted for travel as well as \$100 for motorbike repairs. This situation caused reduce community visitations, awareness activities, follow-ups, etc. On the other hand, ERDI had to fill in the gap by seeking other sources just to ensure that the project staff go to the field and carry on their activities. There's a need for additional amount of gasoline and increment in the cost for motorbike repair to smoothly reach the project beneficiaries.

- c. ForumCiv team needs to be innovative by working with ERDI to design impactful community programs instead of restrict project funds only to be used on non-intended activities that has almost no link to the project or ERDI's communities. In 2024, up to \$10,000 was restricted which should have gone towards surveying conflicted lands that were resolved; income generation for vulnerable land victims; or organizational capacity of ERDI especially considering organizational sustainability.

## **VI. Partnership and Learning**

ERDI is working in partnership with ForumCiv at the national level and GWOFO as well as the Liberia Land Authority, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Gender, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and the National Civil Society Council of Liberia at the sub-national level. These partnerships are intended to strengthen relationships with sector actors while creating synergies to tap into expertise and experience of others to enhance the quality of implementation.

- At the subnational level, ERDI is working in partnership with the Liberia Land Authority who helps to facilitate mentorship for community members in understanding the Land Rights of 2018. As the responsible gov't authority for land matters, the LLA aided with the setting up of the DLAGs leadership and provided them additional technical support in land dispute resolution knowledge and skills. With support provided by ERDI, the LLA participated in the joint project progress monitoring in 2024 to assess the level of community involvement, outcome of the project since 2022, the project's sustainability, etc.
- As a co-partner, GWOFO is aiding the project in terms of community mobilization expertise, awareness raising by providing key messages of the project to the community on women and youth land rights, improving the DLAGs and others knowledge and skills in gender equity amidst their advocacy for women and youth land rights.
- At the national level, ForumCiv is supporting ERDI/GWOFO technical support around project management, compliance, sustainability strategies, resource mobilization, etc. These supports are strengthening ERDI's institutional capacity as a potent organization to successfully implement this project. This support is also enabling ERDI to strengthen the

sustainability approach of the project by ensuring community ownership and stronger linkages between the community and their land authorities of the county.

## **VII. SUSTIANABILITY**

As far as ERDI is concerned, the project is well on its path towards sustainability of key aspects of the project as was mentioned in the project design. The DLAGs established in the districts are currently leading land rights advocacy for women and youth throughout their districts. Traditional leaders and elders are now championing women and youth land rights and physically providing land for women and youth in their families.

The DLAGs are now considered as land advocacy and conflict resolution structures in the districts by the Liberian Land Authority. This effort has even seen a boost where the LLA official of Grand Gedeh, Mr. Freeman Paye assigned to the project since 2022 who facilitated some of the trainings for the DLAGs has now been promoted to the post of Land Commissioner of Grand Gedeh County. This promotion has created stronger bond between the DLAGs and the LLA of Grand Gedeh County.

More importantly, ERDI's 5-Year Strategic Plan (Jan. 2023 – Dec. 2027) carries Land Rights and Climate Change as a Major Program Pillar. This is a clear indication that ERDI is poised to mobilize resources to continue the implementation of Land Rights promotion for women and youth in Grand Gedeh and other parts of Liberia. Such resources will continue to target the established DLAGs and even create additional ones.

## **VIII. COORDINATION**

Coordination has been very great, and it has yielded a strong presence of ERDI and ForumCiv in the County. The Liberia Land Authority in Grand Gedeh has tremendously played its role throughout the year under review. Representatives from the Ministry of Gender has

also played a pivotal role over the last year under review. The office of the County Administration also continues to show their commitment through ensuring that the District Commissioners are contributing and working with the DLAGs. ERDI remains very grateful to the various sector actors. However, the coordination has created a stronger recognition and linkage between the DLAGs and key sector actors to promote the advocacy for women and youth land rights. As a result of the coordination, the DLAGs are now aware of their roles and responsibilities in the community, the county level government institution that is responsible to amicably handle their land matters, as well as processes or pathway towards acquiring and owning titleship to their land. ERDI is also coordinating with the Ministry of Internal Affairs where we provide quarterly updates on achievements and progress made in regards with the national agenda of Liberia.

## **IX. COMPLIANCE AND FINANCIAL REPORTING**

ERDI had worked tremendously during the period under review to ensure that the implementation remains in compliance with the agreement signed with ForumCiv. Very importantly, the compliance team provided monthly mentoring and coaching sessions with ERDI to ensure that processes and documentations were effectively in place during last year. The compliance and reporting sessions conducted with ERDI is also enhancing our ability to effectively manage bigger grants. Moreover, knowledge gained from the mentoring and coaching sessions is further disseminated to the DLAGs to strengthen their knowledge and skills in accountability and reporting. During 2024, there were no changes; operations remained in line with the annual plan to ensure that the project achieve its outcomes. Additional cost was made available towards visibility, communication, and travel as contribution from ERDI to ensure that the DLAGs received adequate technical support for conducting their activities and making follow ups on conflict resolutions and attending traditional district activities where ERDI was invited including during ForumCiv's training for the DLAGs. The financial report for 2024 has also been submitted to the Finance and Compliance Team for their review and further consideration.

## **X. SUCCESS STORY**

There were numerous successes achieved during this year's intervention especially as a result of the alternate dispute resolution approach employed to toe mitigate land cases involving women and youth. Please see attached, one of the successes documented regarding a land dispute case involving Betty Kunta and Wilmot Togeda.

## **XI. CHALLENGES / LESSONS LEARNED**

During the year of 2024, the major challenge experienced was the prolonged period of the annual plan approval in order to kick start implementation which took half of the year. During the year under review, the interventions started in July 2024 which led to distrust within the beneficiaries and weakened the linkages between the project stakeholders.

Other challenges experienced has to do with costs and allotments approved for implementation in terms of gasoline, communication, motorbike repairs, etc. are far below practical reality especially for one of Liberia most difficult regions like Grand Gedeh. Allotments approved always run out before the end of the project.

We have learned that the remunerations for most of our staff on the project are below the minimum standard of the Labor Law of Liberia. This has demotivated the concerned staff members leading to absenteeism because they are engaged in searching for better opportunities.

## **XII. RECOMMENDATION**

We want to be grateful that most of the recommendations coming out of 2023 were approved and included in the interventions in 2024 such as the following.

- a. Commemoration of the World Environment Day in Grand Gedeh.
- b. 16 Days of Activism on Gender-Based Violence in Grand Gedeh.

On the other hand, we realized that funds were restricted during 2024 due to passing of such events or those who approved the plan didn't realize the importance of those activities. This year, we are recommending that we do as much as we can to avoid the restrictions of funds. ERDI should be given the leverage to provide clarity on the essentiality of planned activities and their contribution to the overall outcome of the project. We should design innovative approaches or activities that are linked to the project within the targeted communities. Some of these activities could include

- a. Ensuring that our beneficiaries of resolved disputed land conflicts have title to their conflicted land cases.
- b. Enhancing income generation for most vulnerable beneficiaries who are involved with land dispute cases.
- c. Organizational sustainability for ERDI who has diligently implemented this project since 2022. Some of our thoughts should be around what becomes of ERDI after 2025.

Very importantly, as the Liberian Government and Donor are working towards localization approach for the Liberian Civil Society Organizations, it is important that ForumCiv begin to follow suit fully. Under the ForumCiv partnership, decolonization of the grant to CSOs should be observed as this has the propensity for growth and development as well as self-reliance for CSOs. CSOs should be given to plan and lead their interventions based on their policy and experience with only guidance from ForumCiv.

### **XIII. CONCLUSION**

We remain very grateful to ForumCiv for this partnership. ERDI hold this project with high esteem, and we will commit ourselves, resources, and time to ensure that ForumCiv's goals under this cooperation agreement are achieved with high quality of implementation and subsequent sustainability of key activities of the project. We profoundly acknowledge the tremendous support and flexibility of ForumCiv Liberia Team especially the field support team in Zwedru for the high level of cooperation. The support is marketing our work and building up stronger momentum and resilience of ERDI in rural Liberia. We can't close this report without acknowledging the effort of our DLAGs' leaderships, the local authorities of Grand Gedeh County, our project team including GWOFO team, and importantly our Board of Advisors who have remained delicate and committed to date with high level of expectation management. Thanks to everyone 2024 was a wonderful year and let's continue to work together to conclude this intervention in 2025.



#### **XIV. CERTIFICATION**

**Sign By:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Nya Gboe', written over a horizontal line.

**Daniel Nya Gboe  
Executive Director**

**Approved By:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B. Dahn', written in a cursive style.

**Darlington G. Dahn  
Chairperson of the Board of Advisors**

