



LIBERIA NATIONAL VISION 2030

SUMMARY REPORT

Structure of the Report

This summary report is structured into five parts.

The introductory chapter gives the background of the exercise, the objectives assigned to it and the structure of the report. It aims at contextualizing the exercise.

Chapter I - provides information on the conceptual and methodological frameworks of the exercise

Chapter II - can be read as a status report. It presents the findings of the 10 research papers produced by the working groups and research teams. They are clustered under 4 broad categories: demography, economy, social structures, and governance. Their analysis provides answers to two critical questions: “where is Liberia coming from?” “Where does Liberia stand now?” The chapter presents as well the results of a structural analysis of Liberia in which emphasis is placed on the interrelation of the variables, which define Liberia as a system.

Chapter III - offers glimpses of four possible futures for Liberia through scenarios. The chapter explains the concept of scenarios and how they were constructed. The drivers of the scenarios, the image of the future associated with each scenario and the path leaning to it are described in this chapter.

Chapter IV - presents or rather outlines the vision for Liberia by 2030. It draws on findings of the previous chapters but also on feedback on those findings gathered from a wide range of stakeholders consulted by the project team during district and regional consultations and consultations held abroad among Liberians. Six major components of the vision are presented in the chapter.

Chapter V - addresses the issue of operationalization of the vision presented in the previous chapter. It looks at some key elements in this regard: potential obstacles militating against realizing the vision; whether internal or external, or material or non-material; how can these obstacles be removed in the least destructive or costly manner, what should be done, how it should be done, who should do what, and what are the resources.

Introduction

I) Background

Following the conclusion of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2003, the idea of undertaking long term perspective studies and developing a national visioning was recommended by the newly established Governance Reform Commission (now the Governance Commission) to be an important element of the national reconstruction agenda. Immediately following her appointment as Chairperson of the Commission by Charles Gyude Bryant, Chairman of the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the driving force behind the idea, sought the endorsement of the NTGL to establish a participatory process leading to the development of a national long term perspective and national vision project that would foster reconciliation, national cohesion and self-reliant, sustainable and equitable development. Less than two months after the endorsement of the idea by the NTGL, a mission was fielded with the support of the UN to assist in the formulation of a project document.

At that time - and understandably - issues such as the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and the reintegration of ex-combatants were quite high on the Liberian reconstruction and development agenda along with humanitarian emergencies. In addition, there was great pressure on local, regional and international bodies to develop comprehensive responses to the humanitarian emergencies. While there is no doubt that such programs were needed, they ended up taking precedence over the long term visioning exercise which therefore was not implemented.

The discussions on formulating a long-term vision for Liberia received a new impetus following the inauguration of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in January 2006. A project document was signed between United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Liberia represented by the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs. It was meant to build on the remarkable efforts of the two-year transitional period to consolidate the peace process through the NTGL, the GRC and the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program, **GEMAP**. It was also meant to enhance the new sense of optimism and confidence in the future and desire of the new administration to shift gears toward national reconstruction at all levels and ensuring at all times that benefits would reach the most vulnerable.

However, as with the previous attempt, the implementation of the 2006 project document was to be delayed, as greater attention would be devoted to other interventions such as the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which was to be followed by a full blown Poverty Reduction Strategy covering the period 2008-2011, the Public Sector and Governance Reform.

In 2010, the Government of Liberia (GOL), through the instrumentalities of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs and the Governance Commission, took steps that were to lead to the reformulation of a new project document. The prevailing view at that time was that the Poverty Reduction Strategy Program, the PRSP, had borne considerable fruits. These fruits include establishing institutions and processes that contributed to the consolidation of peace and security, the revitalization of the economy, the entrenchment of institutions of good governance and the rule of law and the reconstruction of the nation's social and physical infrastructure for the delivery of basic public goods and services. However, there was still a pressing need to integrate development policies in a holistic development framework, inscribed in a long-term perspective in which reconciliation and development, peace and democracy would share the

same space and mutually reinforced. Unlike previous efforts to initiate or carry out national visioning exercise, this latest attempt was followed through with the establishment of various organs, including a National Core Team and a national Steering committee. The project yielded significant results, which are presented in this report.

Despite significant changes in the political and economic landscape during the last ten years, as far as the national visioning exercise is concerned, some elements have remained constant and are worth highlighting. They include:

- Support of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in her various capacities, as Chairperson of the Governance Reform Commission at its inception, and later as President of the Republic.
- Support of the Government through the Governance Reform Commission (GRC), now Governance Commission (GC), the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MOPEA), the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA), and the Ministry of Finance (MOF)
- Ownership of the methodological framework initially developed by the African Futures Institute (AFI) is now the Government of Liberia's.

II) Objectives

Throughout this long period of incubation, the exercise was designed so as to have at its core two main objectives:

Objective 1: Formulate a shared, long-term national and global vision in Liberia - Vision 2030

It was expected that the project would assist in building a national consensus on where the nation ought to be in the year 2030. The consensus would be encapsulated in a vision statement designed to provide a long-term framework for decision-makers, leaders at all levels of society and development practitioners in the public, private and civil society organization sectors.

Objective 2: Formulate a Liberia national development strategy based on Liberia Vision 2030. Such a document would serve as a reference point, a compass and guide to the identification of the concrete national policies, and the analysis of the key constraints that need to be overcome in the short and medium term in order to operationalize the vision.

CHAPTER 1: CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS

1. Conceptual framework: what is a futures study?

The rationale of a futures study in Liberia was discussed at the very early days of the exercise. It is worth recalling them

- Firstly, Liberia is at crossroads and is facing many possible futures. At the time the project document was formulated in 2010, four possible scenarios were foreseen: a business as usual; a relapse into violent conflicts; a back to the status quo ante; an africanization and democratization of Liberia.

Facing such different paths, it was felt critical for the country to understand what factors, which actors, what strategies would lead to any of these scenarios and which one would work best for Liberia, or have to be avoided at any cost.

- Secondly, visioning is critical inasmuch as strategies that have been followed in the immediate aftermath of the war have been mainly, and understandably so, crisis management strategies, the main characteristics of which are that they address symptoms rather than root causes. Furthermore, the ad-hoc and quite often piecemeal initiatives supported in the framework of reactive strategies make coordination an almost impossible task.
- Thirdly, Liberia is a divided society. Liberia is divided culturally along the lines of historical narratives; this historical division is compounded by socio-political and economic disparities. For that reason, Liberia is a fragile society and, as such, is not in an optimal situation to sustain the concerted and synergistic efforts that are required to move ahead from poverty to prosperity. To create the new dynamics that is required, there must be, within the citizenry, a shared vision of the future. The confidence in the future and the desire to claim it collectively will hopefully be an important, albeit intangible, by-product of the visioning exercise.

Three postulates are to be found at the core of any visioning exercise:

1. The future is the realm of freedom

Neither a prophecy, nor a prediction, a visioning exercise does not aim to predict the future- to unveil it as if it were pre-fabricated-but to help build it. It invites us to consider the future as something that we create or build, rather than something already decided. The future is open to many possibilities, and scenarios as glimpses on the future are one way to explore possible futures. They are needed, particularly when facing different possible futures, as is the case with a country, which has been described as being at crossroads.

2. The future is the realm of power

Anticipation is the antidote to the dictatorship of the “fire brigade” management style. It enables decision makers, to be pre or pro-active. Without anticipation, there can be no freedom in decision-making, because decision-makers are up against the wall, busy “putting out fires”. By anticipating challenges and identifying possible opportunities collectively, nationally, long term visioning enables leadership to devise a coherent development framework.

3. The future is the realm of will and ambition

The importance of anticipation has a purpose only if there is a set of ideas or values that enable one to define a goal and to conceive a desirable future. Therein lays the subtle balance between dream and reality. The dream generates a vision that is shaped and translated as a better future. Once sifted through the reality grid the vision becomes the driving force behind planning efforts.

2. Methodological framework

The methodological framework is driven by the fact that the exercise, as stated in the previous chapter, is a strategic undertaking with a dual component: it is **an action-oriented research project** and **a process of dialogue** on the outputs of the research.

2.1. The Liberian exercise, in **its research component**, was since the very beginning understood as a knowledge generation process on dynamics of change in Liberia. However, unlike other exercises of knowledge generation, such as academic research, the purpose of the exercise was not limited to examining the possible futures of the Liberian nation, but rather, to help Liberian

citizens build a future that would be consistent, attuned to meet the nation's aspirations, and to assist leaders in making better decisions that would stand a greater chance of resulting in the desired future. To achieve such a goal, it was felt imperative to:

- a) Understand where Liberia as a nation is coming from and where it is now; that is called the construction of the base;
- b) Analyze different development trajectories possible for Liberia, one of which might be the preferred one. That was to be done through a scenario construction and visioning exercise, and
- c) Formulate strategies that would lead to the operationalization of the vision.

Thus the methodological framework adopted was made of the above three analytical steps.

2.2. As a process of dialogue, the exercise aimed at facilitating conversation among Liberian citizens, on the one hand, between Liberian citizens and their external partners-on the other hand, with a view to forging a common understanding of Liberia's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). To achieve such a goal, the process of preparing Liberia 2030 was to be as participatory as possible, as the exercise aims at building a consensus on an agenda for the future. In such an approach, the process is as important as the products of the exercise.

Five (5) regional and one hundred fifty six (156) district consultations were held throughout Liberia. In addition, consultations with Liberians in the Diaspora (USA, Europe and West Africa) were held over a short time span. Focus Group discussions to involve more than fifteen stakeholders including professionals and civil society groups, political parties, the legislature and judiciary were held with about half of the groups targeted.

Limits of the Exercise:

Though an inclusive and comprehensive methodology, limits must be acknowledged. They include:

- The rather short time frame for the exercise: the 18-month period did not allow for the deeper research some might imagine. Similar exercises in other countries have taken much longer.
- The demographic outlook of the Liberian population has made consultations a bit challenging. Liberia's demographic make-up may not have been reflected, as youth were not consulted as extensively as one would have wished.
- With respect to the selection of participants in the consultations, some qualms have been expressed about certain ad hoc arrangements. Management of the consultations has proven difficult at times as communications strategies were not always clearly defined.
- Focus on national ownership has led to not paying enough attention to external partners, including intergovernmental organizations to which Liberia is party (ECOWAS, MRU) not to mention the bilateral and multilateral donors.
- Availability and reliability of data has been problematic at times. Liberian national incomes and other socio-economic data are often flawed and readers are to be mindful of that fact.

Chapter 2: THE BASIS FOR THE VISION. LIBERIA AS IT IS IN 2012

This chapter is devoted to the construction of the base of “Liberia 2030”. As indicated earlier, the construction of the base is a process of information gathering with a view to answering the following questions: where is Liberia as a nation coming from; what are the factors which have shaped it; who are the actors behind the factors identified; what have been their strategies; what have been the critical uncertainties affecting those strategies?

A **systemic approach** to Liberia has been adopted. That means that Liberia is approached as a complex system that is itself embedded in a complex environment.

Such an approach assumes that, the world being what it is, the future can never be determined by any single factor, but results from the interactions of numerous factors, some of which are internal to the system, while others are external and beyond the control of the actors who are attempting to study their own future. Yet, so many different factors go into determining the future of any community that the human mind cannot encompass them all, much less consider all their interactions. All future research methods thus involve establishing a **simplified model of reality**.

Three aspects were therefore to be given some attention:

The *first* aspect is that the future will depend on who Liberians are and what history has made of them-and not just recent history, because what people are today is often rooted in their distant past. One had to rely therefore on an analysis of both the past and present. That was to be done through a **retrospective analysis and a structural analysis**.

The *second* aspect is that the future that people build will depend on the plans that they form, explicitly or implicitly and the vision of the future to which they subscribe. Liberia 2030 requires thus a consideration of the plan or plans for the future that the various stakeholders have made or harbored. This is why **consultations on aspirations and ambitions** and **strategies** to achieve them become important.

A *third* aspect is that Liberians are surrounded by an environment, in the broadest sense of the word, and some factors depend neither on their past nor on their vision of the future. There are external factors beyond Liberians control. They include natural factors (such as climate change) and factors determined by other human communities (such as strategies of other producers of mineral resources, or commodities, or providers of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) or even all-human communities (such as technological progress). That is the purpose of **environmental scanning**.

These three elements – (a) analysis of the past and the present; (b) aspirations, plans and ambitions of the people; and (c) changes taking place in their environment- were to be taken into consideration in the exercise, Liberia 2030. Bearing in mind that the past, present and future actions have multiple dimensions, (psychological, economic, sociological, historical, political, etc.) it was agreed that a multidisciplinary approach that draws on all fields of knowledge was to be adopted.

The information presented in this document has been drawn from a number of working papers produced by a broad spectrum of Liberians and Liberian experts who form the national core team of the prospective study¹

I. THE RETROSPECTIVE ANALYSIS

The chapter has three sections.

The *first* section identifies the “constants” of Liberia as a system. These are features or variables which have remained constant throughout the history of Liberia; these are basically characteristics and variables which relate to the history or the physical environment of the country which up to now have not changed and are likely to remain constant as if they are inscribed in the DNA of Liberia approached as a system.

The *second* section looks at Liberia’s evolution from four different but interrelated perspectives

- (a) Demography
- (b) Economy
- (c) Social Structures
- (d) Governance

The *third* section sums up the findings from the two previous sections and highlights some key interrelations among the variables of the Liberian system. That concluding section draws on the results of a structural analysis, which has been carried out as part of the “Liberia Rising 2030” initiative

SECTION 1: LIBERIA’S CONSTANTS

In futures studies, invariants, also called constants, are relationships that, in a given system, do not change or that change only imperceptibly over the course of a generation. The study has identified five important invariants in the Liberian system. Three of those relate to the history of the country; one has to do with its physical environment (endowment with natural resources) and, lastly, its peculiar political structure since independence puts Liberia apart from other African nations.

SECTION 2: LIBERIA’S TRENDS AND SEEDS OF CHANGE

2.1. DEMOGRAPHY

This section on Liberia’s demographic trends looks firstly at the quantitative features: population and population growth; household composition; age structure; sex ratio; fertility and birth rates; mortality; urbanization; and migration. Then qualitative features of the population factors are considered. They include: health; education; literacy; employment; poverty.

Some Demography Seeds of Change include:

- a) Combination of reduced growth rate, (Population growth rate; fertility rate; and infant mortality rate) suggesting that Liberia is experiencing a demographic transition.
- b) Number of female and children-headed households (nearly 30%) has implications for poverty considering the low level of involvement of women in viable activities across the country.
- c) Vulnerability of the elderly attributable to erosion of social safety nets occasioned by the conflict.
- d) Increased levels of education within the army and other paramilitary forces.

¹ a)Civics and cultural contents and national curriculum issues)Formation of National Identity ;c)The Environment, Land Use and Natural Resource Management, d)Liberian Demography (Liberian people),e)Liberian Society; f)Governance and Politics; g)constitutional Review and Legal Reform; h)Liberian Political Economy; i)Social Cleavages and Access to Opportunities ;j)Inequality in Liberia;

2.2. THE ECONOMY

2.2.1 With respect to the economy, major trends identified (Footnote the following: The Analysis and Perspectives here are those of independent researchers. The Liberian Government's conclusion are otherwise) are as follows:

Concessions are the dominant production system in the monetized sector while Liberians operate primarily in subsistence agriculture and the informal sector.

Growth has been erratic with period of significant progress followed by stagnation and outright collapse. The robust economic growth recorded since 2006 may be another short sequence as structural impediments to shared growth including demographics, physical infrastructure, land tenure and property rights, implementation capacity, and peace and security remain.

The Liberian economy is characterized by increased dependency; other sources of dependency include Foreign Direct Investment (FDIs) and Official Development Assistance (ODA) debt and inappropriate public finance management.

Liberia's public finance management remains problematic: budgetary allocations have yet to conform to the government's policy pronouncements, especially for agriculture, education and health.

Liberia remains an offshore corporate haven: Companies registered in Liberia but doing business exclusively outside the country are exempt from Liberian taxes.

Liberia has had a dual currency system since 1944. Liberia's budgets are expressed in US dollars although the Central Bank Act of 1999 established the Central Bank of Liberia and granted the CBL full powers of a Central bank.

2.2.2 Identifiable economic seeds of change include:

- a) Oil palm plantations (for industrial uses and as biofuel) are granted thousands of hectares of land but the impact of mono plant on environment as well as the potential impact of evictions and alienation on livelihood are undetermined.
- b) Hydrocarbon discovered offshore in deep sea. Liberia is likely to become a petroleum exporter within the decade. The petroleum sector perhaps presents the biggest challenge; the legal framework to make oil exploration, production and export—as unrefined crude— possible portends legal, transparent management and technical challenges.
- c) In FY 2012/13, Liberia initiated a medium term budget exercise but constrained implementation capacity remains a serious challenge particularly as regards the merger of the ministries of Finance and of Planning & Economic Affairs into the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning.
- d) Towards preventing another debt overhang, Liberia agreed as a part of the HIPC process to limit external commercial debt to 3% of GDP.
- e) The government has developed plans to explore and exploit opportunities presented by growth corridors: identify prospects for integrating the oases into the national economy.

- f) Other possible contributors to GDP may include enhanced participation in West African integration.
- g) Liberian business owners are becoming vocal on what they view as foreign domination of their economy. There is growing concern among the Liberian business elite that their share in the economy is not commensurate with what should be a fairer deal for nationals.

2.3 The Social Structures

All societies have multiple and varied groups and there are often cleavages or tensions that explain group dynamics. The tendency to bifurcate Liberians leaves the erroneous impression of two discreet communities. While this may have been nearer the truth “at the creation” of the state, vigorous and untrammled interactions since the days of colonial settlement have resulted in a significant blurring of the socio-cultural lines. The values of a largely patriarchal indigenous society may have made inroads into immigrant society. The fusion of functions and roles in indigenous societies may equally have permeated immigrant society. A deeper examination of Liberian state institutions and processes may uncover borrowings from their original indigenous counterparts. In like manner, as “things fell apart” in indigenous communities, the influence of black settler culture became evident.

Social Structure therefore reflects the total experience of the Liberian people and is characterized by a variety of cleavages and crosscutting cleavage situations, among them ethnicity, religion, region, class. These are supplemented by such other factors as a national identity problematic, and the dominance of American influence evident in the primary symbols of the state. As well, new cleavages are emerging consequent on the aftermath of the civil war which largely pits Liberians resident abroad with their stay-at-home compatriots, inter-generational, and gender issues. Ethnic cleavage is expressed along the lines of a settler/indigenous divide, as well as intra settler and intra indigene tensions.

Religious cleavage is confined to fault lines primarily between Christianity and Islam, with African Traditional Religions (ATR), which is actually a total way of life, having made inroads into both world religions as practiced in Liberia. Some stress religious syncretism instead, pointing out the resilience of ATR norms even among converts both Christian and Moslems. Christianity endures as a legacy of settlement, making Liberia one of the most Christian countries in Africa. Over 85.6% of Liberians identify as Christians or adhere to some combination of Christian and traditional religious beliefs. Muslims constitute a substantial religious group, accounting for 12 % of the population. Traditional religion is 0.6%; other religions – 0.2% and no religion or atheist is 1.4%.

As with the demographic patterns or the economic sphere, social structures are changing and the highlights offered above should be balanced by an identification of seeds of change.

Six social structure seeds of change are identifiable:

- i. Liberian society is no longer complacent or silent
- ii. Sharp cleavages between Liberians who remained at home during the 14 years of civil war and those who fled
- iii. Women have emerged as a potent political force
- iv. Mandingo-Liberians have expressed a heightened sense of social alienation
- v. There is strong sentiment for meaningful indigenous language education in the national curriculum

- vi. Education as a means of social mobility has been the norm in modern Liberia, yet social crises occasioned by instability and war have taken a toll on the value of education, and in the process, impacted value systems as a whole.

2.4. THE GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS.

The governance landscape of Liberia is characterized by the co-existence of structures and processes whose origins and rationale are to be found in the traditional governance systems of pre-Liberia societies, the experience of early Liberia (first 25 years of colonial settlement), and the arrangements associated with the independent Liberian state. Mutual influencing of these experiences across time and space has been a hallmark of the Liberian governance experience.

The early inhabitants of Pre-Liberia exhibited socio-political arrangements that anthropologists have broadly classified as the incipient state or chieftaincy structure, and the “stateless” or acephalous structure. An identifiable government having a well-defined central authority characterized the chieftaincy structure. The Gola, Vai, and Kpelle were among adherents to this system. On the other hand, the “stateless” structure was one without a centralized government, but with complex organizations of kinship or age groups performing the functions of centralized authority as the need arose. The Kru and Grebo were among groups adhering to this political arrangement.

These systems soon encountered the Westphalia state that was planted in the early 19th century by new world immigrants and their American sponsors. That state has had to adapt to its environment, though the adaptation has been uneven and contingent on the disposition of “elite consensus.” The state has also functioned in ways that were both cooperative and conflictual, internally and externally, necessitating negotiating and bargaining circumstances.

With respect to governance system, there are also significant “seeds of change “

The intrinsic character of the Liberian State as a central superstructure over the last 165 years has only slowly yielded to internal and external pressures for change. Current efforts to reconstruct the state following years of war are underway. Some seeds of change include:

- a) Establishment of watchdog institutions such as the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC), the General Auditing Commission (GAC), the Public Procurement and Concession Commission (PPCC) and a developing independent media.
- b) “Development diplomacy” that purports to focus a discreet development agenda.
- c) Professionalization of the Armed Forces and otherwise rationalizing a national security system.
- d) Building peace and security through deliberate action
- e) Creation and expansion of the democratic space and the gradual improvement of the Justice system mean there is incentive for aggrieved parties to seek formal means of dispute resolution.
- f) Land Tenure and Emerging Management Regimes,
- g) Opening the elite space both in terms of broadening participation generally as well as deeper engagement of the rural population in national affairs.
- h) Opportunity for broader debate

CHAPTER 3: SCENARIOS FOR 2030: IMAGES AND POSSIBLE TRAJECTORIES

What will Liberia look like by 2030? Will citizens be better off? Or will they be worse off? And how will the country stand in the world? A word of caution in the form of three preliminary observations is in order before trying to answer those questions.

First, a scenario does not describe future reality. It is simply a **convenient way of representing a plausible future** reality, of creating a simplified image of the future that enables one “to make more intelligent decisions about present action based on possible and desirable futures.”

Secondly, there are different ways of approaching and constructing scenarios. Futurists generally distinguish between **two types of scenarios: exploratory scenarios on the one hand, normative scenarios on the other hand.** Exploratory scenarios start from the current situation and from the past and present trends. Assumptions are then made about uncertainties relating to the environment and factors of change, leading to pictures/images of plausible, possible futures. Normative scenarios are constructed on the basis of various images of the future, which may include either feared or desired futures. **The choice made by the national team was for exploratory scenarios.**

Thirdly, scenarios are not predictions. They describe possible future paths.

Against this background, four possible pathways have been mapped out. All of them depend on two variables: the first is the nature of the State, the quality of the leadership provided by the State and the nature and quality of the State’s interaction with various development stakeholders and with society as a whole. The second is the nature of the economy: will it be a rentier economy based on exploitation of natural resources the country is abundantly endowed with or will it evolve towards a knowledge based economy.

The format adopted consists of four parts:

- A message that hopefully will enable the reader to have a grasp of the scenario;
- An image of a possible future by 2030;
- A description of the path that will have been followed to arrive at the situation described in the image of the future.
- Identification of critical uncertainties,

Scenario I: *The “Thank God Oh” Scenario*

The Message: “Thank God Oh” assumes a country in 2030 with some economic and infrastructural changes facilitated by Foreign Direct Investment (FDIs) and Official Development Assistance (ODA) but those changes are not enough to bring about necessary structural changes to transform the society. While FDIs and ODAs have led to growth in some sectors, business as usual traps Liberia’s tremendous potential to grow and develop, and entraps Liberia on a course that might lead to an increased level of social, political and economic tensions. Nevertheless, to achieve this “Agenda”, concessions (mining, hydro-carbon, forestry, and plantations) have increased to contentious levels, leading to environmental degradation, displacement of the population, land scarcity, urbanization, food and livelihood insecurity, and poverty.

The Image by 2030: In 2030 the GDP growth has reached a percentage level of 239.6% to 309.5% over the base case, which has increased GDP to between \$2.327 and \$3.006 billion. Oil and iron ore exports have overtaken plantation (rubber and palm oil) and forestry (logging). These sectors raise fiscal revenue by 30.4%. There are infrastructural development taking place but unemployment has risen significantly with marginal improvement in some indicators like poverty level, access to healthcare, education, etc. With marginal investment in education and infrastructure, the capacity of the citizens has not developed enough to transform the society into a knowledge-based economy. Growth is concentrated in selected areas, and concession enclaves.

This is not enough to make significant changes to the structure of the Liberian economy, and has led to skewed development and disparities between regions and groups. Therefore, although the country is seeing improved growth in primary commodities exports institutional capacity to direct and diffuse gains in real income among all sectors of the population is weak, leading to or repeating what was known in the 1960s as “growth without development”.

PATH (ACTORS AND STRATEGIES)

In this scenario, there is a lack of coordination between a wide range of actors, the net result of which is an erratic path to development and a slow growth. The actors include:

Government

Poor local tax base and weak capacity, the government focused on land and other natural resources as means of attracting capital flow for needed national development. This realization left the government dependent on foreign exchange through resource export.

Citizens/Communities

The citizens – through individuals, communities, and private businesses – played within the system. With large-scale extractive activities and its related inflow of foreign capital based, the citizens became highly entitled to and depended on the state and state resources for survival. This dependency is both a reaction and a strategy to the political economy of the state, which is resource based.

Foreign Investors/Actors

Since the cessation of hostilities, concession companies encouraged the post war government to grant several large-scale concessions of iron ore, logging, and plantation concessions said to be worth US\$19 billion to Multinational Corporations, MNCs. With poor state capacity and weak national institutions, most of these contracts were badly crafted, poorly regulated leaving them vulnerable to corporate abuse. They were also signed on long-term leases of 30 plus years.

Official Development Assistance

The source of foreign aid to Liberia diversified. Unlike the West, some of these new comers provided aid packages that were value-free, without much pressure on issues like governance, strong fiscal regimes, environmental issues, or human rights. However, Western aid package, particularly that of the US, dominated the aid market. While each of these agencies had its own mission and objectives – which included human rights, religious, free trade, access to resources, and maintaining the international system, the strategy employed was based on strategic interest and access to natural resources.

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs)/Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

Civil society organizations were very instrumental and influential in the Liberian system. Usually, these organizations tend to operate from the “bottom up.” They are situated to develop and provide assistance to the Liberian citizens and government in its development efforts.

Critical Uncertainties

The plausibility of the system hinges on availability of ODA and FDI as the level of investment required goes well beyond the resources that can be mobilized domestically. As that dependency on external resources is unlikely to change drastically in the next 20 years, predictability of ODA and FDIs is a major uncertainty.

Another important uncertainty is the outcome of competition between different socio-economic groups for the rent generated by the exploitation of the natural resources. That competition is likely to lead to different configurations of alliances and heightened tensions due to skewed wealth distribution. Capacity of the state to regulate and mediate will be an important factor in the outcome of that competition.

Existence of appropriate social safety nets, whether endogenous, traditional solidarity mechanisms, or externally induced aid will also be an important variable particularly for those groups which suffer from food insecurity.

Lastly, the responsiveness of the military and security apparatus to these challenges and some externally induced ones will also define the sustainability of this scenario.

2. The Developmental State Scenario: “It’s not for fun” -A Tall Order”

The Message: This scenario posits that a significant breakaway from the current development model to another more knowledge-based one is possible through strategic interventions. It posits as well that, in the absence of a strong private sector, the state must have a strong capacity, knowledge, legitimacy, credibility and the political commitment needed for necessary policy formulation and implementation to effect transformation. The state must have these attributes to also manage the number of tradeoffs associated with this scenario that may cause tension in society. However, whereas it is very unlikely that the developmental state scenario will have been completely achieved by 2030, significant progress will have been made by that time to show that the country is markedly on the path of sustained growth and development.

Image of the Future:

The country is experiencing peace and stability following years of war. National institutions are now effective, efficient, accountable, transparent and democratic, and therefore strong enough to remove or reduce the national fault lines of conflict.

The national security situation is significantly improved, in the process building confidence in the people and attracting international support for national development efforts. Improved regional integration through the Mano River Union (MRU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has led to the creation of protocols to build peace and stability in the region.

Reinforcing this situation is an improved judiciary system. Liberians now have unfettered access to justice with strong rights and property based laws protecting citizens as well as businesses. Liberians are now more predisposed to seek justice through the system than resorting to illicit means and violence.

The process of political liberalization begun nearly two decades earlier has continued, leading to greater democratization of the Liberian system, new political elites have emerged. It is not homogenous as in the past, but expansive enough to incorporate the diversity of stakeholders across the spectrum of the Liberian society in the political, economic and social transformation of the country.

Reforms in governance have been implemented. With constitutional reforms, the three branches of government are truly co-equal, separate and independent, with the executive branch no longer dominating, as presidential powers have been streamlined.

A mutually beneficial alliance between the political elites and local business stakeholders to promote economic and political transformation has been forged and is equally creating a positive change impact on the country. Mainly indigenous entrepreneurs become prominent in the new dispensation as it leverages the opportunity for increased productivity by venturing into bigger investments previously undertaken by foreign businesses.

Meanwhile, a more active, informed and independent civil society has also emerged. It is not only keeping state institutions and bureaucrats accountable and efficient, but is collaborating with the new generation of politicians, in a mutually reinforcing way to sustain the benefits of political and economic transformation

Improved investment in education by the government and local and foreign partners including the construction of more quality and well-equipped educational infrastructure is paying off, as literacy amongst the population is increasing. The provision of free education at the elementary level and focus on girls' education create a steady progression of literacy levels among school going children. Declining illiteracy has created new social orientation that is promoting a change in mindset and attitude, with cultural values shifting more to productivity. As a result of emphasis in science education, vocational training and technology, Liberians are becoming more innovative and competitive, and contributing significantly to the knowledge based economy. They are equally taking advantage of the expansion of Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) and accessing public and private service propelled by technology.

Development of the health infrastructure, availability of more trained health workers and access to quality and affordable health delivery service have not only optimize the skilled and human resource capacity of the state through better health for majority of citizens, but has increased life expectancy to an average of 68 years.

With a current population of nearly 6 million to feed, and the prospect of becoming vulnerable to fluctuation in food prices, the government is driven by the urgency to ensure food sovereignty. The country is not yet completely self-sufficient in growing its staple – but is now producing more rice and has significantly reduce rice importation.

Economically, policy pronouncements and initiatives taken to transform the Liberian economy have been pursued and are paying off with value added a key part of the transformation.

Infrastructure development, particularly electricity and other energy sources, road network and ICT development creates the enabling environment for the economy to transform. Energy sufficiency attracts investment, boosts productivity, manufacturing and value addition. The country balances importation of goods with exports to neighboring countries, creating sufficient local capital to provide needed services for the people.

Similarly, there has been significant improvement in roads around the country. The national road network, which in 2012 was 9,916km, has nearly doubled. The planned construction of the national coastal highway has started, while more road projects linking rural communities are completed.

Legislation, regulatory regimes and policy undertaken to improve business and production are implemented. National savings have also increased as the country's debt is properly managed to avoid repeating the past. But more importantly, domestic funding opportunity is envisaged to

offset uncertainties in the global financial setting that might affect any overseas development assistance. The Liberian economy is significantly shifting from one of resource based and rent seeking to knowledge based, as science and technology are integrated in.

Despite bold steps taken to transform the country and the dividend yielded so far, the country faces critical challenges both internally and externally. Internally, some domestic forces that have been benefiting from accumulation from the old political and economic orthodoxy resist changes to the long running political and economic order. Externally, globalization, trade liberalization and interdependence come with inequities that undermine local production because of limited capacity to strongly compete with regional and international counterparts in the open market

Good governance and economic development have not come without tension. Bold reforms have shaken the old status quo, and with it the forces that perpetrated and thrived on it. Emphasis on capitalization as the driver of change comes with problems that build tension in society and threaten stability. The environment suffers degradation as well, creating more tension between the people and capital. Labor also resists the profit driven mindset of foreign capital because it undermines workers benefit and labor social protection. Foreign capital resists policies instituted by the government to protect Liberian businesses against unfair competition. The new liberal dispensation and economic rationality, in addition to pressure from external partners, constrain government to push for people of ‘non – negro descent’ to own landed property as well as dual citizenship for Diaspora Liberians. Granting non – blacks citizenship and land ownership particularly cause tension in the society because it contradicts long held view to protect the Liberian state and the nation’s cultural heritage.

Periodic situations of xenophobia keep erupting as the economy attracts highly skilled and unskilled foreign labor. Social safety nets and protection programs have been instituted by the state to manage the tension. The net effect of this is more tension in society. The government believes the tension in society undermines stability and economic gains. It is, however, able to manage the tension without employing authoritarian measures because of improved state capacity, and the legitimacy and credibility it has gained as a result.

The Path: The initial effort began in 2006. The country was able to build on initial support for reconstruction following the years of war. A bold reform agenda, including a review of the constitution supported by national forces, the donor community, and the larger international community aimed at democratization and improving the capacity of the state was vigorously pursued by the state.

Major reforms were also carried out in the security and justice sectors. A plan to develop a professional army and national police force was put in place to ensure adequate transition from the United Nations Mission in Liberia with government and international support, major steps were taken towards judicial reform. The Ministry of Justice 10 – 15 years plan has led to a decentralization of the justice system providing access to the system.

Significant progress was made in improving the economy. A national debt of US\$4.6 billion owned International Financial Institutions was waived. There was also continued flow of donor support for major economic and financial reforms and creation of effective financial management systems including the Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS), and the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF). Policy pronouncement aimed at value addition was pursued. Deliberate efforts were made to support local manufacturing. The

Central Bank of Liberia was very pivotal in this direction and established a steady loan scheme through commercial banks for local Liberian businesses particularly in the manufacturing area.

Programs to develop national infrastructure were vigorously pursued. To meet energy needs, the government prioritized the rehabilitation of the national hydro plant at Mount Coffee. In addition, the country tapped into the West African Power pool to supply communities in 4 counties sharing border with Ivory Coast.

Significant progress was also made toward meeting housing needs for the growing population by initially undertaking the construction of 5000 housing units. Telecommunication and ICT have been improved significantly.

A major road rehabilitation project was supported by development partners through ODA and IFI between 2007 and 2012 to repair and recondition roads damaged by years of neglect as a result of the war.

A new national curriculum that emphasized technical education was developed to provide Liberians the skills to support the productive mode and knowledge based economy.

The government was able to undertake these initial steps toward development by forging strategic partnerships with international development partners, regional cooperation and local stakeholders in development programs.

Critical Uncertainties

It is however, uncertain how the economic model based on innovation and productivity, would enable the state compete with other actors in the regional and international markets. In the face of globalization and trade liberalization, limited capacity of the state would render local industry vulnerable to strong foreign competition, weaken domestic production and undermine the drive toward the developmental state.

Despite initial steps to improve political and economic governance, the journey will not be seamless because tension will be smoldering in the society, as these efforts would bypass at least in the initial stages a large number of citizens who were poor. The youth in particular may find themselves quite frustrated, especially because unemployment will remain high. In addition, the government may be seen as failing to tackle corruption. The capacity of the state to manage this tension will be key. It will depend to a large extent on its capacity to deliver on some of its promises to society.

3. Political Liberalization and Resource Based Economy. The “Ain’t That Bad” Scenario

The Message: The Scenario assumes a country in 2030 in quest of a “fairer deal” where there is significant improvement in political governance without any significant economic transformation. There will be a limited adjustment to how the state operates, but no structural or systemic change. Economic growth, - if it will occur- even given a boost with oil revenue, would be marginal and come with negligible improvement in the quality of life of a majority of the citizens. There is tension and insecurity in the society, as the rate of demand for public goods does not meet the state or elites’ capacity to co-opt or manage social, political, and economic tensions.

Image of Future: There is modernization and steady opening of the political space due to pressure from domestic and external forces. The population is increasing and more and more Liberians are finding their voices as the political space is opening to new set of actors. The elite space is also widening and diversifying but elements claiming exclusive rights to the state and its resources are keen on maintaining the economic status quo.

The Path: Efforts were made to institute reforms within the context of The Public Sector and Governance Reform program to build capacity of government institutions and improve governance. A Poverty Reduction Strategy was implemented between 2008 and 2011. In addition a “Strategic Roadmap for Peace and Reconciliation” to address national healing and reconciliation after a long conflict was developed. While significant progress was made, the process was, however, fraught with challenges including resistance by conservative forces in an alliance to preserve the social, political and economic orthodoxy.

Critical Uncertainties

It is difficult to determine the level of predictability of Foreign Direct Investment and Overseas Development Assistance the state heavily relies on. International financial market crash, alternative source of natural resources can militate against reliance on the extraction of natural resources. Reliance on the extraction of foreign aid can lead to the degradation of the environment, and reduce the productivity of the land for agricultural purposes. Harsh economic conditions in the absence of national safety nets lead to the formation of cleavages and reliance on identities, which may sharpen ethnic difference and build tension in society. This scenario is also associated with regional security. Tensions in neighboring countries can have a domino effect, which can undermine peace and security in the country.

4. Authoritarian political regime and resource-based Economy: ” Everything chalk-la oh ”

The Message: This scenario is likely to occur if the institutions of state remain committed to the authoritarian nature of the state. It is defined by extreme social, political, and economic tensions that will lead to anarchy and state collapse; a near catastrophe. The scenario means that governance is very poor, social conditions are worse; the economy is extremely resource based and not performing. The rate of demand, including various forms of social and political agitation and street protests, will increase, leading to an atmosphere of fear and desperation in the society. Tensions would be managed by force or threat of force, both overtly and covertly. Given the high level of tension, the situation can only be contained if there are constituents (internal and external) to protect the authoritarian nature of the state. To avert catastrophe, there will be need to effectively develop and implement a clear plan to deal with the tensions. In the absence of such a plan, there will be aggravated tensions, violence and desolation.

Image of the Future: By 2030, the regime, which has been centralized and authoritative in policy and action, is struggling to manage a country on the brink of going back to war. The state is very weak and cannot provide the political, economic and social goods. It is no longer in control of many parts of the country as strong men are emerging in local communities challenging state authority. While there is little change in the elite composition, identity and religious based politics is increasing; new entrants into politics with aggressive behavior. The government is using resources mainly coming from the extractive industry to undertake huge public projects that are not making any impact and undermined by corruption and sabotage.

The Path: Liberia came from a devastating 14 - year civil war which led to the breakdown of national institutions. The government did not pursue the governance reforms it had promised to

undertake and many Liberians became weary and disappointed in the fact that the promise of a new beginning and a bright future was not fulfilled. With poor governance and dysfunctional institutions, government broke down and a strong man mentality emerged among the ruling elite and some section of the population to ensure stability in the midst of the attending chaos. Other institutions of government such as the legislature and the judiciary were not functioning independently and effectively.

Critical Uncertainties

Tensions induced by this scenario could only be managed if international and regional actors support the regime. However, by 2030, these tensions which transcend the capacity of the state, might heighten instability due to several factors, among them skewed wealth distribution; food insecurity; lack of political, social, and economic freedom, leading to clashes with the regime. How the military and security apparatus react to these challenges will also define the stability and sustainability of the system.

Summary of Four Exploratory Scenarios

SCENARIOS	MESSAGE	FACTORS	ACTORS	UNCERTAINTIES	STRATEGIES	TENSIONS
SCENARIO O – I <i>The “Thank God Oh” Scenario</i>	No catastrophe but no development	Natural resources, ODA and FDI	The state, IFIs, INGOs	The level, timing and predictability of ODA and FDIs, physical environment, regional security, the level of domestic safety net	External: Compliance with conditionalities /policy dialogue Internal: Cooptation/management of access to the economic rent	- Between state and development partners - Between labor and capital - State and communities / cleavages between groups
SCENARIO O – II The Developmental State Scenario: <i>“It’s not for fun” -A Tall Order”</i>	We are in for the long haul! Achieving this status requires major changes to make governance functional	Capable state, enhanced productivity (capital and labor)	The state, national capital, international partners	Competitiveness (international and regional), international architecture for development	External: strategic partnership Internal: strategic partnership with various players/stakeholders	- Creative destruction - Re-composition of social capital
SCENARIO O – III Political Liberalization and Resource Based Economy. The “Ain’t	Search for a fairer deal	Natural resources, ODA and FDI, national capital, and enhance state capacity	The state, IFIs, INGOs	The level and predictability of ODA and FDIs, physical environment, regional security, the level of domestic safety net	Creating and sustaining alliances	- Between state and development partners - Between labor and capital - State and communities/cleavages between groups

That Bad” Scenario						
SCENARIO – IV Authoritarian political regime and resource-based Economy: ” Everything chalk-la oh”	Catastrophe	Natural resource, including oil	The state (for example, the military) and non-state actors (formal, informal, and criminals)	The Security sector – national or international (i.e. regional climate)	Coercion	Confrontation between actors -

Conclusions on the scenarios

1. All the scenarios are fraught with uncertainties, which have been highlighted. The margin of uncertainty varies from a variable to another and depending on the evolution of that uncertainty, the outlook of the scenario may change.
2. The interconnectedness of internal and external variables in the Liberian system comes out very clearly from these scenarios. Although internal dynamics have received a lot of attention in the scenarios, none of them can come close to reality without some external variables playing out. Liberia is not an island but a country, which, for better or worse, is part of the international community.
3. Through these scenarios, and at the end of the exercise, questions to be asked are:
 - How can Liberians address the most urgent and critical challenges and risks associated with the scenarios before they become time bombs that put into jeopardy or even destroy the opportunities identified or the accomplishments recorded?
 - What can each Liberian do in their homes, their communities and workplaces to contribute to build a future that lives up to the expectations and promise encapsulated in a number of policy initiatives and challenges of nation building?

CHAPTER 4: TOWARDS A NATIONAL VISION

National Vision

- **What is a vision?**

A vision is an expression of the aspirations of a people, providing a sense of common identity, purpose, and ideals. It expresses a people’s sense of where they have collectively come from, where they now find themselves, and where they wish to find themselves in the future.

Against the backdrop of Liberia's development context and future possibilities as outlined in four scenarios, the **Developmental State scenario** provides an image of the future that seemingly all Liberians would like to aspire to/realize. Significantly, it incorporates ideas about the requisite critical action for structural and systemic transformation of Liberia. It envisages a harmonious nation united in diversity, democratic and culturally vibrant, innovative, creative, self-reliant and prosperous, amid a beautiful and flourishing environment.

- **Where does the vision come from, what are its sources?**

This vision is knowledge-based. That means that it is drawn from analytical work carried out to understand how Liberia as a system has been constituted and evolved. As such it draws on the retrospective analysis which has identified invariants, trends and seeds of change of the system, as well as SWOT from different thematic studies conducted by the team or others but relevant to the exercise. It draws as well from the structural analysis.

But the vision is also based on people's aspirations as they have been expressed through various mechanisms of consultation. Among the issues on which Liberians enthusiastically expressed their views were the following: national symbols, land, food, health, education, roads, natural resources, security, youth empowerment, women empowerment, the elderly, the physically challenged, value addition, growth and development, and tenure of elected officers. From that point of view, it can be argued that the vision is a synthesis of the national aspirations.

- **What are its characteristics?**

They are five.

- i. It is grounded in knowledge of the system under consideration: the retrospective analysis of Liberia, which has enabled an identification of constants, trends and seeds of change, was a necessary step in that regard.
- ii. It provides a snapshot of desirable, realistic, credible, and attractive future: the exploratory scenarios constructed and the vision formulated meet those criteria.
- iii. The portrayed future is shared by the populations, reflects a national consensus, and/or symbolizes national unity.
- iv. It enhances national pride, dignity, hope and a sense of purpose. It is an invitation to a pro-active behavior from the people, who then rather than being subject to change, act in order to trigger the desired changes.
- v. It jump starts development by marshaling national resources toward achieving development goals. The message conveyed by the Vision is that the Liberian people desire and are committed to realizing the developmental state, and are consequently prepared to marshal all national resource, as well as bring aboard international partners to the common end. Consequently, though achieving Vision 2030 is of a tall order, requiring the focused efforts of many generations, not to speak of the implicit socio-political and economic transformation, the Liberian leadership and people commit themselves to strive to bring to bear a results-

oriented mindset and values in the policy formulation and implementation processes.

- **What are its building blocks, its tenets, thrusts and components?**

From the retrospective and structural analyses, as well as the various consultations, the following elements emerge:

1. **Economically prosperous** people. Liberian people are facing the challenges of poverty, low productivity, and dependence on commodity and external financial assistance. The vision is that a successful and sustained process of extirpation from a commodity based economy to a more knowledge-based economy has been made possible through a set of policies which will have focused on value addition, diversification of the productive base, enhanced assistance to domestic capital, development of a macro-policy framework which has translated into sustained economic growth.

The transformation of the domestic policy space and economic landscape will have been accompanied by an emphasis on, and implementation of, a development diplomacy enabling the country to seize opportunities associated with the changing architecture of international system based on globalization, interconnectedness and cooperation. While sustaining its cooperation with traditional development partners in the North, Liberia will have fostered cooperation with the South and paid particular attention to lessons learnt from countries and nations like Angola and Mozambique – two states previously torn by decades of civil war which were able to turn the curve towards becoming emerging countries. Liberia will have been able to take advantage of this expanding field of cooperation thanks to an unflinching political will to set its own development agenda and make the policy changes that have led to transformation in other emerging countries.

The message is: We will get richer as a nation by making our economy competitive, by finding areas in which we can excel and by going out for quality in whatever we do.

Socially and demographically a harmonious nation united in diversity. Liberian society has been confronted with division and polarization between social groups. Dichotomies like native/settler, Diaspora/homeland, have fed conflicting narratives and threatened social capital. The vision is one of a society which has been able to overcome those divisive discourses and has moved forward toward acknowledgment and appreciation of diversity, re-knitting of the social fabric, addition and multiplication rather than subtraction and division, and a win-win rather than zero-sum conflict resolution model. In that vision, the conventional language or terminology used in reference to Liberian identities has been revisited, if not abolished.

That vision is informed by the national consultations during which Liberians expressed freely their perspectives on the issue of national identity. They voiced the desire that national symbols be rendered more representative of the Liberian population, and in some cases stressed that they be characterized by blending rather than totally replacing old or present symbols. There was a strong and near uniform sentiment for change of one sort or the other in all of the symbols of the state, moving them toward reflecting Liberian traditional culture. Ultimately, the vision is one of a Liberia where social harmony will have been maintained, where diversity will be a source of enrichment rather than a cause

for division, where Liberians will get along well with fellow Africans and indeed all peoples because they get along well with one another.

2. **Politically democratic.** Liberia is facing the issue of the fragility of peace, centralized/authoritarian culture, and frayed relations between State and citizens. The vision is characterized by significant move towards democratization, reconciliation, and respect for human rights, sovereignty of the people, citizenship based not only on common heritage but also and equally important on commitment to common future, and accountable and decentralized state. Again the vision is largely informed by the outcomes of the consultations. Liberians particularly discussed the importance of peace across the country and the Diaspora. Many saw reconciliation as the basis of restoring genuine peace to the country, and in this respect, the TRC process and its outcome have been viewed as a basis of ensuring reconciliation and transformation.
3. **Environmentally, a beautiful and flourishing country.** Liberia is facing the challenge of environmental depletion and degradation at quite a fast pace. If current trends persist, it is likely that water; land, air and biodiversity resources will be seriously affected. The vision is to reverse that trend and make appropriate investments so as to enhance the quality of the environment and promote its sustainable use for the benefit of present and future generations. In the vision, we have made the towns more pleasant to live in; mass transit system has become operational to move people rapidly and with comfort and safety. Liberia has made itself nearly self-sufficient in clean energy through sensible conservation, and through developing the domestic potential for wind, solar energy, and preparing for drawing on the thermal energy of the ocean. The natural beauty of the beaches, which has been threatened at times, will have been restored. All Liberians are aware that the environment is gorgeous but fragile and that the price of quality is unflinching vigilance.
4. **Culturally vibrant.** Since its inception Liberia has been faced with conflicting value systems. A significant number of people see “Liberia [as] a nation mightily struggling to find itself,” believing that “Liberians have yet to find a national identity truly representative of the people. The vision is to head off the risk of Liberia developing culturally as a transplanted culture, a replica of America in Africa and subsequently the rolling back in Liberia of traditional society and cultural practices being replaced by “a modern way of life.” During consultations, many expressed the desire that this state of affairs be changed, and have called for a change in nothing short of a national mindset that would reflect the full range of the country’s heritage as national unity is contemplated. .

The role of the university in that regard cannot be overlooked. Tertiary education in Liberia must of necessity seek to address these issues if it must fulfill its core mission and become more relevant to the nation.

5. **Technologically innovative,** Liberia is technologically speaking quite underdeveloped. Production systems are geared toward extraction and innovation is in very short supply. The vision is to make significant move towards a knowledge-based economy and society, as this is key for seizing opportunities associated with technological innovation-led globalization. The vision is to see tertiary education play a major role in that regard. It must facilitate the development of higher skill levels that would assure the individual and the nation the possibility and opportunity for prosperity, social wellbeing, economic

viability or competitiveness and political stability. In the vision, higher productivity of labor, higher quality goods and services, and better conditions of work will have come as a result of greater use of science and technology, specialist knowledge, skill and professionalism. In the vision, a lower proportion of the population is in agriculture, a much higher proportion in industry and services and, in all sectors, a higher proportion in the more skilled occupations. More science means less sweat.

These components of the vision suggest that the Liberian vision is multidimensional, addressing all at once the social, economic, political, environmental, cultural and technological aspirations of the Liberian people. It goes beyond the narrow approaches of development, which have proven problematic over time.

The multi-dimension Vision may be summarized as follows:

1. A United People with core aspirations of:
 - Political stability based in equity
 - A society that embraces its triple heritage and guarantees space for all positive cultures to thrive
 - A society that is democratic, tolerant, respectful of the rule of law and human rights
 - A society of gender equity, empowerment and opportunities for all.
2. A Progressive Nation reflective of the following elements:
 - Self-reliant, innovative and competitive private sector-led economy with strong indigenous presence
 - People-focused investment policies
 - Nation that embraces science and technology as avenue to modernization
 - Agriculture for food self-sufficiency and security
 - Healthy, well and relevantly-educated with improved quality of life.
- **What to do with it? What is the way forward?**

Operationalization of the vision is the litmus test of its relevance and appropriateness. The vision is not meant to be nicely bound and shelved but rather to serve as a guide for action.

CHAPTER 5: TOWARDS THE OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE NATIONAL VISION

1. Operationalization means literally the translation of the vision tenets and thrust into operational activities.
2. As the vision is multidimensional in scope, its operationalization should be as well. Thus although the economic and political dimensions of the operationalization may pop up first and attract attention and even funding because the vehicles of operationalization are already in existence and funding readily available, they should be seen as just some aspects of the operationalization.
3. Operationalization means moving from identifying what is desirable to creating the conditions that will make the desirable achievable. In other words, operationalization

requires development planning, starting with the **formulation of strategies for attaining the national vision.**

4.1 The formulation of strategies for attaining a national vision entails consideration of several factors, among which are:

- Future bearing events: Liberia is party to a number of international conventions and agreements in different spheres. Key among them will probably be the post 2015 Agenda as it will be in all likelihood characterized by the broadening of the concept of development and will include in all likelihood a number of values and goals expressed in the National vision.
- Key actors. The role of the State in the formation and development of the Liberian nation cannot be overemphasized and no strategy can be formulated and implemented without due consideration to the role of the State. However, other actors are emerging or asserting themselves. They include civil society as well as private sector organizations. On the external front, if development diplomacy is to be meaningful, it is very likely that emerging economies will be playing a greater role in the development of the country.
- The trends. Within the country as well as in the global arena, the trends identified in the report are likely to be active in the next 20 years. Whereas some of them like democratization processes and regional integration may be seen as positive, others like increased disparities between countries and between social groups within countries are a source of concern.
- The strategies of the actors are to be properly analyzed as not only do they evolve over time but also they are quite different from group of actors to another, ranging from cooperation to coercion, from partnerships to conditionalities.
- The uncertainties: From the various scenarios, it would appear that the capacity of the State to ensure peace and stability through political compromise is as an important uncertainty as regional stability.
- The strengths: numerous seeds of change have been identified in the report. If they were to develop, they could provide solid ground for enabling policies in economic, social, political arenas.
- The weaknesses: they include the patriarchal and authoritarian nature of the State and Society. Unless they are uprooted, Liberia's development will be skewed and inequalities will flourish and put into jeopardy the vision of a harmonious nation.
- The opportunities: the demographic dividend, the confidence of the donor community and the advances in regional integration are certainly key elements.
- The threats: regional instability, refugee and internally displaced persons have been quite significant factors in shaping Liberia as it was before the wars; they have played an important role in the recent past and should therefore not be overlooked. The economic performances at the global level may also be a source of concern.

Finally, **realignment** is the key word/vehicle for operationalization. It aims at ensuring that there are synergistic relationships/effects between various spheres and sectors of the economy, the

society and the polity. In other words that the nexus peace, inclusive and sustainable development, democracy is consolidated as the nation moves forward towards the operationalization of its vision.

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