

Land for Life Initiative

Phase 2 Program Evaluation

Final Report

Samuel Tabory, Rita Yembilah, Hippolyt Pul, Mastewal Yami, Antsa Razafimbelo, Tarita Roy Choudhury, and Blake D. Ratner

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ACRONYMS

CoRe	Collaborating for Resilience
CILGF	Community Investor Local Government Forum
CPF	Confédération Paysanne du Faso
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DMSP	District Multi-Stakeholder Platform
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IPD	Institute for Peace and Development
LfL	Land for Life
MAP	Multi-actor platform
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PMAF	Plateforme Multi-Acteurs du Foncier (Multi-Actor Platform for Land Tenure)
PNSFMR	National Rural Land Tenure Security Policy
RRF	Rights and Rice Foundation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ToR	Terms of Reference
TWG	Technical Working Groups
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VGGT	Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security
WHH	Welthungerhilfe

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This work is dedicated to the people of Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone who are grappling with livelihood and food insecurity and for whom the Land for Life initiative is designed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHH has commissioned this program-wide evaluation to broadly document the outcomes of the second phase of the Land for Life (LfL) initiative in Burkina Faso, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ethiopia, as well as to generate lessons to inform the design and implementation of the next and final phase of the program. The evaluation uses both summative and formative approaches, designed to support WHH and partner staff to build their capacities to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of multi-actor platform (MAP) engagement through self-reflective participation.

PROGRAM LEVEL FINDINGS

Relevance

- Each of the LfL MAPs have clearly established timely relevance by creating spaces for inclusive dialogue and negotiation on land governance issues.
- The LfL MAPs have emerged as key spaces for programmatic coordination and alignment both within and across government and CSO actors.
- LfL MAPs are confronted by both opportunities and risks when considering potential expansion of their thematic focus.

Effectiveness

- Different forms of institutionalization present both opportunities and challenges.
- Ongoing decentralization of MAP platforms is seen as critical to long-term effectiveness.
- Government engagement / collaboration has been recognized as critical for achieving policy influence as regards both policy design and implementation.
- Increased media engagement is potentially an important area of work for each MAP, with implications for overall effectiveness.

Efficiency

- Strategic investment in human resources is a high priority for increasing and/or maintaining high levels of efficiency.
- Strong and regular communication channels play an important role in maintaining networking and coordination relations among MAP members.
- Funding requirements determine the feasibility of resource sharing and mobilization internally among MAP members, including at the community level.
- There are opportunities to increase efficiency by clarifying roles and relationships among multiple land reform actors and dialogue processes within a given national context, as well as among actors within MAPs.

Impact

- Country-level programs have documented substantive engagement influencing high-level policy processes.
- Changing attitudes and perspectives about the value of dialogue/exchange via MAP processes is recognized as a key impact.

- LfL MAPs are growing in influence and cultivating reputations as serious fora for the discussion of land policy reform.
- It is still necessary to achieve greater sensitization of gender equity in MAP processes and broader land governance processes.
- While progress has been made, there is still more work to do in achieving greater and more productive engagement with private sector actors.
- The work of accompanying ongoing implementation of land governance reform is recognized as a key frontier for achieving additional impact.

Sustainability

- An increased sense of co-ownership and co-leadership of MAPs (both nationally and sub-nationally) is seen as critical for MAP sustainability.
- Conversations about funding/resource mobilization, diversification, and innovation are ongoing and represent key considerations for sustainability.
- There are other resources, both internal and external, to consider beyond financial resources when it comes to MAP sustainability.

LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Lesson: It is important to strike a balance between sustaining focus vs. responding to emerging themes.

Recommendation 1: Country MAPs should establish a regular process for periodically reviewing priority themes, including scanning for sub-national regional priorities that may not obviously surface as national MAP priorities, to ensure continued relevance and to tailor specific outputs and outcomes that strategically and judiciously respond to top priorities for impact.

Lesson: CSO and government actors are both critical partners for MAP effectiveness but may need to be integrated into MAP structures in different ways at different times.

Recommendation 2: Country MAPs should have an adaptable strategy in place to identify priorities for government and CSO engagement that reinforce the MAPs ability to bridge within and both sectors, being open to different modes of engagement across actors at different times and/or in relation to different topics.

Lesson: Leveraging both institutionalization and loose network linkages contributes to effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

Recommendation 3: Each country MAP should review their strategies with an eye toward achieving continued impact and long-term sustainability, considering the complementary roles of formal institutionalization and looser network linkages among MAP members/collaborators, potentially considering differential categories with associated rights and responsibilities.

Lesson: Barriers to gender equality in MAP composition and decision-making continue to hinder progress in achieving equity outcomes.

Recommendation 4: Each county MAP should develop a specific gender action plan for both internal and external gender-focused engagement and inclusion, specifying efforts that will improve gender equity in MAP decision-making processes and leadership, in outcomes pursued, and in monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

Lesson: There are opportunities to sharpen capacity building for private sector engagement in land reform and policy implementation to support equitable outcomes for communities.

Recommendation 5: Building on private sector engagement strategy work already completed or underway, country MAPs should continue to move toward full implementation of those strategies, leveraging opportunities to proactively shape civil society and government relations with the private sector in more constructive ways, taking into account the needs of wide range of actors. This should be accompanied by measures to monitor and manage the risks/benefits entailed by private sector engagement, which can be used to reassess and reconfigure engagement strategies as necessary.

Lesson: MAP impacts take time and require different styles of funding.

Recommendation 6: Country MAPs should continue to explore and develop alternative funding scenarios (e.g., what might happen to MAPs with ideal levels of funding, medium levels of funding, and with low to minimal levels of funding; also considering potential funding sources). The learnings from these scenario explorations can then be used to inform clear fund development action plans that take multiple eventualities into consideration. Clear documentation and sharing of successes and challenges by each country team around resource mobilization should be encouraged to support cross-country learning and experimentation.

Lesson: The evolution and sustainability of MAPs at the country level requires flexibility in priorities and support from the international level.

Recommendation 7: In a third and final phase of support to LfL, WHH should work internally and with other funders to move away from a project-based approach to supporting MAPs, moving instead to more programmatic and institutionalized approaches with clear demarcations of authority and responsibility among a range of actors attached to the MAPs, emphasizing flexibility and adaptability in pursuit of long-term goals.

1. INTRODUCTION

While multi-actor platforms (MAPs) and other similar multi-stakeholder dialogue consultative processes have played a central role in land governance reform efforts globally for well over a decade, the question of how best to ensure their ongoing operation as long-term initiatives amidst broader evolving political and governance realities is an ongoing concern. Academic and policy literature on instrumental guidance for MAPs, as purposefully convened and constructed dialogue spaces, has largely focused on initial design considerations, specifically around dynamics of power, equity, and inclusion across participants. These themes of design guidance remain imperative to ensure that as MAPs grow and evolve, they maintain an ability to incorporate diverse and underrepresented voices. Less attention within practitioner and academic analysis has been paid to key considerations of ongoing MAP structure, management, and adaptation when thinking about long-term viability, maintenance, and evolution.

Considerations regularly identified as relevant to longer-term operation of MAPs include:

- That the benefits MAP processes seek to deliver are **not short-term goals**, often bearing fruit over long time horizons, which can pose challenges for maintaining commitment and active participation.¹
- That **dependence on external resources**, unsurprisingly, can render a platform vulnerable to potential dissolution when those external resources end, thus, making it necessary to think about alternative resources (broadly understood) to sustain platform activities moving forward.²
- That for platforms originally convened to support dialogue around proposed legislation or policy reform, the formal passage of laws or policies is only one threshold of possible success. The role of MAPs **evolving to support policy implementation** offers a different, often longer-term goal orientation focused on translating policy reform into tangible changes felt by communities.³
- That maintaining **coherence and integration** amidst evolving political and policy contexts—across multiple actors and with multiple institutional frameworks—is an ongoing challenge that requires similarly ongoing effort.⁴ Expansion of a thematic agenda to include additional issue profiles might be a component part of evolution amidst changing conditions.⁵

¹ Kusters et al. (2018). "Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of Multi-Stakeholder Platforms in Integrated Landscape Initiatives." *Environmental Management*, 62, 170–181; Dubbeling, M. & H. De Zeeuw. (2007). *Multi-stakeholder Policy Formulation and Action Planning for Sustainable Urban Agriculture Development*. RUAF Working Paper 1. Leusden: The Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security.

² Werner, J.F. (2006). "More Sustainable Participation? Multi-Stakeholder Platforms for Integrated Catchment Management." *Water Resources Development*, 22:1, 15-35; Dubbeling & De Zeeuw, 2007.

³ Schreiber, A. (2023). "Learning from the VGGT+10 Initiative." *Welthungerhilfe.org* [Blog]. June 29, 2023. <https://www.welthungerhilfe.org/news/latest-articles/learning-from-the-vggt-10-initiative>.

⁴ FAO. (2021). *Evaluation of Projects Related to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security Funded by Germany*. FAO Programme Evaluation Series, 05/2021. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization. <https://www.fao.org/3/cb4876en/cb4876en.pdf>.

⁵ Moodie, J. et al. (2023). Recommendations for Self-Sustainability of MAPs Post-SHERPA. SHERPA: Rural Science Society Policy

This program-wide evaluation comes near the conclusion of the second phase of the WHH Land for Life (LfL) initiative, and in anticipation of a proposed third and final phase of WHH international support to the initiative, such that the sustainability and longevity of the LfL MAPs are key concerns. The introduction to the evaluation report for the first phase of the LfL initiative (2017-2019) emphasized the complexity and urgency of land governance reform processes, globally and in the four LfL countries—Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone—as well as the potentially powerful role of MAPs as a relevant tool to support such reform processes. A major finding of this evaluation report is that such complexity and urgency have not changed, nor has the relevance of MAPs in accompanying those processes.

The passage of multiple pieces of formal land rights and land reform legislation across multiple LfL countries (as detailed later in this report) represent major milestones amidst larger processes of national land governance reform. But as is noted in the findings of this report and by LfL international program staff themselves, such legislative victories are a further launching off point, rather than an end point, in the long-term effort to win access to land rights and land justice at the community level, such that effects are felt in the lives of real people. This progress, moreover, is closely tied to ongoing efforts to achieve as of yet under-realized gender equity and inclusion goals as part of the overall LfL initiative.

Instead of understanding the LfL MAPs as having delivered on their full potential as a result of the contribution they made to such legislative achievements, the evaluation findings make it clear that the sustainable, ongoing functioning of the MAPs will be critical for accompanying the *translation* and *implementation* of new laws and victories in formal regulatory arenas into tangible results at the community level. This is in addition to the role of MAPs as vehicles for continuing to advocate for national and subnational policy and regulatory reform as necessary.

The LfL cross-country program is in the unique position of having supported MAPs in the four LfL countries over the course of two program cycles, totaling some six years of commitment. With a third and final program phase on the horizon, this report takes stock of the experience to date, tracks impacts and challenges as experienced by country MAPs, and directly considers the question of preparedness for long-term sustainability after WHH support to the LfL country MAPs has ended.

To meet these goals, Collaborating for Resilience (CoRe, headquartered in Washington DC) and the Institute for Peace and Development (IPD, headquartered in Tamale, Ghana) were tasked with conducting a second program-wide evaluation. The evaluation, using both summative and formative approaches, is also a learning tool that aims to support WHH and partner staff to build their capacities for implementation of future interventions through self-reflective participation.

2. EVALUATION SCOPE, OBJECTIVES, AND APPROACH

2.1 Evaluation Scope and Objectives

Based upon the evaluation ToR, the over-arching goal of this program-wide evaluation is to: *analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the strategic approach and strategic components WHH has used in the four implementing countries, and to determine the results that have been achieved while also taking stock of the resources and support that will be necessary to achieve MAP sustainability.*

Five main objectives were identified for this assignment:

- a. Assess achievements towards the expected results as defined by the LfL program;
- b. Assess (intermediate) outcomes that are directly linked to the results;
- c. Assess the pertinence and effectiveness of the overall LfL approach and its ability to adapt to changing conditions;
- d. Identify challenges, if any, that have impeded the effectiveness and achievement of results as well as map future resources and supports that will be needed; and
- e. Recommend actions to be taken for the third and final phase of the initiative with a specific interest in consolidating the MAP processes such that they are in a position to continue after WHH support ends.

Importantly, this evaluation report intentionally does not evaluate individual LfL country team performance. Country team experiences and country level validation exercises were critical components of the overall program-wide methodology, but the report is written with a view toward the performance, outcomes, and evolution of the LfL program as a whole, rather than individual LfL country experiences.

2.2 Evaluation Design

The program-wide evaluation design for Phase 2 intentionally replicates and builds on the approach used in the Phase 1 evaluation as a means of enhancing continuity in analysis and learning. As before, the evaluation methodology is designed to strike a balance between formative and summative evaluation approaches. The evaluation is designed to draw insights from the country level and international program-level, emphasizing cross-country, program-wide synthesis of findings. The evaluation employed the following phased methods and approaches:

- a. **Desk review.** Program management provided access to country-specific and international level documents, containing strategic planning documents (e.g., for communications, resource mobilization, and private sector engagement), interim progress reports and assessments, policy notes, activity reports, outputs, and other documents. These were critical for developing an understanding of program evolution in Phase 2, building on the experiences and outcomes from Phase 1. The desk review focused on identifying and using sources that are most revealing in offering evidence to address the evaluation questions (see below).

- b. **Participatory self-evaluation by country teams.** As in Phase 1, country teams undertook self-evaluation workshops. Drawing upon a generic framework for participatory monitoring and evaluation of multi-stakeholder platforms in landscape governance,³ the self-evaluation protocol addressed elements of “looking back” to identify and assess outcomes and “looking forward” to identify directions to improve future program performance. A future oriented view was particularly important in this second evaluation as the initiative looks toward its third and final phase with an interest in achieving a relative degree of institutional sustainability with respect to MAP processes in each country. Methods in the selfevaluation protocol include **outcome mapping** and **outcome evidencing**, to develop narratives of most significant outcomes, to map the causal connections that have resulted in these outcomes, and to identify the sources of evidence that may be used to validate these. The forward-looking components of the selfevaluation protocol rely on a degree of foresight analysis about anticipated changes, resources, and supports that will likely be necessary for the MAPs to achieve institutional sustainability.
- c. **Independent validation.** The independent validation was undertaken by evaluation team members, primarily using **semi-structured interviews** with individuals and groups, supported by review of **documentary evidence**. Identification of suitable key informants for interviews relied upon a simple stakeholder mapping process, building upon the information provided by country teams as well as the results of the self-evaluation exercises.

Across these methodologies, the evaluation aimed to embed a **gender, inclusion and diversity** lens in order to capture the differential impacts of various socio-demographic categories within and across the program, paying attention to internal program dynamics, the inclusiveness of MAP processes, as well as equity in program outcomes. The broader **capacity building** element of the evaluation effort focused on the roles of program team members in the participatory evaluation, developing hypotheses regarding key outcomes and lessons, and examining these through both country-level analysis and cross-country comparison.

2.3 Framework of Evaluation Questions

The overall evaluation process was structured to address **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and impact** (as in the Phase 1 evaluation), with the addition of institutional **sustainability** as a priority focus of the Phase 2 evaluation.

We identified priority “lenses” informed both by the progression of LfL between Phase 1 and Phase 2 evaluations, as well as by the forward-looking imperative to inform the design of an envisioned third and *final* phase of WHH support:

- A first priority lens included a heightened emphasis on **MAP operationalization**,

i.e., how are the MAP processes working in practice in each country and toward what end. This created space to focus on considerations of the *adaptive capacity* of the MAP structures and processes to operate in ways that maintain or increase MAP relevance and influence under *evolving conditions*.

- A second priority lens was a forward-looking concern for institutional consolidation and prospects for **institutional sustainability**. This concerns the medium to long-term operability and functioning of MAP processes after the sunseting of direct WHH funding and support. This adds an element of anticipatory **foresight analysis** that goes beyond leveraging formative evaluation findings to inform program adjustments going forward.

Table 1. Modified framework of evaluation questions

Primary questions	Subsidiary questions: addressed selectively, based upon available evidence
<p>Relevance To what extent is the initiative relevant in its design and approach in relation to stakeholders and beneficiaries' needs?</p>	1. To what extent is the initiative, both in its civil society and MAP components, addressing gaps in land policy reform and implementation? Has the MAP identified new topics or themes of relevance that were previously missing from land policy reform and implementation since the conclusion of Phase 1?
	2. To what extent is the initiative's approach addressing stakeholder's capacity and informed policy dialogue needs ?
	3. Are the activities and outputs of the program consistent with the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives?
	4. How has the MAP structure consolidated and/or adapted its relevance to the evolving country contexts (considering individual country's specific characteristics)? Has the MAP structure overall demonstrated flexibility in being able to respond to new information and adjust course when necessary?
	5. What should change , if anything, in the initiative's approach to better address beneficiaries' needs and/or increase MAP relevance? Do you anticipate the MAP continuing to be a relevant process moving forward (e.g., in 5 years, in 10 years)? What will likely affect its relevance?
<p>Effectiveness To what extent will the initiative achieve its objectives? (i.e., based upon evidence to date)</p>	1. How clear and focused are the international and national objectives of the LfL program?
	2. To what extent have the intended outputs and targets been achieved , or are likely to be achieved, within the timeframe of the initiative?
	3. How are stakeholders benefitting differently from the initiative (within CSO constituency and across different stakeholders) – including differences by gender, ethnicity, occupational group, geographic region, etc.?
	4. What internal program management and implementation factors have positively or negatively influenced the achievement of intended results?

	<p>5. To what extent are the MAP structures effective in delivering the national strategies and work plans? What factors, if any, outside of the MAP process and LfL implementation efforts have had an impact on delivering national strategies and work plans? Do MAP actors or LfL have the capacity to influence or mitigate external factors?</p>
<p>Efficiency To what extent are the capacities within the management and coordination teams appropriate to the achievement of the intended objectives? Are there specific strategic resources and capacities that are not adequately represented?</p>	<p>1. How appropriate are the international and national management systems, and distribution of roles, to the achievement of intended results?</p> <p>2. How have the quantum and/or quality of financial and human resources available for project implementation affected the achievement of intended results? Does the MAP process have a likely pathway to securing necessary resources to sustain itself post-WHH external support?</p> <p>3. To what extent is the initiative (through its international team) addressing the technical and management support needs of national staff and structures in delivering project results?</p> <p>4. How have the initiative’s activities been coordinated and harmonized with those of other initiatives/actors?</p> <p>5. How appropriate have the existing planning, implementation, and monitoring tools and cycles been to the achievement of the intended results? Have the management and coordination teams been able to take in information (internal or external) and adjust course based on new learning when necessary?</p>
<p>Impact To what extent have the intended outcomes been achieved? Have there been unintended outcomes?</p>	<p>1. Have capacities of civil society actors to engage in multistakeholder policy dialogue improved?</p> <p>2. To what extent has information flow on land related processes improved among land actors involved in the initiative? Are MAP actors demonstrating an ability to learn from and respond to new information?</p> <p>3. How has the MAP approach influenced the level of trust, openness and collaboration among different stakeholders?</p> <p>4. What differences are observed in the level of engagement of different actors in the MAP processes?</p> <p>5. In what ways has the MAP been able to engage in or influence policy processes?</p>
<p>Sustainability To what extent are the foundations for a sustainable continuation of the established MAP structures in place?</p>	<p>1. To what extent have MAPs been able to consolidate or institutionalize their processes and operations? Do you see a runway of likely continued operation into the near, medium, or longterm future?</p> <p>2. What type of systems will be needed to sustain efforts after formal external WHH supports ends?</p> <p>3. What types of outcomes or level of forward momentum do you think it will be necessary to achieve moving forward in order to keep MAP stakeholders engaged and to attract the necessary resources to maintain the MAP process post-WHH external support?</p> <p>4. Are there previous learnings or recommendations (explicit or implicit) that have yet to be accounted for or incorporated into future MAP process design and sustainability planning that should be?</p>

2.4 Data Collection Approach and Tools

Data collection drew upon the three approaches outlined in section 2.2, though with different degrees of emphasis in relation to the framework of evaluation questions (see Table 2, below).

Table 2. Sources of Evidence by Primary Evaluation Questions

Source of evidence	Category of evaluation questions				
	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Outcomes	Sustainability
Desk review	**	*	*	**	*
Participatory selfevaluation by country teams	**	**	*	***	***
Semi-structured validation interviews	***	**	***	***	***

Key: * low, ** medium, and *** high relative emphasis

Participatory self-evaluation reports were completed by all country teams, based on an intensive, one-day facilitated workshop in each country, followed by write-up. These reports, along with other materials consulted in the desk review, provided background to structure the validation interviews. Interviews were conducted with the following categories of respondents (though not necessarily all categories in each country):

- Staff of WHH working at the node of MAPs and the LfL program in program countries—supervisors and program liaisons.
- Staff of LfL implementing partner organizations/MAP members in program countries, such as program officers, technical officers and executive directors.
- Staff of international or national institutions or agencies familiar with the MAP processes and larger landscapes in which they are operating.
- Government officials and public servants participating in MAP processes in relation to LfL and its affiliates' work.
- Community level representatives who have engaged with MAP processes and/or MAP members who work particularly closely with community-level actors.

Table 3. Interviews and Group Discussions by Country and Gender

Activity	Country	Participants	Female	Male
Individual interviews	Burkina Faso	6	3	3
	Ethiopia	11	3	8
	Liberia	12	1	11
	Sierra Leone	10	1	9
	International	7	3	4
Group interviews / focus group discussions	Burkina Faso	9	2	7
	Ethiopia	No group interviews held in Ethiopia		
	Liberia	8	1	7
	Sierra Leone	37	18	19
Total		100	32	68

In total, 100 individuals were interviewed for this evaluation across the four program countries plus international program participants (see details in Table 3). Interviews in Liberia, Ethiopia, and Sierra Leone were conducted in person by members of the evaluation team while those in Burkina Faso were conducted remotely, due to security reasons resulting from political instability in the region. Despite an effort to achieve greater gender balance among respondents, the imbalance (over two-thirds male) reflects the composition of the current country teams and MAP participants.

2.5 Data Analysis

The **analysis phase** further engaged the country teams in a facilitated, remote dialogue to draw cross-country comparisons.

Evaluation team members responsible for each program country compiled a preliminary synthesis of findings in relation to the framework of evaluation questions, drawing upon the desk review, participatory self-evaluation reports from country teams, and validation interviews. Team members undertook comparative analysis to identify emerging themes, similarities and differences across the four program countries, along with emerging lessons at the program level.

A remote meeting with key program staff (WHH and country affiliates) was held to present the preliminary analysis for review, input, and validation, and again upon completion of the full draft report. This gave international and country team members the opportunity to comment upon initial findings, as well as lessons learned and implications for future program development. Follow-up comments received on the draft report were also taken into account in preparing this final revision.

The goal and objectives of the evaluation assignment motivated a **primarily qualitative** evaluation approach that, where possible, relies upon **multiple sources of data** to underpin key findings and recommendations. This generated grounded insights that WHH, affiliates, and program funders can use to inform strategy and direction setting, and that lessons relevant to others implementing and investing in MAP processes to support land and natural resource governance.

As compared to the Phase 1 evaluation, when implementation was still early in several countries, this Phase 2 evaluation analysis aimed to validate more substantial outcomes. As is true of multi-actor interventions generally, precise attribution of outcomes remains challenging, given the range of related activities that MAPs and their members might be undertaking. Rather than attempt to designate full attribution, our aim instead was to validate **credible contributions** of the program towards key outcomes. The evaluation team also sought to include **community-level perspectives** on outcomes by, in some limited instances, consulting directly with affected/involved community members, as well as speaking with MAP members who work particularly closely with community level concerns and actors, querying about most significant changes observed at the community level and the extent to which MAP processes may have contributed.

3. COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

3.1 Burkina Faso

Background

Despite conflicts over land ownership, the MAP in Burkina Faso plays an important role in convening different stakeholders on issues of land policy reform and management and developing effective strategies. Large tracts of land in Burkina Faso are unpopulated, and demands for land use from government, private businesses, and local communities have triggered conflicts over land ownership on multiple fronts. Government-community land encounters can result in forcible annexation and expropriation of lands from communities. Conflicts also occur between sedentary farming communities and transhumance herder communities and small-scale mining operators that encroach on lands suspected to have precious minerals without licenses or prior discussions with communities. Prior to the MAP, there was no central forum in which these diverse parties could engage with each other or air concerns jointly.

Existing legal frameworks provide a strong basis for equitable land governance. At the time of the 2019 evaluation report, three legal frameworks governed the ownership and management of land in Burkina Faso. The Law on Agrarian and Land Reorganization (RAF) set guidelines for the acquisition and management of public lands at the national, provincial, and local levels, and regulated land use planning and practices across the country. The Law on Rural Land Tenure regulates land tenure and management in rural areas by advocating for decentralized land management. It recognizes customary practices and authority systems as a starting point for land tenure systems and has been hailed as one of the most progressive examples of land management legislation in Africa. The National Rural Land Tenure Security Policy (PNSFMR) aims to guarantee equitable access to land, security of tenure, and peaceful resolution of land disputes. More recently, the Law on Real Estate Promotion stands against land grabbing and unfair use of land by real estate developers, protecting vulnerable populations and smallholder farmers. The MAP played an important role in advocating for the adoption of this law and contributed to its development.

Significant headway has been made to operationalize the legal frameworks. The Multi-Stakeholder Platform for Land Tenure (PMAF) is formalized, creating better ownership and accountability amongst members. The PMAF has been strengthened in various ways, including by hosting National Land Action Days, leading to a declaration of commitment from members, the decentralization of the PMAF in the Hauts Bassins region, and the revitalization of key governmental and CSO partnerships. There are ongoing efforts to address the conflict between what the laws anticipate as good practices and customary land ownership and management practices, which can pose challenges to implementation of the laws. For instance, while the Law on Rural Land Tenure grants authority to women to own land, customary practices do not always accept that. The Femmes Burkina Sans Faim advocacy campaign puts a spotlight on women's relationship to land access and tenure. Women's roles have also expanded with the active

involvement of the Association des Femmes Juristes du Burkina Faso in advocacy campaigns, policy dialogues and government engagement activities of the PMAF.

Despite some gains, critical obstacles such as security threats remain a challenge in expanding the reach of the MAP. Political instability as a result of coups in Burkina Faso and neighboring countries and security issues from militant movements makes implementation of laws and PMAF activities harder to maintain, even with decentralized operations and the presence of community embedded paralegals. In fact, with the coups, new Prefects came to power at the commune level, many of whom were initially skeptical towards dialogue around land matters. Security threats, particularly in the upper basin regions, have led to other forced transitions (such as relocation of land service offices), impacting general operations of public offices dealing with land issues. The ongoing security concern remains a key challenge for the effective decentralization of the PMAF as well.

Approach

PMAF has enabled CSO actors to focus attention on land security needs for the most vulnerable and has helped enhance the capabilities of participating members. In the 2019 evaluation report, it was reported that the contextual studies that WHH sponsored enabled MAP members to adopt a common agenda focused on protecting the rights of rural people to land and addressing the land security needs for the most vulnerable, including women and youth. Women have traditionally been constrained in their ability to own and use land in many communities in Burkina, and the MAP has prioritized addressing this by deepening its involvement through advocacy on securing access for women to productive rural lands. PMAF has revitalized various partnerships and CSO members are seeing significant enhancements in their capabilities, which in turn has optimized their mandate fulfillment.

MAP members have identified potential challenges and solutions to effectiveness and sustainability of the platform. In the past, while institutional representation in such meetings was more or less consistent, the individuals who represented their respective institutions as key interlocutors changed frequently due to broader dynamics of political instability. This represented considerable loss of institutional memory for the platform and the participating member institutions. PMAF has responded by making an effort to designate a permanent focal point within ministries to ensure continual collaboration. There is also a clear need to bolster the human resources of the PMAF, in the form of administrative and project management support, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of PMAF's performance and impact, in order to align with the scope of work to which the PMAF aspires. As for the long-term sustainability of MAP financing, PMAF is working toward acquiring status as a public benefit or public utility organization, which would allow it to receive state-subsidized funds.

Outcomes

The MAP in Burkina provides a space for inclusive dialogue on land governance issues and has developed a greater capacity for advocacy and citizen oversight in the field of land management. The MAP steering team, members, and coordination team participate are more

active, and have strengthened operations and the implementation of activities. In addition, the MAP has developed effective advocacy strategies that have led to significant results. Overall, the MAP is increasingly able to prepare and carry out high-quality information-communication activities.

PMAF's direct contributions to ongoing land policy reforms, along with on the ground outreach to rural stakeholders on issues of land security are seen as major triumphs. PMAF's collaboration with government stakeholders, especially the ministry responsible for urban planning and land matters and with the Transitional Legislative Assembly, has been crucial to advancing advocacy on land governance. PMAF members regularly engaged the Minister, invited representatives of rural stakeholders to these meetings, and encouraged them to voice their grievances, especially regarding land grabbing. PMAF played a key role in the development and adoption of the Law on Real Estate Promotion, through advocacy, drafting a note of concern on the issue of land grabbing, drafting a memorandum by CSOs on the issue, and hosting a press conference to raise awareness on the issue of land grabbing in rural areas. These actions demonstrated the need for the Law on Real Estate

Promotion and helped galvanize the ministry to draft it. This advocacy also included vital communications through radio broadcasts translated into local languages on the issue of land security in rural areas targeted at rural stakeholders. PMAF also contributed to the five-year evaluation of the Law on Rural Land Tenure.

3.2 Ethiopia

Background

The goals of the LfL initiative align with Ethiopia's national development plans.

The Home-Grown Economic Reform Agenda, and the ten-year development plan (2021-2030) indicate commitment to raise incomes and livelihoods of farmers and pastoralists and end poverty by making agriculture more productive and competitive. These development plans underscore the need to protect land rights to realize economic development through efficient use of land resources.

The interventions of the LfL initiative align with the Organization of Civil Societies Proclamation of Ethiopia. Ethiopia has had experiences with civil society engagements in MAP-like activities addressing HIV/AIDS, on food security during the famine, and on human rights and gender issues. However, such activities were stifled when the political climate tightened with a clamp down on NGO/CSO activities under the previous administration. The 2019 CSO proclamation allows the use of rights-based approaches in Ethiopia. The LfL initiative has taken advantage of this opportunity and provided a platform for CSOs to restore their networks and collaboration in policy advocacy on land governance. The continuous engagement of LfL on land issues and its experiences in working with the government have made it a highly relevant catalyst for other CSOs working on land governance.

The initiative created an opportunity for CSOs to collaborate with other stakeholders on relevant land policy issues and has helped address knowledge and information gaps. The

initiative identified challenges in land governance in Ethiopia and prioritized three thematic areas: 1) responsible and inclusive agricultural investment addressing the challenges associated with unclear mechanisms used in allocating land for agricultural investment and poorly designed and implemented compensation schemes that lead to forced evictions and conflicts; 2) legal recognition and protection of pastoral land rights in response to the influence of political instability and boundary conflicts that threaten pastoral livelihoods; and 3) creating inclusive and transparent land policy-making processes. Furthermore, stakeholders have faced difficulties in accessing up-to-date information about the context and status of policies on land governance. The LfL initiative supports evidence generation, information sharing and exchange, and capacity strengthening of institutions on participatory and integrated land use planning. The inclusion of actors representing CSOs and the government in the core group has been crucial in widening the space for dialogue and negotiation and increasing the capacity and knowledge of actors in policy advocacy on land issues in a broader context with limited spaces for such exchange.

Approach

The MAP approach has encouraged actors to engage in and collaborate on policy processes on land-related issues and to work together despite their diverse interests. The structure of the MAP took shape when individuals and/or individuals within organizations who were willing and committed to actively engage in land policy dialogues came together and established a core group of members. The design of the MAP brought together stakeholders with competing and, at times, conflicting interests to sit together and explore mechanisms that could lead to positive outcomes for all concerned actors at national and subnational levels. A growing interest in mutual learning, experience sharing, collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders working on environment, agriculture, climate, and gender has increased the relevance of the MAP in Ethiopia.

The decentralization of the MAP supported policy action at subnational levels. The MAP design has facilitated the participation of stakeholders in land reform processes who previously did not have a chance to engage in dialogue or sit together and share their views. The decentralized MAP has guided specific policy dialogues such as the Community Investor Local Government Forum (CILGF) and played an important role in making all voices heard, providing equal opportunities for stakeholders who have different degrees of power, resources, and influence. The MAP has influenced the culture of participation by promoting two-way communication in the dialogues and by ensuring equal rights among investors and local communities. The 2019 evaluation report noted the context of implementation when conflicts over land were at a peak and there was a concerted effort to address protests in the Oromia state. This led to the creation of a decentralized MAP in Oromia, a direct result of MAP activities encouraging dialogue at the subnational level. Tangible outcomes include local communities' increased employment opportunities in private companies, investments in rural infrastructure by private companies such as a water supply scheme and kindergarten. Sharing this experience with other regional states has been important in raising awareness on land policy issues. There are similar examples of increased private sector engagement and government policy commitments at the subnational level.

The LfL initiative in Ethiopia has developed and implemented a communication strategy improving information flow. Improved communication is noted among MAP steering committee

members, thematic working groups, and strategic support institutions. The communication and policy advocacy strategy (in draft stage at the time of the 2019 evaluation report) clearly shared the channels of communication and set mechanisms for monitoring learning among the target audience. The strategy played an important role in guiding the activities of the MAP towards influencing policy on advocacy issues including land law, environmental law and investment law.

Outcomes

The MAP has improved capacity of stakeholders to engage in policy dialogue and negotiation. Given that CSOs had been inactive for almost 10 years in Ethiopia prior to the political opening that took place in 2019, there was a consensus that CSO-focused trainings and capacity building would be necessary to keep up with the latest developments in policy processes and to understand the requirements for effective engagement in policy advocacy. The MAP approach helped stakeholders to discuss land policy issues with mutual understanding of the competing, and at times conflicting, interests of different stakeholders over land. The MAP approach has made it easier for stakeholders to bring different land issues to the dialogues with the hope of jointly solving problems and exploring win-win solutions for issues raised. Trainings provided on the MAP approach, responsible agricultural investment, land use planning, the land governance system of Ethiopia and other issues have strengthened the capacity of stakeholders in making informed dialogues.

The MAP has improved participation of local government, women and private sector actors in policy dialogue at subnational levels. Policy processes in Ethiopia have traditionally provided little attention to participation of women and the private sector. Engaging the private sector using a rights-based approach remained a challenge due to low awareness of policy provisions. Local governments have often engaged in policy implementation without adequate knowledge and information on policy frameworks relevant to land issues. Such constraints hampered policy implementation and led to poor outcomes and influenced the sustainability of agricultural investments. The LfL initiative has established close working relationships with the government and has collaborated well in implementing the MAP for influencing policy. This relationship is central for influencing policy and has also resulted in improved motivation, willingness, and commitment of government participation in policy dialogues at the subnational level. However, the efforts to establish a standing MAP dialogue space at the national level have not yet revealed a similar level of commitment or policy influence compared to the subnational level. This is attributed to constraints such as a limited culture of volunteerism on a long-term basis and time constraints. Moreover, there is still much work to be done to ensure gender parity in terms of access, inclusion, and decision making in the broader land governance space.

3.3 Liberia

Background

The unique history of land ownership in Liberia provides essential subtext to conflict in the area and underlies current and ongoing land reform efforts. Americo-Liberians, once settled

in the country, imported Western conceptions of land as property that can be privately owned and appropriated large tracks of seemingly unclaimed lands for their own use. To facilitate and legitimize this, the national law on land ownership created a multiplicity of legal frameworks that ambiguously distinguished between public, private, and customary lands. The political and economic elite, further used these land laws to expropriate lands from indigenous communities as public lands and granted them to private businesses as concessions for logging, mining, and plantations (primarily rubber and oil palm) and real estate development. This constrained families' and communities' access to land for food security needs, leading to tense relationships between government, communities, and commercial land users. Such developments contributed to tensions between the formal state laws governing ownership and access to land and the indigenous concept of landownership. The discontent over the expropriation of land from indigenous populations became one of the symbols of political and economic power imbalance that undergirded the 14-year civil war in Liberia. In recent times, there have also been increasing incidents of boundary disputes between neighboring counties, especially with respect to who owns what lands and therefore has rights to grant land concessions to commercial land users.

CSOs engaged in initiatives to promote land reform but the efforts were isolated and highly localized in many cases, and therefore incapable of achieving the higher-level legal and policy reforms that would bring about more equitable land reform. CSOs worked from different thematic angles, had small footprints geographically and in terms of mobilizing citizens' engagement, and were therefore limited in their capacity to make land reform happen on the scale and at the pace they desired. The initiation of MAP, with the support of WHH through the LfL initiative, enabled CSOs to pursue effective land reform in Liberia in a more concerted fashion.

Approach

The LfL initiative offered a platform for coalescing land reform efforts into more concerted interventions for promoting comprehensive land reforms. CSOs in Liberia have a history of working in coalitions and networks, building on their experiences from periods of civil war and the Ebola outbreak. Many were already working on issues related to land reform either directly or tangentially. Though the initial focus was to promote the passage of the Liberia Land Act (see below), much remains to be done to ensure implementation of the land reform process. This includes ensuring the operationalization of the law through legislative instruments, institutional arrangements, and established procedures leading to constructive engagement of all parties to ensure the law delivers on what it promises.

The MAP provides a crucial space to bring community members into the land reform agenda. It has led effective communication on land reform laws, making them more accessible to community members. This has enabled community members to be a part of the process of reimagining and realigning customary land ownership, access, and management processes. This has reduced a risk of creating dissonance in community perceptions of the new law and its mandates, which can hinder implementation. To ensure a breadth of expertise and interest represented in the MAP (both in terms of participating organizations and communities), the MAP self-organized into four thematic working groups: 1) customary land rights; 2) dissemination of land rights; 3) women, youth, and people with disabilities land rights; and 4) responsible

agricultural investments. Headed by different CSO actors, each thematic working group designs modalities for implementing their respective aspects of the MAP's agenda. This has enabled the MAP to have more focused approaches to addressing these issues.

Outcomes

Concerted action of the MAP contributed to passage of the Liberia Land Rights

Act. The Land Rights bill had been in Liberia's legislature for 14 years prior to formation of the MAP. Although there were various advocacy initiatives for passage of the bill, it wasn't until a concerted effort through the MAP that the Liberia Land Rights Act was adopted. A high point of the law is the reinvestiture of land ownership in communities and granting of rights to women and youth to own land and participate in land decision making, especially on customary land. It has also paved the way for the harmonization of prior laws and practices into uniform codes to guide land administration in the country. Follow through is still required to ensure the new laws are implemented and upheld, as they are not necessarily recognized by customary leaders yet.

Considerable trust has developed among MAP members, yielding increased openness to collaboration, even among private actors, and there is improved capacity of civil society actors to engage in multi-stakeholder policy dialogue. The MAP has established working group meetings to share best practices and lessons learned, enabling CSOs to participate in national level dialogues. Programmatically too, many CSOs have aligned their strategies. Communities are now more open to working with CSOs on land issues because they see them as champions of the change they have been waiting for. CSOs are increasing their capacity to engage in this work through trainings on accountability and transparency in land management; general management training; and training to improve financial resource management and accountability for local partners. There is also considerable improvement in information flow on land related processes among land actors involved in the initiative.

Engagement of the private sector in MAP activities has also increased considerably. The 2019 report noted that, though listed on the membership list, private sector representatives did not fully participate in the MAP due to a lack of understanding of the purpose of the MAP and prior negative history with CSOs. However, this situation has evolved and the private sector is slowly coming around to participate in the MAP, as they see it as a safe space for addressing land issues with communities. There is still additional work to be done in engaging the private sector in MAP activities.

MAP members are aware of the challenges of sustaining their efforts beyond WHH funding and are considering various institutional realignment options, including assessing decentralization as a tool to address this challenge. For instance, the MAP is considering cost-sharing arrangements through rotational hosting of meetings and discussing the pros and cons of various institutionalization options. The MAP Secretariat has also worked to diversify the funding base of the MAP through partnerships with a growing number of donor agencies that have come to see the key role it is playing in the land policy and management space. Decentralization of MAP operations beyond Monrovia also provides an opportunity to reduce operational costs. Compared to the context of the 2019 evaluation, the MAP Secretariat no longer has to travel repeatedly to the

nine counties covered under the decentralized MAPs. This increases efficiency in the use of the limited resources and promotes more sustainable modes of operations. In this way, MAP partners aim to be positioned to continue interventions beyond the life of currently funding.

3.4 Sierra Leone

Background

Land tenure in Sierra Leone remains unequal and tends to be conflict-inducing, though efforts are being made to address past inequities. Sierra Leone has abundant fertile land ideal for cultivation and ensuring food security; however, current land access and governance hinders access to such livelihood goals. There is an issue of conflating custodianship (usually held by traditional chiefs) with ownership and control, resulting in the lack of free, prior and informed consent of families being dispossessed of their land. Inconsistencies in the land acquisition process also impact land tenure security. This can result in a volatile land situation involving companies and local communities. Additionally, there is systemic subordination and marginalization of women (as well as people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups) from land access and use, making it difficult for them to even engage in subsistence farming. Nuances in land access between the urban region (Freetown) and other provinces and districts, and within families contain inequities that lead to struggles with spousal rights to land. To address and improve these circumstances, a Land Administration Project was established to promote efficient and accessible land administration protocols.

Although new national land laws have been enacted, there are many customary land laws that need to be codified into the Customary Lands Act. Absent this, it will be a significant challenge for people to assert ownership of ancestral and farm lands and ensure legal protections. Since the 2019 evaluation report, MAP members, government and various stakeholders have worked to improve the land governance environment with the formal recognition of land rights as an important standard of practice. This was headlined by the enactment of the Customary Land Rights Act (2022) which introduced and mandated the establishment of systems and processes to open the sector, remove land access barriers, and to safeguard related socio-economic activities. The new land laws also include the establishment of a National Land Commission (2022) that will streamline land sector processes while also spearheading the mapping and titling of systems.

Sierra Leone had prior experience with MAPs addressing land governance at a national level, mainly through efforts supporting implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT). Prior to the LfL initiative, there was a national conversation around land reform to make land accessible to more demographic groups. Since then, various events have taken place to establish and deepen the roots of the National Land Reform Policy and the VGGT mainstreaming process. These included reaching out to and training local communities.

Against this backdrop, the MAP approach is highly suited to address the country's pressing land issues. Some MAP members have previous experience working in a collaborative, multi-

stakeholder context. Since the launch of the LfL initiative, actors have expressed positivity around the functioning of the MAP pointing to good working relationships, resource pooling, and collaboration around Technical Working Groups (TWGs) as important conduits in delivering the initiative's goals. The decentralized MAP model has helped incorporate at least 30 CSOs and diverse ministries, departments and agencies in the platform and has served as a crucial space for clarifying and honoring VGGT principles.

Approach

The MAP approach in Sierra Leone has a sub-national emphasis, and local partners see the tremendous value of the multi stakeholder platform approach. The MAP has helped consolidate civic space in the land sector governance, while acknowledging that additional work needs to be done and there still is resistance from some parties. The decentralized model also elicits more engagement at the subnational level. The use of diverse communication tools (including virtual meetings) and the introduction of local District Multi-Stakeholder Platforms (DMSP) have been a good way to educate and sensitize communities on issues of land rights, which is an improvement from the situation during the 2019 evaluation, which revealed gaps in communication and a concern that the MAP did not adequately link across localities.

There has been significant investment in team capacity to reach large audiences and achieve outcomes, leading to a “maturing” of the MAP initiative. Since the 2019 report, significant strides have been made in growing the capacity of CSOs in the platform. There are still issues regarding implementation of land reform, women's access to land, and addressing tensions at the intersection of the interests of large to medium scale companies and local livelihoods. However, CSOs have been engaging in capacity building activities that include introduction to concepts and frameworks and use of various tools around participatory and human rights and development, in addition to improved expertise on land laws as a result of the TWGs. There is increased media engagement, allowing for the dissemination of information on land rights across communities as well as an observed reduction in siloed work and more collaborative practice among CSOs. Many are even seeing an increased profile at the national level, especially when the government calls on them for consultations.

Outcomes

Information flow and media engagement has improved significantly, though there is scope for further work. The platform instituted TWGs to ensure that members understand the various issues (land policy, principles for responsible large-scale land acquisition, women's rights and tenure governance, etc.) and how to address them. The teams report findings to the platform as a whole and that is used to inform decisions and directions of the platform. The degree of disclosure from communities to platform members is high, indicating that the MAP structure effectively enables information sharing. The visibility of the platform has also increased due to strengthened media collaboration. LfL's media alliance with ten media institutions in 2021 is seen as a key success, allowing information dissemination through radio, TV, print and electronic journalism. This media engagement has also been helpful in educating women about their rights, empowering

them to seek appropriate land tenure recognition. There is still work to be done in this area as LfL and MAP members do not have specific media budgets, which limit the scope of their engagement.

Though the power dynamics around land allocation remain daunting, the MAP has helped navigate conflicts and support community rights. At the time of the 2019 evaluation, there was consensus about the opacity of land related deal-making, depriving locals of their livelihoods and the feeling was that even though the LfL initiative left locals more informed, hidden negotiations on major land decisions seemed virtually impenetrable. During this current evaluation, members reported that landowners are airing their grievances in an organized manner rather than resorting to confrontation, and companies are gradually becoming responsive to calls for alternate grievance redress processes. Examples include the establishment of a cooperative and interactive relationship between Miro (a private company), LfL, and local communities; supporting dialogue between Socfin (a private company that is mostly resistant to informed consent and dialogue) and local communities, helping reduce tensions to some extent; supporting local communities in dispute over the harbor in the Black Johnson area of Freetown; supporting female landowners in conflicts against traditional chiefs; and local DMSPs being called in to resolve various disputes after the communities heard about MAP activities through the media.

4. PROGRAM-LEVEL FINDINGS

4.1 Relevance

Each of the LfL MAPs have clearly established timely relevance by creating spaces for inclusive dialogue and negotiation on land governance issues. This includes the MAPs being recognized by a wide range of actors as central spaces for such engagement in each of their country contexts. The MAPs have demonstrated the ability to reach stakeholders who might traditionally have difficulty accessing policy dialogue fora, and have established spaces in which community representatives can negotiate with government authorities. All four countries demonstrate that the MAPs are relevant dialogue and negotiation spaces, and Ethiopia and Liberia show that the success of their relevance can be seen in terms of increased recognition of MAP activities, patronage by other major, previously unconnected development partners, as well as by other land rights initiatives employing the MAP approach.

The LfL MAPs have emerged as key spaces for programmatic coordination and alignment both within and across government and CSO actors. Growth in membership and partnership opportunities and requests to collaborate have been cited as key indicators of the MAPs' ongoing relevance. In Liberia, for example, this is evidenced by the different organizations that came together to host the National Land Conference in 2022. There is increased buy-in, support, and partnership relationships with government, local, and international agencies. The other three countries are also seeing increased collaboration with different government agencies, and the Sierra Leone MAP is considering similarly planning a national land conference to discuss common concerns in the sector, which is a key win in a country where CSO relationships are not always seen in a positive light by traditional authorities.

LfL MAPs are confronted by both opportunities and risks when considering potential expansion of their thematic focus. With increasing participation of additional stakeholders, there appears to be at least some appetite to link the tight land governance focus of LfL MAPs to larger international priorities and themes around climate, SDGs, youth, environment, economy, etc.; or, alternatively, to take up regionally-specific supplementary themes based on the needs of decentralized MAP actors. Expansion of themes and activities is seen as a strategic opportunity by some country teams and external observers familiar with the MAP broader space. But there are also risks associated with thematic expansion, potentially compromising programmatic efficiency and/or broader MAP identity. There is growing interest in mutual learning, experience sharing, collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders working on environment, agriculture, climate, and gender. MAPs also have to respond to emerging needs, especially those arising out of the success of the legislative phase of the land reform process. In Ethiopia, expansion is seen as an opportunity to engage in more networks and a step towards long term MAP sustainability. In Sierra Leone, synergies with climate change advocacy and broader human development have been identified, with members generally agreeing that expansion could help the MAP capitalize on the gains in land rights and maintain its central role at the national level.

4.2 Effectiveness

Different forms of institutionalization present both opportunities and challenges. This includes opportunities and challenges regarding program effectiveness, with institutionalization generally offering the potential to strengthen organizational identity and create a legal basis for direct or independent contracting but also creating possibilities for distracting “mission creep” or interfering with perceptions of collective MAP ownership and/or identity. In Burkina Faso, the MAP is an officially registered organization, however, suboptimal collaboration among actors, mixed with institutional confusion, has raised challenges for the platform. In Liberia, the MAP is not legally registered but is housed under the Rights and Rice Foundation (RRF), which contracts and manages resources on its behalf. A steering committee provides governance oversight. This structure has led to concerns about limited participation of other MAP members in resource mobilization and management, potentially stifling the growth of the MAP as an independent structure. In both Ethiopia and Sierra Leone, the country-level LfL initiatives have pursued institutionalization as independent CSOs, explicitly adopting the LfL name for the new entities. In Ethiopia, this institutionalization has improved the subnational MAP’s status, visibility, and influence in the land community. Yet, the new institutional status also brings risks of “projectification” (taking on an increasing number of short-term projects to generate revenue to sustain the new organization).

Ongoing decentralization of MAP platforms is seen as critical to long-term effectiveness. Specifically, decentralization has played an important role in accompanying community level implementation of land reform process, beyond high level policy influence and design of legislation. Decentralization can require interrelated investments in sub-grantees, resourcing at the level of community partners, and support for MAP-adjacent but not specifically MAP-focused activities (e.g., funding of community-level paralegals in Burkina Faso). Decentralized MAP structures still require strong coordinating functions from national level MAPs to ensure concerted and consistent efforts across sub-national MAPs, accompanied by adequate human resource capabilities. All four countries have decentralized MAP systems. In Liberia, the decentralization of the MAP to at least two functional regional structures extends the work of MAP beyond the national capital and currently covers 9 out of 16 counties in the country (a previously identified shortcoming). In Sierra Leone, MAP processes at the decentralized level seem to elicit more engagement, a clear example being the establishment of four District Multi-Stakeholder Platforms. In Ethiopia too, decentralization supported policy action at subnational levels and has helped guide policy dialogues related to the Community Investor Local Government Forum.

Government engagement / collaboration has been recognized as critical for achieving policy influence as regards both policy design and implementation. All four countries have buy-in from government authorities, in varying capacities. In some cases, while individual government officials are supportive of the MAP, all-of-government enthusiasm cannot be assumed. There are also instances of government officials attempting to push the agenda of specific agencies or political parties within the MAPs. In Sierra Leone, there is strengthened collaboration between civil society, traditional authorities, government, and the private sector. The formation of new DMSPs is seen as a win. Ministries, departments and agencies have proved helpful in depoliticizing the dialogue environment by managing assumptions regarding CSO, business, and community relationships with the government. In Liberia, the MAP serves as a bridge between CSOs and the government and provides a collective voice on land reform processes. Both Liberia and Ethiopia have

government representatives included in the core MAP group, which is seen as an important step in strengthening operations of the platform. In Ethiopia, this has resulted in improved motivation, willingness, and commitment of government in policy dialogues at the subnational level. While there is not yet an established, standing MAP structure at the national level in Ethiopia (as the MAP in Ethiopia only formally operates as a dialogue space at a subnational level), limited engagements with national policymakers to date have been fruitful, and the country team is optimistic about the potential for broadly positive government commitment at the national level. This bodes well for ongoing efforts to establish a formal LfL MAP structure at the national level in Ethiopia. In the case of Burkina Faso, even under challenging political conditions, the transitional government participates in the MAP and is supportive of inclusive policy reform processes.

Increased media engagement is potentially an important area of work for each MAP, with implications for overall effectiveness. Media engagement undertaken to date has not only been important for covering land-related policy processes but also in raising awareness about rights among potentially affected communities. This has drawn attention to success stories of communities and individuals who have pursued land rights claims, as well as highlighting land rights abuses/abusers, in ways that have been important for influencing both policy design and implementation processes. In Burkina Faso, the close relationship between the MAP and the media signifies a growing interest in land issues at the national level. In Sierra Leone too, the important role of media alliances in amplifying public education messages has been highlighted, though with a potential downside where communities might act unilaterally, leading to community-level confrontations that then require MAP intervention to resolve.

4.3 Efficiency

Strategic investment in human resources is a high priority for increasing and/or maintaining high levels of efficiency. With current situations varied across country programs, the ability to make robust investments in the personnel capacities of each country program has implications for staff recruitment/retention, staff capacity development, and maintenance of institutional knowledge. Minimizing turnover, maintaining reasonable workloads for individual staff members, and ensuring that programs can be sustained even after a change in personnel or leadership are important priorities for strategic human resource investments. Both Burkina Faso and Ethiopia contend that despite current staff having the necessary expertise, inadequate human resource capacity remains a challenge in meeting demands. In Sierra Leone too, the need for more personnel to strengthen the work of the secretariat was raised as well as the need to take steps to preserve institutional memory, as staff capacity has grown since 2019. In Liberia, logistical constraints are a major obstacle for efficiency of the MAP, both nationally and in the decentralized structures.

Strong and regular communication channels play an important role in maintaining networking and coordination relations among MAP members. Leveraging digital communications channels (e.g., WhatsApp) has proven an effective complement to in-person meetings, supporting the efficiency of programming and operations, as well as the substantive alignment and strategizing of MAP members in an ongoing way in-between formal MAP convenings. In Ethiopia, establishing a communication strategy improved information flow among MAP steering committee members, thematic working groups, and strategic support institutions.

The strategy contributed to regular engagement, and virtual calls were used to conduct monitoring and evaluation. Both Sierra Leone and Liberia have pivoted to online engagements and digital communications, with less emphasis on in-person meetings. However, underdeveloped communication infrastructure in certain regions also proved to be a logistical challenge for decentralized MAP members in maintaining connectivity.

Funding requirements determine the feasibility of resource sharing and mobilization internally among MAP members, including at the community level. This includes instances where funding requirements have made it difficult to orchestrate sub-grants for MAP members or community-level partners to pursue activities related or complementary to the MAP (e.g., in Liberia). In other instances (e.g., in Burkina Faso) MAP supported resources, such as embedded paralegals, have reached the community level, though the Burkina Faso MAP experienced delays in implementation due to timing of funding disbursement. In Sierra Leone too, thin budget lines around particular activities have limited intervention scope, meaning that planned actions were regularly reduced due to limited resources.

There are opportunities to increase efficiency by clarifying roles and relationships among multiple land reform actors and dialogue processes within a given national context, as well as among actors within MAPs. This is particularly important in contexts where more than one land-related dialogue process or consultative space exists at the same time, or where they might have previously existed. Within a broader national landscape of land reform efforts, the specificity of a MAP as a distinct type of dialogue mechanism may not be obvious to all observers, in turn, affecting perceptions of competition and/or duplication among related initiatives. Regarding clarifying role and identity among MAP actors, some actors report a tension between the identity of an anchor organization and the notion of a MAP as co-owned forums among *all* members. In Burkina Faso, the MAP shares the financial and political landscape with a previously existing CSO that has its own substantial networks, CPF. There are concerns regarding the MAP sometimes being perceived to operate as CPF's advocacy arm on issues of land governance. In Liberia, while RRF has been instrumental in nurturing and guiding the MAP to its current state, some have voiced concerns of the MAP being run as its subsidiary project. Observers highlight the need for the MAP to acquire an independent institutional identity and grow its capacities to ensure future growth and sustainability. In Ethiopia, the focus is on maintaining the identity of the existing sub-national MAP, avoiding duplication of efforts, potentially taking on the role of leading and supporting other decentralized MAPs in the country, and further supporting efforts to establish a national-level MAP, building on relatively limited but successful national policy engagement to-date.

4.4 Impact

Country-level programs have documented substantive engagement influencing high-level policy processes. This includes the Land Rights Act in Liberia (passed 2018), the accompanying Legislative Instrument passed in 2023, and the commencement of community land formalization processes; Sierra Leone's Customary Land Rights Act (passed 2022) and the setup of the National Land Commission (2022); and the ongoing assessment/implementation of Burkina Faso's Rural Land Tenure Law (passed in 2009) as well as its Real Estate Development Law (passed 2023). In Ethiopia, policy intervention has mainly been at the sub-national level, focused on improving relationships among

communities, government, and private actors, dialogues on co-designing corporate responsibilities, and improving rural infrastructure and opportunities for employment. At the national level, the MAP has organized policy dialogues on pastoral land tenure and rights but has not achieved the formalization of a standing national-level MAP.

Changing attitudes and perspectives about the value of dialogue/exchange via MAP processes is recognized as a key impact. This type of impact is often represented as a gradual process of “coming around” to the value of cross-sectoral dialogue, emphasizing the long-time horizon for full MAP impacts to materialize. Changes in attitude and perspective take time, particularly among parties that have been somewhat reluctant or hesitant to engage, for example the private sector or traditional/tribal community authorities. In Liberia, there has been a gradual shift among actors in the private sector to consider and engage in the MAP as a space for resolving land acquisition issues and to achieve mutually beneficial interests. In Sierra Leone, there is increased trust between CSOs and traditional authorities, and businesses are also coming around, a marked improvement from when parties existed as adversaries and rarely were in dialogue with one another. The formation of DMSPs is a significant advance in increasing participation of traditional chiefs in land governance issues.

LfL MAPs are growing in influence and cultivating reputations as serious fora for discussion of land policy reform. This manifests as MAPs being perceived by government, media, and development agencies as central loci of knowledge and expertise around land policy, governance, and reform. In Liberia, the MAP’s expanding membership creates greater voice, reach, and legitimacy for the MAP. In Ethiopia, stakeholders previously faced difficulties in accessing up-to-date information on the context of policies on land governance issues. The MAP has supported evidence generation, information sharing and exchange, and strengthened the capacities of institutions working on participatory and integrated land use planning. In Sierra Leone, technical working groups conduct investigations and report findings, which has expanded both capacity and expertise related to land laws. Members also have an increased profile at the national level and are often called on for consultations.

It is still necessary to achieve greater sensitization of gender equity in MAP processes and broader land governance processes. This includes needing to achieve greater gender inclusion not just in terms of increased involvement of women generally, but also an increase in women occupying positions of power/decision-making, both within MAP structures specifically and in land governance processes more broadly. In Sierra Leone, while women are represented in some areas, they are still largely outside positions of authority, and intentional steps need to be taken to increase female representation across all levels of the platform. Additionally, the records of women challenging the status quo are “historical,” as such victories have not been recorded since 2019. In Ethiopia, while women’s participation at the sub-national level has increased compared to Phase 1, overall, policy processes have provided little attention to their participation. In Burkina Faso and Liberia, while the MAPs empower women on issues of land ownership, women are ultimately still under-represented.

While progress has been made, there is still more work to do in achieving greater and more productive engagement with private sector actors. This finding is reached with the acknowledgement that LfL MAPs in Ethiopia, Liberia, and Sierra Leone have each gone through

a “learning cycle” on private sector engagement and have begun developing (or have already developed) country specific engagement strategies. In Liberia, there has been a gradual conversion among private sector actors who have come to see the MAP as a space where they can engage with other actors for advancing shared interests. In Ethiopia, the LfL MAP has thus far seen relatively low levels of private sector engagement, although it has pursued some degree of engagement, for example, around the Ethiopian Agricultural Investors Forum. In Sierra Leone, tensions have reduced because of increased responsiveness and openness from the private sector to participate in MAP processes, and this has resulted in some wins (e.g., engagement with the Miro Agricultural Company). On the other hand, there is still work that needs to be done as evidenced by the MAP’s relationship with companies like Socfin, a company that is still generally resistant to dialogue processes. Private sector engagement continues to be a challenge in Burkina Faso, especially with private actors opposing the Real Estate Development Law (passed in 2023), in particular its provisions protecting the rights of communities against land grabbing practices.

The work of accompanying ongoing implementation of land governance reform is recognized as a key frontier for achieving additional impact. In part because of formal policy processes resulting in legislation being passed in multiple LfL countries, the actual implementation and operationalization of such policies at the community level is a critical area of future follow-on work. In Ethiopia, poor understanding of existing land policies and regulations across levels of government (separate from debates about any eventual national land law) has constrained inclusive land governance implementation, but there has been progress in the establishment of regulations that will guide implementation of formal legislation, as evidenced by the 150-200 pilot communities that are involved in the process. This process is helping communities understand their ownership rights and how to enforce them. Though regulations are not in an implementation stage yet, they provide an operational guideline to MAP members. In Sierra Leone too, the passage of formal legislation is seen as a beginning, and now, there is an ongoing education and sensitization around determining boundaries of lands, mapping, registration and titling, and establishing systems to ensure all stakeholders can work in concert with one another. In Burkina Faso, the implementation of landfocused legislation encountered major roadblocks that sidelined key stakeholders such as farmers and customary leaders and stymied the dynamic it sought to strengthen. In Liberia, the slow pace in community land formalization processes have required continuous engagement of the MAP with government authorities to address administrative bottlenecks and ensure that the land reforms are implemented.

4.5 Sustainability

An increased sense of co-ownership and co-leadership of MAPs (both nationally and sub-nationally) is seen as critical for MAP sustainability. Multiple strategies may be necessary to achieve this. The role of resource sharing among MAP members, rather than resources being controlled by a single host has emerged as a consideration affecting partner perspectives on co-ownership and co-leadership. There can be tradeoffs among stability, identity, continuity, and co-ownership, particularly when considering rotating leadership models. In Liberia, the success of the MAP has been closely tied to its association with RRF and its leadership guidance. In the event of this anchor organization’s leadership taking a step back from the MAP, members have raised concerns about the platform’s sustainability due to the lack of alternative leadership displayed among members selected to lead working groups. On the other hand, there is a concern that the

current institutional arrangement prevents members from providing adequate co-leadership. In Ethiopia too, a feeling of co-ownership is seen as a necessary key to achieving institutional sustainability, and members have identified a need to build alternative mechanisms (non-volunteer basis) and incentives to develop this sense of ownership of both sub-national and national MAPs. In Burkina Faso, the formalization of the MAP has strengthened the sense of belonging among members to achieve better ownership / accountability. In Sierra Leone, though, there are multiple CSO and government members with different priorities and schedules, which complicates goals of shared ownership. The need to bolster sub-national structures like the District Multi-Stakeholder Platforms is also highlighted.

Conversations about funding/resource mobilization, diversification, and innovation are ongoing and represent key considerations for sustainability. While multiple options are being considered across country contexts, new funding strategies have not yet been tested or put into practice. All four countries have participated in a virtual workshop around resource mobilization, led by Civil Society Academy, and strategy documents for each country are under development. In speaking with international observers familiar with the LfL MAPs, there was no obvious consensus that these MAPs have a clear pathway to financial sustainability (and thus operational sustainability) absent substantial “external” funding. In Liberia, the MAP has been successful in garnering donor support from a broad range of agencies (e.g., World Bank, FAO, USAID, ForumCiv of Sweden, International Land Coalition, etc.). However, there is a need for more flexible funding and sub-granting mechanisms to ensure funds can be more easily accessed by members outside of the anchor organization. Burkina Faso also faces challenges around the efficient mobilization of funds. While member contributions form a part of the MAP’s financing, other avenues, such as seeking public utility status to facilitate access to public funds, are being considered. In Sierra Leone, members have started conversations with a focus on diversifying funding sources and collaborating with other institutions on proposals. In Ethiopia, relying solely on WHH financial support has been identified as a major constraint. In general, there is a relationship between the institutional form a MAP takes in each country and the modes of resource mobilization that might be available to it. For the country MAPs that have status as independent CSOs, they may be most administratively well positioned to take on related projects and activities that help generate revenue to support the functioning of the MAP. This type of strategy may, however, bring risks around “projectification” as discussed in section 4.2.

There are other resources, both internal and external, to consider beyond financial resources when it comes to MAP sustainability. Logistical and technical cooperation from a variety of partners may represent important pathways for supporting ongoing MAP operations and their medium to long term viability. In Sierra Leone, this includes diversifying and exploring logistical and technical collaboration, procurement and compliance strengthening, and building alliances with academia to support research or evidence-based decision-making. As in Sierra Leone, the Ethiopia team considers creating synergies with other initiatives as critical to sustaining the MAP. In Liberia, members are building on past experiences of sustaining activities, including resuscitating vital interventions such as the VGGT principles and reintegrating them within the Ministry of Agriculture. Other issues include membership retention and active participation in access to MAP resources, as some members are discouraged by the current funding mechanisms when they aren’t able to access MAP-specific funding despite contributing to the overall achievement of MAP goals.

5. LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Along with consolidating findings on the implementation of the LfL initiative in its second phase, a key focus of this evaluation is forward-looking. What priorities need attention to increase the effectiveness and impact of the country MAPs, and to set them up to endure and evolve beyond the period of WHH support in a planned Phase 3? The following lessons and associated recommendations speak to these forward-looking concerns.

Lesson 1: It is important to strike a balance between sustaining focus vs. responding to emerging themes. A clear and sustained focus on land governance and policy reform has been an important part of the MAPs being able to establish strong reputations as central hubs of dialogue on these topics. That said, the agility and flexibility to link to broader themes or respond to emerging themes is also strategically valuable. Balancing responsiveness and focus is an ongoing concern for which there is no one size fits all solution, and which may require an evolving approach over time that is reflected upon at regular intervals and updated as necessary.

The opportunity to respond to new and/or emergent themes can be bracketed into two categories. The first type of opportunity, and the one most directly connected to the existing emphases of MAPs can be summarized as a focus on pushing beyond land legislation and the liberalization of the land sector more generally, to addressing specific issues around the operationalization of land legislation at the ground level. Specific areas of work in this category may include: responding to overt and covert push-backs to the reform process by political and business interest groups; the need to realign and assure a positive role for traditional chiefs in land administration; the need to establish strong systems that guarantee the rights of women and youth to access, own, and use land independently; and the need to institutionalize transparent community decision making systems that ensure that the benefits of land reform are equitably allocated or judiciously used for the benefit of all.

The second type of opportunity has to do with linking the MAPs' existing land-based thematic portfolios to broader international discourses and movements with which land as a broad thematic has clear interconnections. A non-exhaustive list of such topics include: youth employment and opportunity; the Sustainable Development Goals; economic empowerment of women; and climate change discourse more broadly. For example, there are already concrete plans for the international cross-country LfL program to support the incorporation of the VGGT principles into the Rio+ Conventions, doing so in collaboration with FAO and LandCollaborative (an international community of practice which LfL supports). Judicious and strategic linkage of land policy themes to additional related topics may also be one avenue for MAPs to respond to evolving national political climates. Additionally, MAPs making specific linkages to additional regionally specific or more local topics of concern in a particular area is seen as an approach that can potentially help to make inroads into specific regional policy environments as part of broader MAP decentralization efforts.

- **Recommendation:** Country MAPs should establish a regular process for periodically reviewing priority themes, including scanning for sub-national regional priorities that may not obviously surface as national MAP priorities, to ensure continued relevance and to tailor specific outputs and outcomes that strategically and judiciously respond to top priorities for impact.

Lesson 2: CSO and government actors are both critical partners for MAP effectiveness but may need to be integrated into MAP structures in different ways at different times. All of the MAPs have been able to broadly reach both government and CSO actors, each of which are recognized as critical partners for the effectiveness and credibility of a MAP. Government engagement and partnerships are particularly important for being able to directly influence high-level policy design and reform processes. CSO involvement is critical for being able to counterbalance government perspectives via the inclusion of wider community voice, while also being important for MAP activities that are particularly focused on “downstream” land reform implementation challenges that government actors have not sufficiently engaged with.

Depending on the priorities and focus of a MAP, greater or lesser engagement with government or CSO partners may be justified at any given time. More operational modes, on the one hand, and more consultative modes, on the other, can be appropriate ways for conceiving of differential engagement across government and CSO actors, with operational engagement focusing on direct collaboration addressing a particular challenge or concern, and with consultative engagement focusing on keeping partners abreast of developments and seeking input when necessary. A MAP’s engagement with a given actor may span multiple modes at the same time, with engagement being differentiated around specific topics. For example, a MAP may seek direct and involved collaboration with an actor on topic A while having a more consultative mode of engagement around topic B. Maintaining at least minimal levels of consultative engagement with all partners should be a priority even when they might not be principally relevant to a given focus of MAP efforts at a given time. This is a matter of both network maintenance and professional courtesy.

- **Recommendation:** Country MAPs should have an adaptable strategy in place to identify priorities for government and CSO engagement that reinforce the MAPs ability to bridge within and both sectors, being open to different modes of engagement across actors at different times and/or in relation to different topics.

Lesson 3: Leveraging both institutionalization and loose network linkages contributes to effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Each of the MAPs has pursued some degree of institutionalization, either under the umbrella of a stable host organization affiliation or as an independent entity. While there are clear benefits to the consolidation of LfL MAP initiatives so that they operate as more than ad hoc or loose networks (e.g., credibility, strategic partnership opportunities, administrative control), there are still ways in which preserving certain conditions of flexibility or “looseness” may benefit a given platform, specifically when thinking about concerns of co-ownership as well as experimentation. Being able to draw on the strengths of both a consolidated institution and a more informal network may be advantageous.

In at least some instances, MAP funding partners have expressed a hope to see MAPs distinguish themselves from the identity of the founding host institution, with its own robust vision, mission, core values, structures, and systems to deliver on its mandate while meeting the accountability needs of its stakeholders. The future of the MAPs lies in their ability to move from being a project under one of its members to being an autonomous institution with its own programs.

Institutional consolidation is particularly important to work against so-called “founder’s syndrome.” While individual enthusiasm and commitment has been critical for the formation and implementation of MAPs, it is essential that MAPs are not dependent on specific individuals. This requires resilient, dynamic, and self-propelling institutional structures that allow MAPs to disperse roles and responsibilities. Rotating hosting rights and/or secretariat membership may be an initial and necessary step, but it is unlikely to be sufficient on its own for reaching the levels of institutionalization and independence required for long-term MAP sustainability. While continued formalization and simultaneous dispersal of roles, responsibilities, and possible wider access to resources among MAP members are all likely to be components of ongoing institutionalization discussions, due care should be exercised in establishing any new internal MAP norms and structures so that they do not exclude or work against more temporary, less involved, or experimental collaborations with relevant MAP partners. A tiered understanding of ‘core’ membership and engagement vs. a role for lighter-touch membership and engagement may be worth considering, particularly when it comes to rights/responsibilities of membership.

- **Recommendation:** Each country MAP should review their strategies with an eye toward achieving continued impact and long-term sustainability, considering the complementary roles of formal institutionalization and looser network linkages among MAP members/collaborators, potentially considering differential categories with associated rights and responsibilities.

Lesson 4: Barriers to gender equality in MAP composition and decision-making continue to hinder progress in achieving equity outcomes. In the context of internal MAP processes, gender inclusion should be intentionally reflected not just in the increased participation of women, but of women holding positions of decision-making and authority. It is significant that women’s engagement in the MAPs in all four countries remains low, especially when acknowledging that MAP interventions are intended to liberalize land governance and land access to include equity-deserving groups such as women. Despite the positive legislative developments (to different degrees) across the four MAP countries, a lack of women leaders in MAPs and their processes will hamper the translation of impact to the community level—where it matters most. In broader arenas of land governance reform, MAPs pursuing formal policies that recognize the equal rights of women is only a starting point. Tracking and accompanying the implementation of such policies at the community level will be critical, with an emphasis on ensuring that women have the necessary resources to materially realize their land rights claims.

Individual country MAPs should develop context-specific women's engagement and inclusion strategies, at both the national and field/community level. Internally, an overt effort across country MAPs is needed to hire women with gender-related land practice expertise into senior project roles, and not just in auxiliary/administrative roles. This may include allocating resources for developing

and investing in a pipeline of such specialists, either via expanded recruitment efforts or direct professional development support to further cultivate women-led expertise internally. Increased international program support specifically around training for gender-based analysis could also help offer shared guidance and resources to country teams.

- **Recommendation:** Each county MAP should develop a specific gender action plan for both internal and external gender-focused engagement and inclusion, specifying efforts that will improve gender equity in MAP decision-making processes and leadership, in outcomes pursued, and in monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

Lesson 5: There are opportunities to sharpen capacity building for private sector engagement in land reform and policy implementation to support equitable outcomes for communities.

Interviews indicate that where increased MAP engagement with the private sector has been achieved, it has been seen as delivering mutually beneficial results to private sector actors and their host communities, including: providing a safe and constructive space for resolving conflicts around land allocation, payment of compensation, and the management of corporate social responsibility resources that corporations with land and natural resource concessions make available to communities. MAP spaces create an alternative to turning to government intermediaries for redress of challenges that concessionaires face with their host communities, instead allowing direct engagement across parties in an established dialogue forum. Such spaces additionally make it harder for government functionaries to side-step communities in dealing with corporations that have been granted land and natural resource concessions.

Despite the mutually beneficial outcomes that can be expected from constructive private sector engagement, overall, progress on advancing such engagement has been mixed. The private sector engagement strategies prepared as an outcome of the private sector engagement “learning cycle” that the Ethiopia, Liberia and Sierra Leone MAPs joined should be understood as a major milestone. While at least some private sector actors have demonstrated a willingness to be responsive and accountable to the communities in which they operate, many corporate actors need help to build capacities for transparent and accountable community engagement. Training around the intersectionality of community concerns, needs, and priorities is particularly important.

Specific dialogue processes targeting the business community may be important for socializing more reticent businesses to the spirit and benefits associated with MAP membership and/or engagement in cross-sectoral exchange. In such processes, it is necessary to still be cognizant of fundamental business interests and demonstrate the contribution of MAP-based dialogue to “bottom line” interests. The ability of LfL MAPs/ country entities to offer such capacity building to interested private sector actors might help contribute to allaying concerns about longstanding antagonism and mistrust between CSOs and the private sector that are identified in multiple LfL country private sector strategy documents. By offering a proactive service around capacity building for community engagement, the MAPs could further position themselves as constructive intermediaries (avoiding any misperception of being unduly obstructive) that can help deliver on the potential mutual benefits described above.

Private sector engagement efforts should emphasize both the potential for equitably and efficiently resolving disputes as they arrive, and the potential for proactively avoiding such disputes in the first place by building strong channels of communication and reservoirs of good will with local communities. Building on already existing private sector engagement efforts to identify corporate actors who can act as good faith champions of and trusted advocates for MAP-based dialogue could be an important strategy for convincing more reticent private stakeholders of the value of MAP engagement and participation.

- **Recommendation:** Building on private sector engagement strategy work already completed or underway, country MAPs should continue to move toward full implementation of those strategies, leveraging opportunities to proactively shape civil society and government relations with the private sector in more constructive ways, taking into account the needs of wide range of actors. This should be accompanied by measures to monitor and manage the risks/benefits entailed by private sector engagement, which can be used to reassess and reconfigure engagement strategies as necessary.

Lesson 6: MAP impacts take time and require different styles of funding. MAPs are not short-term projects; their ability to deliver lasting impact takes time. A range of 5-10 years is commonly referenced as the basic window of time for which a MAP would ideally have stable funding in order to fully deliver on its potential. Current funding for MAPs across countries is often more structured as consecutive project funding, with accompanying project-level timelines for delivery of outputs (convenings, events, policy briefs, etc.). The ability to influence not just the design and passage of particular policies, but to accompany and influence the implementation of land policy so that it delivers the intended results at the community level is a lengthy process.

Substantial external funding according to the timeline mentioned above is clearly one way to support the long-term operations and viability of MAPs to deliver on their full potential. There are other mechanisms for potentially diversifying and creatively matching resources to ensure that MAPs can secure stable sources of longer-term funding. Establishing a stable stream or structure of funding, regardless of the specific model that is determined to work best in a given context, will take time. Early prioritization of the consultations and contact building that will be necessary to establish and operationalize new streams of resource support should begin as soon as possible in an anticipated phase 3 of international support to LfL country programs.

As MAP financial sustainability is likely to take different forms across countries, there is an opportunity for MAPs to undertake self-reflection about what contextually specific sustainability would mean to them, as well as how the eventual “exit” of WHH international program support should happen. There is likely value in having these conversations both internally to each MAP as well as across MAPs.

- **Recommendation:** Country MAPs should continue to explore and develop alternative funding scenarios (e.g., what might happen to MAPs with ideal levels of funding, medium levels of funding, and with low to minimal levels of funding; also considering potential funding sources). The learnings from these scenario explorations can then be used to inform clear fund development action plans that take multiple eventualities into consideration.

Clear documentation and sharing of successes and challenges by each country team around resource mobilization should be encouraged to support cross-country learning and experimentation.

Lesson 7: The evolution and sustainability of MAPs at the country level requires flexibility in priorities and support from the international level. All four country MAPs have evolved considerably, thanks to funding received largely from WHH, and in some cases, other agencies. Much of this additional funding from other agencies has been structured around “projects” or support for specific, one-off activities or events. The reporting and accountability systems attached to such funding have served as important guardrails for ensuring that MAP funding has been spent judiciously. However, some compliance requirements from donors come with stringent rules that constrain creativity and adaptability in the use of available resources. For example, some donor requirements forbid the movement of surplus budget between line items, while others do not allow sub-granting of funds to other members of MAPs that are best situated, thematically and/or geographically, to carry out activities that advance MAP objectives. Additionally, juggling multiple, and often different, donor-funding requirements makes it difficult to develop standardized internal structures, systems, and processes that enable LfL country teams to meet the needs of multiple donors while building their internal capacities for fund management and accountability to their multiple stakeholders.

Rigid activity and reporting templates frustrate the adaptability of MAPs in taking advantage of opportunities to maximize the outcomes of unplanned, but positive, contributions to intervention goals. A project-focused mindset among funders further hinders the ability to develop long-term visions and comprehensive programs of actions that are adaptive in dealing with the multiplicity and ever-evolving nature of land issues that confront the MAPs.

To fully support the MAPs in their next stage of growth, it is essential that WHH staff in country, as well as other agencies supporting the MAPs move away from the project mindset. Lines of collaboration also need to be clarified and streamlined. For instance, there is the need for greater clarity in distinguishing the roles, responsibilities, and scope of authority and action between WHH LfL international support, vs, the country MAP, vs the WHH national office vs, newly established independent organizations that have evolved out of the LfL program (regardless of whether they still use the LfL name) and which pursue activities beyond hosting the originally supported LfL country MAP.

- **Recommendation:** In a third and final phase of support to LfL, WHH should work internally and with other funders to move away from a project-based approach to supporting MAPs, moving instead to more programmatic and institutionalized approaches with clear demarcations of authority and responsibility among a range of actors associated with the MAP, emphasizing flexibility and adaptability in pursuit of long-term goals.