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Report and Guide

LAND, LIVELIHOODS AND LONG-TERM VISIONS

Community-led Land Tenure Assessment and
Land Use Planning in Eastern Sierra Leone

IMPRINT

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The SPIRAL Project: Building Sustainable Partnerships
for the Implementation of Responsible Investments in Agricultural Land

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Women from Pewama Village during the Sketch Mapping Exercise
Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e. V. (18.07.2018); by Brima Dakonah

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ABBREVIATIONS & DEFINITIONS

Annual Crop	Crop whose life cycle lasts one year
Bush Committee	A leadership council consisting of community elders, family representatives and Traditional Authorities
Bush Head	An elder individual who is a ward of a Land Owning Family's land. He ensures that there is no encroachment or illegal activity taking place
Community Delegation	Group of community representatives appointed by the community to facilitate the Municipal Land Documentation-Process in the field (for details, see Chapter 2.2.1)
Coordination Team	Group of four or five members from the Implementation Team with overall responsibility for the implementation of the LTA/PLUP Exercise
CPC-Model	A fair and inclusive business model for responsible private-sector investments in agricultural land developed by the SPIRAL Project under the LEGEND Challenge Fund
DFID	The UK Department for International Development
Family Delegation	Group of Land Owning Family Members that facilitates the Land Ownership Claims Documentation-Process in the field (for details, see Chapter 2.2.2)
Farm Hut	A basic, temporary shelter used by farmers during the day in order to be close to their crops
Hamlet	A small village where people permanently live, that originated from a 'mother' village and still lies within the boundaries and under the jurisdiction of such village (i.e. the "Target Village")
Implementor	The entity (Government, NGO, Investor) that is conducting the LTA/PLUP
ITA	Investment Target Area
Key Developmental Issue	A concept used by the Coordination Team and the Village Volunteer Committee to facilitate the development of a community vision (e.g. 'Socio-economic Progress and Environmental Sustainability')
Land Holding	The total land, or sum of all Land Ownership Polygons, owned by a Land Owning Family
Land Ownership Polygon	A spatial layer of an area of land that is claimed by a Land Owning Family
Land Owning Family	A group of individuals and sub-families who are related through patrilineal descent and share Ownership Claims to a specific area of land
Land Use Polygon	A spatial layer of an area of (agricultural) land that is linked to a single Land User with customary use rights over such area and lays within a Land Ownership Polygon
Land User	An individual who cultivates land, and may or may not be a member of a Land Owning Family
(Permanent) Land Use Right	The customary right of a Land User over a Land Use Polygon that is either being cultivated with Annual, or Perennial Crops. While Use Rights over land planted with Annual Crops are limited in time, Use Rights to Perennial Crops are permanent
LTA/PLUP	Land Tenure Assessment/Participatory Land Use Planning

Mapping Team	Group of community members appointed by the community to facilitate the Land Use Rights Documentation-Process (for details, see Chapter 2.2.3)
MLCPE	Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment
Municipal Boundary Polygon	A spatial layer of an area that is claimed by a community. It contains Land Ownership and Land Use Polygons
Neighboring Village	A non-associated community that shares borders with the Target Village
NLP	National Land Policy
Perennial Crop	Crop that has a long life cycle and can survive for decades
Satellite Community	A village that started as a Hamlet, but over time became an independent village
SPIRAL Project	Sustainable Partnerships for the Implementation of Responsible Investments in Agricultural Land - Project (the "Project")
Stranger	An individual who is not in a Land Owning Family and has moved to a particular community in the last five years
Target Village	Village in which the LTA/PLUP Exercise took place
Traditional Authority	Customary leadership structure encompassing the community, section and chiefdom-levels and headed by the Chiefdom Council as its ultimate decision-making body
Tree Crop	Crop that is permanent, such as cocoa, coffee or cashew
VGGT	Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security; endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security of the UN FAO in May 2012
VVC	The Village Volunteer Committee; a group of community members acting as an intermediary for Stages II and III of the LTA/PLUP Exercise and providing support to the Implementors as needed

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT AND GUIDE

Recording Land Ownership Claims and Land Use Rights information can strengthen land tenure rights, increase land productivity, and prevent future land disputes.

Against this background, Sierra Leone's National Land Policy (NLP) strives to map the land tenure rights of all citizens by 2030. Achieving this objective will require the systematic implementation of land tenure assessments across the country. As this has the potential of triggering major land-related conflicts, such assessments must be participatory and go hand in hand with a sound planning process at the community level. Since the formal endorsement of the NLP by the President of Sierra Leone in May 2017, there has been a growing demand by civil society, government, especially the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment (MLCPE) and NGO's, as well as the international donor community, for a new, adapted methodology. Under the SPIRAL Project (the "**Project**")¹ *Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e. V.* (WHH), in partnership with *One Village Partners (OVP)* and *Lizard Earth Limited*, strove to develop and test a reliable, integrated methodology for a Land Tenure Assessment (LTA) and Participatory Land Use Planning (PLUP) process which government agencies and partners can scale-up and replicate in their endeavor to meet the provisions of the NLP. As part of these efforts, WHH has:

- Created and validated a reliable, integrated methodological approach for the implementation of LTAs and PLUPs in investment contexts and complex family land holding structures
- Documented and geo-referenced municipal boundaries in three Target Villages across Kailahun District in Eastern Sierra Leone
- Sketched Land Ownership Claims and Land Use Rights in participatory mapping exercises and developed an approach to the geo-referencing and mapping of such claims/rights on the basis of prior assessments, as well as regional and sector expertise²
- Documented and geo-referenced Permanent Land Use Rights of 49 community members in the Target Village of Pewama in Kailahun District in Eastern Sierra Leone
- Initiated and contributed to wider community development through a participatory Land Use Planning process

The purpose of this publication is to document the applied methodology (see Chapter 2), present the key findings (see Chapter 3), capture relevant learnings and make recommendations (see Chapter 4). It also intends to serve as a comprehensive guide for Implementors who wish to conduct Land Tenure Assessments and Land Use Planning exercises (see Chapter 5).

As customary land tenure systems exist throughout Sierra Leone and in many areas around the world, the guide may act as a tool to understand land tenure systems and stakeholders, document community boundaries and land tenure rights, and to empower communities in leading their own development projects in and beyond Sierra Leone.

1 For details, see Chapter 1.1

2 For the avoidance of doubt: WHH did not map Land Ownership Claims in the field.

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The SPIRAL Project

With the objective of strengthening equitable access to land and infrastructure for sustainable development and environmental protection, the Committee on World Food Security of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) endorsed the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT) as a global consensus on land governance standards on May 11th, 2012. Following the VGGT, the Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (PRAI) were endorsed on October 15, 2014 to advance people's right to adequate food, reduce poverty, and support the global fight against hunger.

Since then, many countries have launched initiatives to drive the implementation of the VGGT and PRAI, integrating their principles into national legislation and promoting business models which enhance the potential of large-scale agri-business investments in land and building social legitimacy by strengthening citizens' rights to inclusive and consultative participation in decision-making processes, women's tenure rights and rural communities' stake in land-based business proceeds.

Against this background, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) which has long been playing a strong role in driving change towards improving land rights protection, land-tenure information and responsible private sector land investments in developing countries, commissioned WHH to develop and test an alternative business model for large-scale land-based investments in Eastern Sierra Leone (i.e. the "CPC-Model").

With funding from DFID, WHH developed the Cocoa Production Cluster (CPC) Model and in October 2016, launched the SPIRAL Project to set the stage and prepare the framework for the establishment and sustainable implementation of the CPC-Model by a private sector investor over the next 30 years.

The CPC-Model is an innovative approach which operationalizes the principles of the VGGT into real change on the ground by institutionalizing "win-win partnerships" between investors and rural communities. Under the model, investors obtain access to agricultural land and investment security while the host communities gain access to capital, farm inputs and know-how.

Land Acquisition and Consultation

In an inclusive engagement process, the SPIRAL Project identified production sites of 1,000 hectares in four geographically distinct Investment Target Areas (ITAs) across three Chiefdoms in Eastern Sierra Leone. Together with the investor it engaged Traditional Leaders, Land Owning Families and the wider community to secure land pledges and conduct participatory site assessments verifying the suitability and size of the pledged land before documenting, surveying, and mapping the individual pieces of land. Consultations formed an important aspect of the acquisition process. The Project created platforms for the exchange with civil society and established a grievance mechanism which served as a tool for stakeholders to voice and address concerns and discontent.

The regular dissemination of information in meetings, trainings and radio programs complemented the approach.

Community Empowerment

Informed by a comprehensive Household Vulnerability Assessment, the Project selected the most vulnerable members of society as Project Beneficiaries and supported them in setting up community-based producer associations. The Project conducted Constitution Development Workshops³, strengthened the members' understanding of the VGGT and fair land acquisition processes, and linked them with legal experts who helped to negotiate a Land Lease and Partnership Arrangement which meets the requirements of the VGGT and ensures the viability of the investment.

Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility and Advocacy

The Project determined the potential social and environmental risks associated with the investment and designed appropriate mitigation, management, and monitoring measures to address unintended impacts that could affect host communities' livelihoods, the investor's sustainability performance, or ecosystems.

3 Constitution Development Workshops support the Project Beneficiaries in establishing constitutions and by-laws governing their producer association.

Promoting the CPC-Model as a responsible land-use option, the Project worked closely with government authorities lobbying for the inclusion of key-points of the VGGT and other standards into relevant policies including the government's new Agri-Business Investment Approval Process (the "AIAP"). All consultations followed a participatory approach and involved civil society as well as government bodies and commercial agents. The main aim was to influence the overall land tenure and investment debate in Sierra Leone and to establish the CPC as a new rights-based investment model in the agriculture sector.

Land Tenure Assessment and Participatory Land Use Planning

In order to identify land use opportunities and challenges, understand existing land tenure conditions, document the legitimate tenure rights of community members, and expand local development strategies, the Project engaged host communities, beneficiaries, local government, traditional leaders and other stakeholders in a LTA/PLUP Exercise. The exercise gave the host communities the opportunity to identify and present opportunities and problems to decision makers.

This document places a specific focus on the LTA/PLUP Exercise undertaken by the Project.

1.2 Land Governance in Sierra Leone

Since colonial times, Sierra Leone's land governance system has been complex and multi-layered. It is built on three different ownership regimes comprising State Land, Private Land, and Public Land and is governed by both, general and customary law which compete, and often overlap in jurisdiction. While general law provides for the awarding of freeholds and leaseholds, customary law provides for statutory leases and customary tenancies. This coexistence creates legal uncertainty in the transition from customary land use arrangements to commercial agriculture, which often disadvantages local communities.

The land sector is characterized by the absence of a singular legal and legislative framework. While the Government of Sierra Leone presented a new NLP in mid 2015 after several years of negotiations, the document falls short of adequately addressing the existing legal land governance challenges. The problems posed by legislation are further compounded by a weak land administration and management. The Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment (MLCPE) has insufficient capacities to carry out its scope of responsibility. Beyond all, land rights have never been

systematically documented and mapped. As a result, land owners do not have official land titles and the government does not have a comprehensive database with land use information at its disposal.

All this has detrimental effects on the governance of land including insecure tenure rights, people's inequitable access to land, and legal uncertainty in land matters. While the "Protectorate (Provinces) Land Act, CAP 122 of the Laws of Sierra Leone 1960" defines that land in the provinces is subject to customary law and that Paramount Chiefs have the right and duty to hold land in trust of the land owners in their Chiefdom, some Paramount Chiefs and land owners have proven to interpret their customary privileges in their own interest and engage in land negotiations with investors and/or government officials without consulting the affected Land Users. Even if such consultations take place, wider societal interests are often inadequately represented as the affected host communities struggle to organize themselves. Women are especially disadvantaged by the provisions of customary tradition and often depend on the goodwill of the traditional chiefs, the Land Owning Families, their husbands, and male siblings to obtain access to land. Women's access is highly problematic as they play a crucial role in household development and small-scale subsistence farming for daily food production.

Fueled by a new focus on economic development, large scale land acquisitions by mostly foreign investors have grown since 2002 and particularly soared since 2009 when the state-run Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA) organized an investment conference in the United Kingdom. While the Ebola epidemic temporarily reduced foreign currency inflows, private sector companies have renewed large-scale land investments in Sierra Leone amounting to about 18% of all arable land, as the global demand for food, fuel, fiber, forestry and horticultural products continues to rise.⁴

Conventional large-scale land developments put small-holders at risk of being marginalized by losing access to land and other limited natural resources. This has potential implications for food security, stability, and peace. Although more than 60% of Sierra Leone's population work in the agricultural sector⁵, national food security is a constant concern. According to the 2016 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA) conducted by the Government of Sierra Leone together with the World Food Program (WFP) and the UN FAO, 50% of Sierra Leone's population is food insecure.⁶ Smallholders rely on rudimentary cultivation methods, low capital input, and a low degree of mechanization for the production of crops.

4 Oakland Institute

5 Lahai/Sannoh/Koroma (2006)

6 Figures gathered at a Presentation on February 4th, 2016 in Freetown

As a consequence, the sector is prone to low labor and land productivity, resulting in inefficient natural resource use and gradual degradation.

The increasing pressure on the country's natural resources (by a growing number of smallholders, mining companies, and agri-businesses) and the low food and nutrition security in rural areas, in combination with inadequate consultation practices (in land acquisition processes) has in the past led to conflicts between traditional Land Users and investors. Since then, the principle of the *free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)*, a central cornerstone of the VGGT, has received wider attention by the government and other stakeholders. Despite growing understanding of the importance of responsible land-based investment and the publication of guidance on the subject, there has been a lack of effective implementation. Investments continue to reduce land tenure security, projects are contested by local Land Users, and investment risks remain high.

The NLP better addresses the problematic issues of land administration, land tenure, and large-scale land investments. While first drafts of the policy document did not adequately reflect the VGGT, and were not based on a wide societal consensus, the current version from August 2015 places greater emphasis on principles of inclusion, transparency, fairness, and corporate responsibility.

1.3 Land Tenure Systems in the Eastern Province

Sierra Leone has multiple land tenure regimes, including a system modeled after British colonial land doctrine in the Western Peninsula, and a customary land tenure system throughout the rest of the country (the "Provinces").

In the Provinces, land ownership and Use Rights fall under the customary land tenure system, encompassing various levels of Traditional Authority over family land. Primarily, Land Ownership Claims fall under the jurisdiction of Land Owning Families. A Land Owning Family is a group of individuals, comprised of sub-families and households who derive from the same patrilineal line and have claim to specific land through direct descent. A Land Owning Family ranges in size with multiple authorities, namely a Land Owning Family Head and Representatives. Although Land Owning Families confer Land Ownership Claims by descent, sometimes outside households or individuals, known as "strangers", will establish strong relations with a Land Owning Family. Though they are not related to the Land Owning Family, they gain *de facto* membership through favor or by marriage, and are recognized as members henceforth.

Individuals in a Land Owning Family have claims to land owned by their family. Typically, a Land Owning Family's claims derive from the original settlement by an ancestor or as an outcome of war, tracing back to as far as 400 years ago up to contemporary times. Claims to specific portions of land and other land-related interests lay at the discretion and control of sub-families or even individuals, but are in accordance with the Head of the Land Owning Family, their members, and the Traditional Authorities who act as custodians over the land

Sub-families' access to land and Ownership Claims derive from habitual Use Rights, in cases where land is not a limiting factor and land pressure allows for the reclamation of land. When a sub-family engages in crop rotation for food crops and other small agricultural products, their access to different plots of land increases. For example, if a sub-family starts with one hectare of land, in 10 years it will have 10 hectares since each new crop requires a 'fresh' area of land. Through these land use patterns and shifting cultivation, sub-family heads gradually gain larger land holdings and more independence. Eventually, their trans-generational Land Use Rights turn into distinctive Ownership Claims. A similar pattern can be found among sub-families of one Land Owning Family who acquire Land Use Rights over a piece of land claimed by another Land Owning Family. To solidify their rights, these sub-families will sometimes adopt the other Land Owning Family's name, while still associating with their original Land Owning Family, although this often leads to protracted inter-family disputes.

Major decisions on land are made by the Head of the Land Owning Family (subject to the gravity of the respective decision) with the consent of all members through Land Owning Family representatives and a Bush Committee. Community elders play a crucial role as information on land in many communities is restricted to older members. Despite the appearance of a balanced power structure, there is considerable overlap with Land Owning Families and Traditional Authorities. For example, chiefs, and youth leaders are often members of Land Owning Families, essentially blurring the lines between these separate vestiges of power.

While there is variation from village to village, a Land User who is a Stranger or ordinary community member must generally enter into a customary land use agreement with a Land Owning Family. By law, every smallholder farmer is a leaseholder and the right to settle in a community confers the right to grow food crops at the minimum, but what, where, and how much is determined by the Land Owning Family.

Use Rights are tied to the types of crops one cultivates and are obtained in the following ways: inheritance from a father or husband, a land lease with payment, land “borrowing” without payment, a sharecropping arrangement, land given as collateral, purchase of land, or stewardship of land. The presence of crops bestows rights to the Land User, as long as the crops remain. Land Users may have land rights ‘indefinitely’ as common crops in Sierra Leone (cocoa, coffee, cashew) are perennial. In this case, Land Users are able to bequeath their rights to descendants establishing a de facto Ownership Claim, commonly after two generations. However, as soon as an area is no longer in use, the Land User transfers his rights back to the Land Owning Family. Therefore, Land Users that cultivate annual crops such as fruit, vegetables, and upland rice, experience land insecurity as they lose their rights shortly after annual harvest. While this is most commonly the case, Use Rights can also sometimes span several years, depending on the customary arrangements in a community.

As Land Owning Families generally show reluctance in surrendering rights to an individual over extended periods of time, community members may find it difficult to acquire Use Rights to larger-than-average holdings, especially for tree crops. Overall, a Land User may experience challenges or relative ease in accessing land, depending on the community’s by-laws which differ from village to village.

1.4 Demographics of the Target Villages

Sierra Leone remains one of the least developed countries in the world.⁷ In rural areas, low education and income levels, lack of access to healthcare, WASH, and road networks contribute to high levels of vulnerability and insecurity among communities. With most people reliant on agriculture to secure a livelihood, access to land is vital and the strongest determinant of vulnerability. WHH, together with OVP and Lizard Earth conceived, developed, and implemented the LTA/PLUP Exercise in three rural, highly vulnerable villages in the Eastern Province, who were identified through an ongoing partnership with the SPIRAL Project. The need for an increased understanding of land systems and use for the Project investment made the three Target Villages prime candidates for the LTA/PLUP, with additional aims of generating awareness on land use and tenure systems and sparking community-led development. The communities of Pewama, Gunsua and Mbenahun are located in Kailahun District, an area in Eastern Sierra Leone bordering Guinea and Liberia. The communities are small and homogenous with 49 households residing in Pewama, 29 in Gunsua and 35 in Mbenahun. All communities experience high vulnerability as most members engage in subsistence agricultural activities to sustain their families. The communities have a

majority of young people, with over half their populations below 19 years of age and an average household size of five members. The majority of people are married monogamously, practice Islam, and speak Mende as their primary language.⁸ Due to the communities’ small size and remote location, they each present a unique case and cannot be assumed to be representative of other villages in Kailahun District.

7 UNDP (2016)

8 Annie Werner (2018)

2 METHODOLOGY

The LTA/PLUP Exercise was implemented in four stages:

1. Consensus Building, Awareness Creation and Sketch Mapping
2. Land Mapping
3. Participatory Action Planning
4. Documentation and Policy Implementation

While the following pages outline the approach developed and used by WHH, OVP and Lizard Earth in implementing the LTA/PLUP Exercise, a detailed, more practical step-by-step guide for Implementors describing the objectives, processes, target group(s) and expected outputs of each activity can be found in Chapter 5.

2.1 Consensus Building, Awareness Creation and Sketch Mapping

Numerous group discussions, knowledge-sharing and sketch mapping were necessary foundational steps in the LTA/PLUP Exercise. For the initial stage, WHH, OVP and Lizard Earth formed a joint Coordination Team which comprised of four staff who were all experienced in participatory community work. The team members were backstopped by WHH's Head of Project and OVP's Program Director. The Coordination Team was responsible for monitoring and steering the LTA/PLUP process, served as a contact point to the communities, facilitated the participatory community exercises and followed-up on the agreed way forward.

Pro-tip

Clear messaging and the consistent use of terminology around the exercise and objectives has significant implications and are important steps before engaging with a community. For example, land 'demarcation' involves physically marking an area and hands the Project inappropriate control of community boundaries while, 'documentation' is simply recording. A strong message and consistent terminology leaves less room for confusion and doubts that may surface in a community.

The first stage of the LTA/PLUP Exercise involved two different community visits which spanned over three days, with the option to extend for a more prolonged period of time.

Day 1

2.1.1 Meeting with Community Leadership & Stakeholder Analysis

Upon entering a community, the Coordination Team met with the town chief, crucially, the Paramount Chief, and other relevant community leaders to explain the purpose and objectives of the LTA/PLUP Exercise. In securing support and leadership buy-in, the chief then invited those who make critical decisions about land to a focus group discussion that day about the history of the village and land. Such stakeholders included traditional representatives, community leaders, land owners and their representatives, and community members.

In order to gain insight into the communities' existing land ownership structures, the Coordination Team, together with the focus group, identified the community stakeholders by conducting a Stakeholder Analysis. As the LTA/PLUP Exercise was designed to document community boundaries as well as Land Ownership Claims and Use Rights of community members, the Coordination Team obtained an understanding of the social fabric of the respective community and a general picture of who the Land Owners and Land Users were.

At the end of the meeting, the town chief invited the entire community to a meeting a few days later to introduce and discuss the second and third stages of the LTA/PLUP Exercise.

2.1.2 Village and Land History

The Coordination Team obtained a broad understanding of the community and its history before moving ahead. The discussion among chiefs, Traditional Authorities, and other decision makers consolidated the community's history of land use and ownership from the mid-20th century or before, up to now and identified key agricultural systems and any long-term land dispute between community members.

Pro-tip

The Village and Land History might reveal inter-community relationships which are important to understanding decision-making processes and identifying important stakeholders later on. For example, if the Target Village has grown out of a former Hamlet, the original village may want to exert control over the exercise. The Coordination Team found instances of this with the village of Bandajuma, where Gunsua is originally from.

By the end of this activity, the origins and baseline of families with Land Ownership Claims were established.

2.1.3 Transect Walk

After collecting the Village and Land History, the Coordination Team concluded the first day's activities by walking with a few community members through the village to identify local farming businesses and important community features.

The Community Leadership Meeting, Village and Land History, and Transect Walk were a solid foray into the LTA/PLUP Exercise laying the groundwork for the following activities of Stage I.

Day 2

2.1.4 Facilitated Group Discussion with the Entire Community

The town chief and Traditional Authorities invited the entire community and members of Hamlets identified during the community stakeholder analysis to a meeting to secure ownership among the entire community, prevent potential land issues, have all those who have land rights in the community represented, and to obtain consent from the Hamlet members. The community-wide Facilitated Group Discussion introduced the LTA/PLUP Exercise and identified existing by-laws and decision-making processes, gender norms around land use, marginalized groups and ways in which gender and vulnerable or marginalized groups were using land.

The Coordination Team began by outlining the objectives and activities for the current meeting, the LTA/PLUP Exercise, and larger country-wide policy aims. In the discussion, the day's activities and rest of the exercise were put into context of the national political and economic landscape and in direct benefit to the community members. Throughout the introduction, the Coordination Team underscored the importance of the exercise in clear language; by mapping their land and reaching consensus together, the community could better plan for how to use land in order to trigger development that would benefit the entire community.

The Coordination Team carefully listened to the concerns of the community members and other stakeholders and built common ground. It documented the key discussion points and outcomes of all meetings in a pre-defined reporting format.

Once the community had given its free and informed consent, the Coordination Team, together with the community, agreed on the implementation process, a timeline, and each other's roles and responsibilities.

The Coordination Team also prepared for the event that the LTA/PLUP Exercise evoked land-related disputes between community members, Land Owning Families, and entire villages. Together with the community members it explored which local conflict resolution mechanisms for land-related conflicts the community had in place. In no instance did a community have no such mechanism. The Coordination Team encouraged the community to explain the procedure in order to establish a uniform understanding among all members and ensured that all members felt happy with the existing mechanism and agreed to resort to it in the event that a conflict would arise.

2.1.5 Social Capital Mapping

The construction of a Social Capital Map allowed all community members to have a chance to visualize their village and their land, examine how the community was using this land, identify social assets, capital, needs, and encouraged the community to think about different development initiatives.

The first step engaged the whole community in delineating community borders and roads that cross their village. The approach was participatory and utilized the creative and effective method of sand-mapping in a community area, such as a barre. In the next step, the community further identified the sections⁹ in their village and five or so key social assets that they wanted to map, with an appropriate local symbol to represent each one. Once complete, the community endorsed and discussed their immediate thoughts on the map. The information gathered from *Mapping Exercise 1: Social Capital* was used to complement the information of the subsequent Natural Resource Mapping Exercise.

⁹ A municipal area (i.e. a community's land) commonly consists of several sections which represent different families' Land Ownership Claims.

2.1.6 Natural Resource Mapping of the Village

The Natural Resource Mapping Exercise was an important first step in identifying and documenting the community land governing structures, Use Rights among different groups, and key agricultural activities. The mapping exercise not only identified community land, but documented the borders of Land Ownership Claims, the number of Land Owning Families and types of agricultural activities taking place in the respective community.

Information from the Stakeholder Analysis (for details, see Chapter 2.1.1) provided preliminary information on different community members' relationship to land and agricultural activities. The analysis revealed differences in land among women, elders, and male youth. In order to obtain the most accurate understanding of Land Ownership Claims and Use Rights, these three groups thus made maps separately.

The Coordination Team asked the community members to draw three different sketch maps; one of Land Ownership Claims and land use zones on brown paper and two of actual land use on large pieces of transparent overhead sheets which were later overlaid with each other to reconcile the various drawings using pens of different colors.

While all groups worked on maps concurrently, the Land Ownership Claims and land use zones (forest, farm bush, tree crop plantations, responsible investments, communal use zones) were transferred onto brown paper by the community elders. In this exercise, land use zones documentation demonstrated whether zones aligned with actual land use documented by the users, or if there was variance. Immediately after transferring Land Ownership Claims and use zones on to brown paper, it was overlaid with the two land use maps, which were drawn by the women and male youth groups on transparent paper.

During the exercise, **the Coordination Team tried to obtain an understanding of existing needs, challenges, problems and potential areas of conflict.** The team discussed the three sketch maps with the community members, probing into what the members wanted to accomplish over the next five years and what the main barriers towards achieving this vision were, including challenges to land productivity, sustainability and food security.

2.1.7 Formation of a Village Volunteer Committee

The Village Volunteer Committee (VVC) was a small group of between 3 and 5 people from the community who acted as an intermediary and the first point of contact for Stages II and III. The VVC ensured that the land planning activities went smoothly by providing support to the Implementors as needed, collected feedback from community members to make sure their concerns were voiced, aided with the mediation of disputes, and generally ensured that activities happened with the full understanding of the community. The VVC included members representing the traditional custodians of the land, Land Owning Families, Land Users, and other key stakeholders, and was formed in a participatory process, emphasizing gender inclusion. While certain community stakeholders had to be part of the VVC, a pre-determined number of positions were filled with appointed volunteers that were well known to the community and full-time residents.

Before the Coordination Team asked for volunteers from the community, it explained the importance of supporting women, including them in decision-making, and having volunteers from different sections of the community; the VVC had to be balanced in order to represent the entire community fairly. The meeting concluded when there was community-wide agreement on the VVC and that their responsibilities were well-understood by all.

2.1.8 Focus Group Discussion with the Village Volunteer Committee

As soon as the VVC was formed, the Coordination Team directed a focus group discussion with the newly appointed volunteers.

The meeting began with an outline of the next steps for Stages II and III. After clarifying the objectives and answering remaining questions, the Coordination Team and VVC established an Action Plan, where they agreed on the operational way forward regarding the Land Mapping in Stage II and established a timeframe and respective responsibilities for the volunteers.

Additionally, the Coordination Team introduced the VVC to the concept of a Key Developmental Issue and proposed **“socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability”** as a possible issue for further discussion during the visioning exercise with the community (for details, see Chapter 2.3.3).

The team had derived the idea of focusing on this specific issue from the Natural Resource Mapping (for details, see Chapter 2.1.6) during which it had probed into what the community wanted to accomplish over the next five years and what it perceived as the main barriers towards achieving it.

In order to foster the VVC's understanding of such, rather abstract issue, the Coordination Team placed considerable emphasis on explaining the meaning of socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability in plain words and based on practical, context-driven examples from the Natural Resource Mapping Exercise.

In all Target Villages the VVCs quickly adopted the idea, but in order to make the issue more tangible and enhance the upcoming community discussions decided to phrase the issue as a concise question: **“How can we use our land to promote socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability?”**

The meeting concluded with an understanding of Stages II and III, a VVC Action Plan, the agreed Key Developmental Issue (incl. the respective framing question) and a time-frame regarding the next steps.

The Focus Group with the VVC marked the end of the second day of Stage I. The community took a few days to absorb all of the information before proceeding to day three of Stage I. During the break, the Coordination Team conducted outreach to neighboring communities.

Day 3

2.1.9 Consensus-building on Maps and Feedback Session

The third day of Stage I consisted of one meeting focused on providing feedback, and discussing the sketch maps, and any lingering questions or concerns the community had. The Coordination Team framed discussions with the key developmental question in mind and reiterated that the information collected was for the community to make informed decisions about its future. The Coordination Team opened by reviewing the activities conducted on Day 2 and the take-aways from such activities. Next, the elders, male youth and women each presented the maps they had created to the entire community verifying Land Ownership Claims and Use Rights. The issues that came up were resolved in this meeting and ended with community-wide endorsement of the sketch maps. At the end, the outputs of Stage I were presented to the Paramount Chief and key members of the Chiefdom Council who appropriately acknowledged them.

2.2 Land Mapping

The Land Tenure Assessment pursued the objective of identifying and mapping three primary dimensions:

1. Municipal Land / Boundaries;
2. Land Ownership Claims; and
3. Land Use Rights of community members and non-household entities.

Land mapping verified the spatial information collected during Stage I and set the stage for Stage III.

Throughout the entire Land Mapping exercise the Coordination Team strove to keep the process inclusive, involving marginalized groups and neighboring communities.

The geospatial mapping of each Land Ownership Claim and/or Use Right was linked to an individual, a household, a Land Owning Family, the community as a whole, a commercial entity, or the government.

In order to capture all the information and different parties that had land rights, the LTA was completed in a stepwise process according to the following six *Land Documentation Assessment Modules* (for details, see Annex):

1. Municipal Land Documentation
2. Land Owning Family Registration
3. Household Registration
4. Non-Household Entity Registration
5. Land Ownership Claims Document.
6. Land Use Rights Documentation

The Guide for Implementors (for details, see Chapter 5) describes how and when the respective modules and the questionnaires therein are intended to be used. The questionnaires are best administered via a digital data management system.

WHH completed the Municipal Land Documentation in Pewama Village (for details, see Chapter 2.2.1), but did not undertake the Land Ownership Claims Documentation. The Land Use Rights Documentation was completed for Permanent Land Use Rights only (for details, see Chapter 2.2.3). Documenting Land Ownership Claims and Annual Land Use Rights would have gone considerably beyond the time frame available to the Project. Nevertheless, below this document describes the methodology the Project had intended to use, as if it had undertaken the respective process.

2.2.1 Municipal Land Documentation

The first step in Stage II of the LTA/PLUP Exercise documented community boundaries. Municipal Land Documentation used *Assessment Module 1* which registered and collected village-wide information and metadata. The mapping of Municipal Land revealed the area under the community's jurisdiction and documented existing resources. Particularly younger community members mentioned that they had, for the first time in their life, understood the exact extent of their community's boundaries. The exercise also strengthened the community's relations with neighboring communities by identifying and documenting joint boundaries together.

Community Engagement

The Coordination Team reached out, sensitized and secured the consent of the community and neighboring communities by visiting the neighboring communities together with a representative from the Target Village.

Planning and Preparation

The Coordination Team formed Community Delegations in each Target Village and all neighboring villages. These were groups of 10 to 15 community representatives meant to facilitate the Municipal Land Documentation and spearhead the physical identification of community boundaries in the field.

The delegations were appointed by the community in a participatory manner and included Traditional Authority representatives, specifically the Paramount Chief, section chiefs, and other appointed representatives, community elders, representatives of each Land Owning Family in the community, and other community representatives (i.e. ordinary members). Together with the VVC, the Coordination Team recorded the members of each delegation and created unique work plans for each one.

Village Registration

Each village with a Community Delegation was registered with the *1.1 Village Registration Questionnaire*. In registering communities, a village was defined as either a Target Village or a Neighboring Village.

Boundary Reconnaissance & Consolidation

After the villages had been registered and a work plan created, the Coordination Team and Community Delegations identified, blazed and marked the boundaries of the Target Village with paint. The delegation of the Target Village teamed up with the delegations of the neighboring villages on different days and identified the joint boundary together. In order to ensure an efficient process, the Coordination Team prepared the communities for this process and allowed them to discuss possible problems in advance. If any disputes or variances in boundaries arose during Field Reconnaissance, they were discussed, and if not dissolved, registered and beacons painted (in a color different to the other boundary marks) at the respective locations. All variances so registered were discussed with the involved communities and, in all instances, concluded with an agreement.

Geo-Referencing

Once the community boundary had been consolidated, the Community Delegations surveyed the respective area by administering the *1.2 Municipal Land Mapping Questionnaire*. They used a combination of tablet PCs which visualized the polygons, and hand-held GPS devices which provided greater accuracy, during mapping. While a member of the Implementation Team operated one device, members of the delegations used the other two devices. After the exercise, the recordings were compared and discussed.

Consensus Building

The geo-referencing produced a Municipal Boundary Polygon. The Implementors synthesized that boundary information into a map which was presented to the community. They then presented the document for discussion and asked for commentary. The outputs of the Municipal Land Documentation included (1.) a Community Delegation membership list, (2.) marked physical community boundaries, (3.) the completed *1.1 Village Registration Questionnaire*, (4.) the completed *1.2 Municipal Land Mapping Questionnaire*, (5.) the spatial Municipal Boundary Polygon, and (6.) the community-endorsed Municipal Land Map.

2.2.2 Land Ownership Claims Documentation¹⁰

During the Natural Resource Mapping (for details, see Chapter 2.1.6) the village elders had sketched the Land Ownership Claims of the community's various Land Owning Families on paper. The Land Ownership Claims Documentation used *Assessment Modules 2 and 5* to verify and geo-reference such claims. The exercise thereby pursued the objective of better understanding the land ownership patterns in the community and strengthening the social cohesion among the community's Land Owning Families by identifying and geo-referencing each family's Ownership Claims together.

Community Engagement

The Coordination Team initiated the exercise by sensitizing the community members on the purposes of the exercise and secure their general buy-in. Convincing the Land Owning Families of the long-term benefits of having their claims documented was at the focus of the engagement.

Land Owning Family Registration

Once the community had given its consent for the mapping to go ahead, the Coordination Team begun registering the various Land Owning Families in the village by administering the *2.1 Land Owning Family Registration Questionnaire*. The Stakeholder Analysis of Stage I (for details, see Chapter 2.1.1.) helped the Coordination Team to establish a complete picture of all families in the community.

Planning and Preparation

Before commencing the actual mapping process, the Coordination Team asked each Land Owning Family to appoint a Family Delegation (i.e. a small group of family members) that would facilitate the mapping process and be responsible for the physical identification of the family's Land Ownership Claims in the field. Once set-up, the team created a harmonized work plan with all Family Delegations to ensure the timely implementation of the mapping activities. It then trained the members on how to operate a GPS device and geo-reference the family claims.

Boundary Reconnaissance & Consolidation

After the training, the various Family Delegations started identifying, blazing and marking the boundaries of their family's Land Ownership Claims with paint. In accordance with the previously created work plan, the delegations teamed up when necessary and jointly identified shared boundaries. In order to ensure an efficient process, the Coordination Team prepared the Land Owning Families for this process and allowed them to discuss possible problems in advance. If any disputes or variances in boundaries arose during the Boundary Reconnaissance, they were discussed, and if not dissolved, registered and consigned to the respective village authorities.

Claims' Mapping

Together with the Coordination Team, the Family Delegations geo-referenced the consolidated Land Ownership Claims by administering the *5.1 Land Ownership Claims Questionnaire*. As for the Municipal Land Documentation, they used a combination of tablet PCs and hand-held GPS devices during mapping. While a member of the Implementation Team operated one device, members of the delegations used the other two devices. After the exercise, the recordings were compared and discussed.

Consensus Building

The Land Ownership Claims Documentation produced various Land Ownership Polygons which the Implementors synthesized into a map and presented to the entire community for discussion and endorsement.

The outputs of the Land Ownership Claims Documentation included (1.) the completed *2.1 Land Owning Family Registration Questionnaire*, (2.) demarcated physical Land Ownership Claims of all Land Owning Families in the community, (3.) the completed *5.1 Land Ownership Claims Questionnaire* and (4.) a community-endorsed map of Land Ownership Claims.

2.2.3 Land Use Rights Documentation¹¹

The Land Use Rights Documentation built on the Natural Resource Sketch Mapping activity conducted during Stage I at which the community members visualized existing plantations and fields, areas for logging, and other uses. Similar to piecing together a puzzle, the Land Use Rights Documentation geo-referenced individual Land Use Polygons (for details, see below) of various agricultural and non-agricultural uses, and linked them to a user or several users,

¹⁰ The following steps under Land Ownership Claims Documentation were planned, but not implemented in the field

¹¹ WHH only documented Permanent Land Use Rights. The documentation of Annual Land Use Rights would have followed the same steps, but gone considerably beyond the time frame available to the Project.

including a smallholder, a youth/women group, a family, a commercial business or a government entity. The Land Use Rights Documentation established how much land in a community was presently used by its members, identified existing land use patterns, verified land use zones and visualized the existing tenure arrangements in the community context.

Community Engagement

Similar to the Municipal Land Documentation, the Coordination Team created awareness among the community members about the aims and objectives of the exercise and secured buy-in among the community.

Planning and Preparation

Before registering and mapping Land Use Polygons, the Coordination Team conducted a Land User Analysis. The objective of the analysis was to identify all the Land Users in the Target Village in preparation of registering and mapping their rights. On the basis of the Resource Sketch Map which already indicated plantations and fields, the team identified the Land Users linked to a particular plantation or field within the Municipal Land. After the *Land User Analysis* the Coordination Team and VVC agreed on a schedule to conduct the mapping together with the respective plantation and field owners. This step included the setting-up of a “Mapping Team” which represented the entire community and was appointed by the members to facilitate the Land Use Rights Documentation process and spearhead the physical identification of Land Use Rights in the field.

Land User Registration

The Coordination Team registered all Land Users identified during the *Land User Analysis*. They included Heads of Households, Youth/Women Groups, Commercial Businesses, Enterprises and Cooperatives, Government Ministries, Departments or Agencies, and other “land using entities”. In order to complete the registration process, the following two questionnaires were administered:

- A. 3.1 Household Registration Questionnaire:**
Administered to every Land User that qualified as a household or individual
- B. 4.1 Non-Household Entity Registration Questionnaire:**
Administered to commercial businesses, government agencies, enterprises, and cooperatives

Field Mapping

Pro-tip

A Land Use Polygon refers to a geo-referenced agricultural area that is linked to a single Land User and lays within a Land Ownership Polygon.

A Land Ownership Polygon is a geo-referenced area that is linked to a Land Owning Family. Multiple Land Ownership Polygons from the same Land Owning Family are called a Land Holding.

A Municipal Boundary Polygon is a geo-referenced area that is linked to a community. It contains Land Ownership and Land Use Polygons.

The Mapping Team engaged all registered Land Users and mapped their Land Use Polygons. Land Use Polygons included all existing fields and plantations, as well as meadows, pastures, and temporary fallows which could distinctively be attributed to an individual land-using entity. They did not include land polygons over which no present Use Rights were held by any household or non-household entity - such land polygons were commonly subject to communal access rights.

In order to complete the Field Mapping, the following questionnaires were administered:

- A. 6.1 Land Use (Permanent Crops) Questionnaire:**
Linked to Household Registration
- B. 6.2 Land Use (Temporary Crops) Questionnaire:**
Linked to Household Registration
- C. 4.2 Non-household Entity Land Use Questionnaire:**
Linked to Non-Household Entity Registration¹²

Consensus Building

Upon completion of the Field Mapping, the Coordination Team synthesized the land use information into a map and presented the document for discussion, comment and endorsement to the community. When the discussion revealed that not all Land Use Rights had been mapped, the Coordination Team re-engaged with the community to revise the *Land User Analysis*, registered the Land Users who had previously been overlooked, and re-did the Field Mapping. The resulting map again was presented to the community for discussion, comment and – eventually – endorsed.

12 WHH only administered Questionnaire 6.1 (see Comment 11 for details)

The outputs of the Land Use Rights Documentation included (1.) a Land User Register, (2.) the completed *3.1 Household Registration Questionnaire*, (3.) the completed *4.1 Non-Household Entity Registration Questionnaire*, (4.) the completed *6.1 Land Use (Permanent Crops) Questionnaire*, (5.) the completed *6.2 Land Use (Temporary Crops) Questionnaire*, (6.) the completed *4.2 Non-household Entity Land Use Questionnaire*, (7.) the spatial Land Use Polygons, and (8.) the community-endorsed Land Use Map.

2.3 Participatory Action Planning

The third stage of the LTA/PLUP Exercise was Participatory Land Use Planning. This activity used the information gathered during Stages I and II, the facilitated discussions, sketch maps and land mapping, to help the community create a vision for its land and resources and their future use. This approach catalyzed community-led change by providing the tools to build consensus on the information collected thus far, identify needs and barriers to improved land use and productivity, develop solutions to overcome such challenges and design new development initiatives. The level of development in most communities presented myriad concerns and a desire to address a variety of development issues (i.e. roads/infrastructure, WASH/water/health facilities, education, agricultural productivity and storage). For that reason, the Coordination Team continued to approach Stage III with the developmental key question of socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability discussed in Stage I (for details, see Chapter 2.1.8).

While this provided a framework for the further discussion, it did not restrict the exercise to barriers and solutions which the community could immediately address and implement on its own. The Coordination Team thus had to manage expectations well and place emphasis on the fact that the vision did not serve as an immediate Wish List, but rather as a planning and lobbying instrument which the community members could use to rally government agencies, Chiefdom and District Councils, NGOs and other stakeholders behind their development goals. By strongly involving the Paramount Chiefs and the Chiefdom Councils in the process, the Project ensured that the community had a first vantage point for its advocacy efforts.

Emphasizing on the community's ability to develop own solutions, the Coordination Team guided the Participatory Action Planning and facilitated reflection and discussion among the community members, but did not provide specific advice.

2.3.1 Information Review and Status Quo Mapping

The Coordination Team provided an overview of the day's agenda and again presented the Developmental Key Question to the community – how could the community members use their land to promote socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability? In order to answer this question, the Coordination Team facilitated a community discussion establishing a common understanding among the community members of what socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability meant to them. This revealed different interests regarding land use which were prioritized and contextualized by linking them to the community's previously identified needs (see below for details).

Reflecting back on the findings of Stages I and II, the Coordination Team presented the Maps of Land Use Rights and Social Assets, including the decision-making processes, as well as barriers and income generating activities identified during the Social Capital Sketch Mapping. After they had presented these outputs, they then briefly reviewed them with the community members. Using a strengths-based approach, the team emphasized the positive social capital or productive assets that already existed in the community.

After reviewing the maps and outputs from Stages I and II, the Coordination Team presented the community needs that were identified during the community discussions and mapping exercises of Stage I (for details, see Chapters 2.1.6 and 2.1.9). The Coordination Team encouraged the community to identify the community's Status Quo in terms of meeting its local and immediate needs and guided the discussion to revolve particularly around eating (fishing, hunting), drinking (clean water sources, wells, streams, and rivers), defecation (waste and washing), and learning (school locations, learning from other sources, the existence and state of roads and paths to school).

Following the discussion, the Coordination Team facilitated the development of a Status Quo Map which documented where each of the aforementioned activities was taking place.

2.3.2 Developmental Barriers and the Design of a Solution

After discussing the identified needs of the community and creating a Status Quo Map, the Coordination Team presented the barriers to land productivity, food resiliency and environmental sustainability that were identified during the Social Capital discussions in Stage I (for details, see Chapter 2.1.5). The community was asked to identify any further barriers to socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability, record and then rank them by relevance before narrowing the identified barriers down to five. During the entire exercise the community members were encouraged to discuss and decide among themselves. After they had settled on five or so barriers, they then identified the most urgent barrier through a pair-wise ranking method.¹³

The community broke into three different groups (i.e. elders, male youth, and women). From the pair-wise ranking, a single barrier of highest relevance was identified and formed the basis of the following discussion. Among the three groups, the Coordination Team asked the community members to flip the barrier into an opportunity. Each group identified a core solution and demonstrated the causal effects of such by developing a *Solution Tree*.

After the groups had finished their *Solution Trees*, everyone came back together and had a member of each group present their solution and associated developmental vision to the rest of the community. The Coordination Team reviewed all the solutions and highlighted components of a vision of land use that had been missing in the discussion, for example, hunting, logging, commercialization and population growth of the Target Village and surrounding villages. Lastly, the team relayed to the community that these *Solution Trees* helped to create a community-wide vision.

2.3.3 Visioning

The next step established a vision for the community's use of land through a Vision Map. Turning the discussion again back to the developmental key question, the Coordination Team asked the community members how they intended to use their land to promote socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability in the future? With this question in mind, the Coordination Team explained to the community that they were creating a map depicting the future of their village.

The community decided on how far into the future they wanted their map to go and then created a sketch map of future land use, emphasizing that the map was a vision of what they wanted their land use to look like. For this activity, the Coordination Team provided two traced outlines of the village's land - one to be used for the map of future land use and another as a baseline to be compared with the new map at the close of the activity. For this step, the Coordination Team took a holistic approach to the development of the map using facilitation skills to ensure that all perspectives and visions were accurately reflected. In order to create the Map of Future Land Use (i.e. the Vision Map), the Coordination Team discussed with the community members how they wanted their village to look like, what areas of unused land would have zoning for farming, forest, commercial development, protection of forest and drinking water, and population growth. The Coordination Team then continued map production by having the community identify better uses of land than were currently being used, new zone uses, and draw the locations of current use areas.

With their new future land use map, the Coordination Team helped the community to develop short, medium and long-term Action Plans that addressed the *What, Who, Where, When, and How?*

2.4 Documentation and Policy Implementation

The last stage of the LTA/PLUP Exercise compiled the information from the three previous stages and recorded the findings, learnings and recommendations. There was a report and presentation for public use and consumption. In addition, outputs were presented and formally handed over to the communities and Traditional Authorities. This was done in a final community meeting with the attendance of the Paramount Chief and key members of the Chieftom Council.

13 For a description of the pair-wise ranking method see <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/G01675.pdf>

3 FINDINGS

3.1 Village-Level Findings

The basis of the LTA/PLUP methodology derives from a pilot test created and implemented by the Project under WHH in partnership with OVP and Lizard Earth. The exercise occurred from May to August 2018 and March to April 2019 in Kailahun District. For the exercise, the Implementors selected the three Target Villages of Mbenahun, Pewama and Gunsua. All have communities with less than 60 households each and experience a high level of vulnerability, with their livelihood and social capital entrenched in land networks and agricultural activities. All of the communities have a customary land tenure system.

Against this background, the LTA/PLUP Exercise ventured to capture Land Use Rights, Land Ownership Claims, social capital and natural resources in order to help communities understand their land from a community-wide perspective and prepare an Action Plan that encourages a more sustainable and equitable use of land. At the same time, the findings drawn from the LTA/PLUP Exercise in Mbenahun, Pewama and Gunsua present unique insights into existing land tenure systems which may be used to inform future LTA/PLUP Exercises, national land policy development and land acquisition processes by large-scale investors. The Table of Aggregated Village-Level Findings in the Appendix can serve as a template of the information collected.

While Chapter 3.2 presents the findings by selected *Thematic Topics*, Chapter 3.1 presents them by *Stages & Steps* as outlined in the *Methodology* (for details, see Chapter 2) and the *Guide for Implementors* (for details, see Chapter 5). Focus is thereby placed on the community of Pewama which generated the most diverse set of information. The findings from Gunsua and Mbenahun are presented in brief.

3.1.1 Pewama

Village and Land History¹⁴

Pewama was established by three families (i.e. the *Boima*, *Bondo* and *Songo* Families) in the 1600's. Initially a tiny community of three houses which primarily survived on the cultivation of rice, hunting and the growing of vegetables, by the mid 1900's Pewama had grown into a larger settlement of 5 and eventually 8 families (including the *Jinnah*, *Kandar*, *Sao*, *Joe*, and *Vandi* Families). At that time, the production of cash crops (incl. cocoa, coffee and kola) gained increasing relevance as a source of community income. During and after the civil war from 1991 to 2002 the community grew further to its present size and is now home to 49 households, most of whom affiliate with one of 12 Land Owning Families (including the *Swarray*, *Kanneh*, *Jusu* and *Koroma* Families).

Pewama is a remote community close to the Liberian border with few community features such as an open community hall, a mosque, and a small blacksmith's shop. There are four neighboring communities of similar size and social fabric which share boundaries with Pewama including Gunsua (with 30 households) to the South, Kamatahun (with 20 households) to the West, and Kanga (with 11 households) and Sienga with 50 households) to the North. To the East, Pewama is confined by the Liberian border.

Most community members depend directly on agriculture practicing upland farming (esp. rice and cassava), lowland farming (esp. rice), the cultivation of tree crops (such as cocoa, coffee, kola and oil palm), and the production of vegetables (such as peanuts, pepper, okra, potato, and eggplant). The harvesting of timber from the community's large swaths of forest provides additional income. There are no shops in Pewama and petty trading is not of any economic relevance.

14 Paragraph consolidates findings from LTA/PLUP Exercise Stage I, Steps 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3

Land-related Conflicts¹⁵

While the influx of new community members over the past decades has led to various minor conflicts over land, Pewama is a homogeneous and stable community. If conflicts arise, they are commonly solved within the existing family structures. Only in rare cases, the chief, bush heads or other elders (who know the history of the disputed land) get involved. Most recent conflicts have revolved around Land Users' disagreements over boundaries and the violation of women's Use Rights. It is a general notion of the community that by-laws are often not sufficiently endorsed by the relevant authorities, particularly with reference to the village- and section chiefs and the heads of the concerned Land Owning Families (often due to strong social intra-community pressures).

Land Use Norms, By-Laws and Decision-Making Processes¹⁶

In Pewama any community member can become a town chief or take any other position of trust. For members of a Land Owning Family, however, this is easier. While most decisions over land are taken by the heads of the 12 Land Owning Families and the community's Traditional Authorities (esp. the town chief and his speaker), together with the youth- and women leaders, trusted community members are often asked to participate in decision-making processes. Strangers who have developed a strong relationship with a member of a Land Owning Family are also sometimes invited. Ordinary Land Users, however, are only consulted when the land to which they hold Use Rights, lies at the center of a dispute.

While women are generally involved in decision-making processes over land, their Land Use Rights are restricted to the cultivation of vegetable gardens and small upland rice fields.

Elders have stronger decision-making powers in Pewama than younger community members: They are particularly respected for their knowledge of the community's history, its boundaries, and their ancestors and often play a paramount role in ruling over Land Ownership Claims and Land Use Rights when it comes to land-related conflicts.

By-laws exist, but have not been written down. Key regulations make provision that: (1.) Land given to a community member can be withdrawn from that Land User if it has not been utilized for two years; (2.) Land given to a community member for a particular use (and crop) cannot be used for any other purpose (or crop); (3.) Land Owning Family members are automatically allowed to grow food crops on land which their

ancestors used to cultivate; (4.) Decisions to grant leases to external parties require the prior consent of all Land Owning Family members. Leases must benefit the entire community and not merely the respective Land Owning Family (who, nevertheless, remains the primary beneficiary).

Pewama's Social Capital¹⁷

Pewama's social capital comprises a few carpenters, masons and tailors. Some community members earn incomes from logging trees for timber traders. Ten people are members of a local Bike Riders' Union which they have set up together with community members from Sienga. There is a small football club and five Farmer Groups (including *Ngiikoh*, *Pewama United*, *Moloma*, *Ngoyea*, and *Family Club*) which jointly cultivate community land.

Pewama's Developmental Barriers to Socio-Economic Progress¹⁸

The community members of Pewama identified eight Developmental Barriers to Socio-Economic Progress, the first four of which are among their top barriers (for details, see below). These are:

1. Poor general knowledge and skills
2. Poor food storage and preservation systems
3. Lack of support to enhance agricultural productivity
4. Hunger (i.e. Food and Nutrition Security)
5. others:
6. Inapplicable crop varieties
7. Poor management practices for home food supplies
8. Indebtedness to produce buyers
9. Inadequate financial management skills

15 Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage 1, Step 2.1.4

16 Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage I, Step 2.1.4

17 Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage I, Step 2.1.5

18 Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage I, Step 2.1.5

Pewama's Developmental Barriers to Environmental Sustainability¹⁹

Besides the eight socio-economic barriers, the community also identified the following three environmental barriers:

1. Water pollution
2. Inadequate farming practices resulting in erosion, degradation and deforestation
3. Hunting and fishing everywhere

Despite these challenges, however, the community members share the belief that their land can support their children in the future as two quarters of their municipal area are suitable for agricultural use, but presently not under cultivation.

Adverse Effects of Exploitive Land Use²⁰

Although a means of employment, the community expresses concern over the excessive logging of timber within the municipality by non-community members. While all of them operate with the community's prior permission and pay a concession fee, most members acknowledge that logging contributes to deforestation and climate change, general degradation, and – if unregulated – the depletion of existing resources and does not generate enough benefits to offset the negative impacts. They also express that it drives away bush animals, an important source of protein for the community.

Natural Resources and Land Ownership²¹

Pewama's municipal land covers 719.4 hectares (or 7.2 square kilometers). The municipality has the shape of an egg pointing in a North-Westerly direction with its Eastern side constituting the national border with Liberia. The populated village-area lies in the North-Western parts of the municipality and covers roughly one twelfth of the entire area. There is one road coming into Pewama from the North-West. This was completed very recently with funding from the German Development Bank KfW.

Forested mountains cover most of the Eastern parts of the municipality. They are the source of two major streams (i.e. the Kpaya and Huenyo) which run along the Northern and Southern sides of the settled village-area. All Ownership Claims of the Land Owning Families fall within the respective community boundaries and compose a fragmented, puzzle-like ownership pattern.

The 12 Land Owning Families hold claims over 10 distinct sections including (in order of size) 1.) Godie in the far South, 2.) Njeigo, and 3.) Ngaekpoima in the centre, 4.) Nyandehun in the South-East, 5.) Gbongboyama, and 6.) Hungoma in the North, 7.) Sakiema in the East, and 8.) Njeh, 9.) Bakaboi, and 10.) Yorguma in the West.

Map of Pewama's Natural Resources and Land Ownership Claims



19 Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage I, Step 2.1.5

20 Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage I, Step 2.1.5

21 Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage I, Step 2.1.6

Men's Land Use in Pewama



- Community Boundary (black lines)
- Logging Site (brown squares)
- Land Ownership Section (blue lines)
- Tree Crop Plantations (blue dots)
- Field for Food Production (red dots)
- Swamps (big and small orange circles)

Women's Land Use in Pewama



- Community Boundary (black lines)
- Land Ownership Section (blue lines)
- Mixed Garden (green circles)
- Tree Crop Plantations (blue dots)

Present Land Use Patterns²²

The community differentiates between two Land Use Zones: The *Food Crop Zone* (which includes inland valley swamps, vegetable gardens and upland farms) and the *Forest Zone* (which covers forested land, tree crop plantations and land for commercial investments). The *Forest Zone* extends in a narrow belt along the municipal border from the Eastern to the Western sides of the municipality and encloses most of the *Food Crop Zone* which covers two thirds of the total municipal land.

Within the *Food Crop Zone* land use is highly fragmented. Clusters of tree crop plantations (mostly agro-forests with cocoa, coffee or oil palm as main crops) are found in all, except two (i.e. Njeigo and Bakaboi) of the ten sections with the largest clusters being located closer to the settled village-area. There is a small logging-site in Godie section (in the far South). Upland farm fields of all sizes are scattered across the entire municipal area, but especially found in the Southern, Eastern and Western parts of Pewama directly at the municipal border with its neighboring communities. While far from the settled village-area, these remote farm sites serve as a natural barrier for members of other communities and protect the Land Ownership Claims of Pewama's Land Owning Families.

Widely scattered around the men's tree crop plantations (with hardly any overlaps), the women of the community cultivate mixed gardens (where they mainly grow pepper, okra, cassava, peanuts, and garden eggs). The community members cultivate a total of 49 farm fields, 124 small mixed gardens and 90 tree crop plantations.

Pewama's Municipal Land²³

Pewama shares boundaries with four neighboring communities: Sienga and Kanga to the North, Gunsua to the South, and Kamatahun to the West. During the Municipal Land Documentation-Exercise, the community members of Pewama discovered that their neighbors from Kamatahun had entered into their land and established farms and tree crop plantations without their knowledge and consent. When the community members of Kamatahun alleged that the land had essentially become theirs the matter briefly threatened to escalate into an open conflict between the two communities which was only stopped when the Paramount Chief of Dea stepped in and declared that the unauthorized establishment of farms constituted a breach of existing customary law and did in no way allow for an automatic transfer of Ownership Claims from the community of Pewama to Kamatahun. The event still negatively affects the otherwise good relationship between the two communities.

Sienga (in the Section of the same name) is Pewama's "Mother Town". Two of the three founding Land Owning Families of Pewama (i.e. the *Boima* and *Songo* Families) hail from there. Only the *Bondo* Family originated from the neighboring Section of Dodo. When, however, a conflict arose between the *Boima* and *Songo* Families and their former friends from *Sienga* (a conflict which allegedly revolved around the use of sacred land), the *Bondo* Family convinced the other two families to leave Sienga's jurisdiction and join the Section of Dodo.

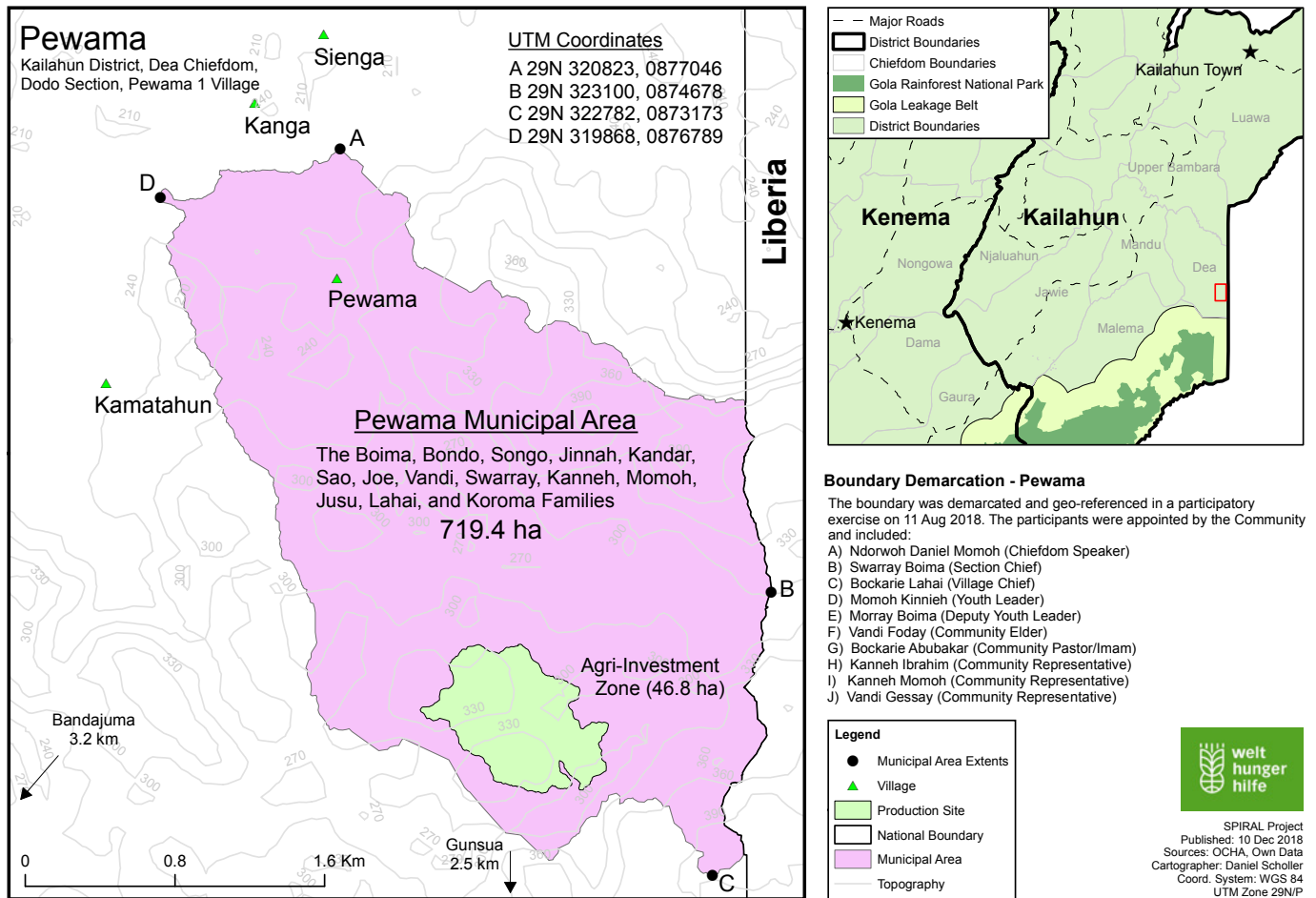
Nevertheless, there are still strong links between the respective communities.

Kanga emerged as a hamlet under Sienga, but has grown into an independent village since. The relationship with Pewama is cordial.

The community of Gunsua is Pewama's only neighbor in the South. Gunsua is difficult to access from Pewama, interaction between the two communities thus relatively limited.

²² Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage I, Step 2.1.6; Steps 2.1.7, 2.1.8 and 2.1.9 were conducted, but did not produce findings. Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage II, Step 2.2.1; Step 2.2.2 was not conducted.

²³ Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage II, Step 2.2.1; Step 2.2.2 was not conducted.



Permanent Land Use Rights²⁴

Pewama, with 245 people and municipal lands stretching 719.4 hectares, has 12 Land Owning Families. Nearly every person is a member of one of the five original or seven descendant Land Owning Families, except for 14 people who are considered “Strangers” without any Land Ownership Claims. Of the approximately 109 adults (individuals 18+) in Pewama, 49 community members hold permanent use rights to 90 pieces of land, all of whom are members of a Land Owning Family. The community members’ permanent use rights extend over an area of 50.5 ha, or 7% of the total area of Pewama’s municipal land. While the village itself dates back to the 1600’s, existing permanent use rights go back to as early as the 1950s: 64 (71%) use rights were established before 1991, 6 (7%) during the war, and 20 (22%) after the war in 2001.

19 women (39%) hold permanent use rights to 26 pieces and 30 men (61%) to 64 pieces of land. Together, the average permanent land user has use rights to 1.8 pieces of land, with women averaging 1.4 pieces and men 2.1. The number of pieces, however, is not evenly distributed among the 49 rights’ holders. Of the 90 pieces, 65 are associated with rights’ holders who have more than one piece of land,

compared to 25 (28%) rights’ holders who only have rights to one piece (12 men and 13 women). Additionally, 40 of the 90 pieces of land (45%) belong to 11 rights’ holders (22%) who have 3 or more pieces of land. In other words, nearly half of all permanent land use rights are held by only about a fifth of all permanent use rights’ holders.

In terms of size, the average use rights’ holder has use rights to 0.56 ha of land, with a median of 0.49 ha. Women have smaller pieces of land than men (0.51 ha vs. 0.58 ha). With a 55/45 population ratio of men to women, it is clear that proportionately less women (39% vs. 61%) have permanent use rights, as well as fewer and smaller pieces of land compared to men.

The absolute majority of permanent use rights’ holders is between 35 and 60 years of age. Middle-aged adults (35–60 years) make up 61% of all permanent land users, hold a majority of permanent land use rights (63%), and have on average 1.9 pieces of land. In comparison, younger people (0-35 years) who make up 20% (i.e. 10 persons) of all permanent land users, have rights to 17 pieces of land (19%) and on average 1.7 pieces each. For older adults (60+ years), 9 (18%) have permanent use rights over 16 pieces (18%) and – on average – 1.8 pieces of land. Though

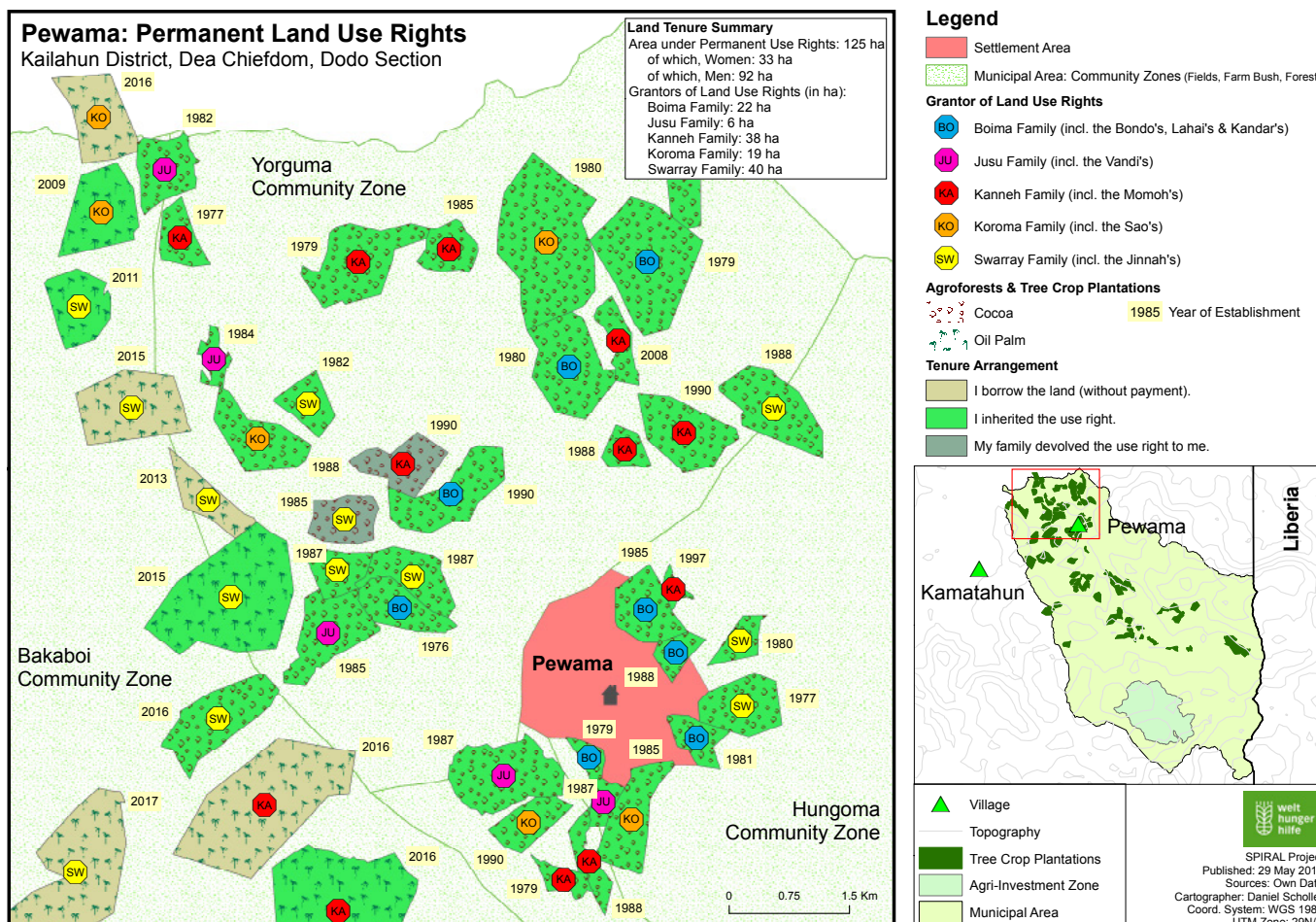
²⁴ Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage I, Step 2.2.3. WHH only documented Permanent Land Use Rights (see Comment 11 for details).

there are more men with permanent use rights overall, women are represented slightly more among young adults (6 women and 4 men) than middle-aged and older use rights' holders. Still, there is no correlation between the age of a use rights' holder and the average number of use rights s/he has, though younger adults have larger pieces of land than middle-aged and older users.

Though cocoa, coffee, and oil palm are the primary permanent crops grown, cocoa is dominant among all permanent land users, including both, men and women. All 49 permanent land users grow cocoa on 75 pieces of land (83%), one grows coffee on 1 piece (1%), and 14 grow oil palms on 14 (16%) pieces of land, with men and women cultivating these crops at the same proportions. The crop dominance of cocoa, however, differs depending on the age of the use rights' holder: 94% of the older adults' fields are cocoa, compared to 82% of middle-aged users, and 76% of young adults. Oil palm, while uncommon among older permanent land users, has greater relevance for young adults, with 4 (28%) pieces of land dedicated to its production.

The relationship of age to crop type relates to the date of establishment of the fields: While 84% of cocoa fields pre-date 1991, oil palm cultivation is a recent phenomenon with the first fields emerging in the year 2000. While cocoa is the dominant primary crop, nearly all the permanent land use rights (92%) are intercropped, most notably with coffee, cola nut, oil palm, fruit trees, and shade trees.

The majority of use rights' holders (84%) inherited their use rights from their fathers or husbands, while 10 permanent land users (20%) borrow the land (without any payment) and 7 (14%) have the land entrusted in their care by their family. Although most permanent land users cite inheritance as the primary mode of acquisition, it is common for rights' holders to obtain permanent land use rights from a Land Owning Family which they are not a member of. 5 members (38%) of the Boima Family, 2 members (50%) of the Jusu Family, 4 members (21%) of the Kanneh Family, and 1 member (20%) of the Koroma Family have been granted use rights by a different Land Owning Family than their own. While the size and scale of the land owned by a given Land Owning Family remains unclear, permanent land use rights, which serve as de facto Ownership Claims, should serve as an indication of the extent of a family's land. Of the original five Land Owning Families, the Swarray Family has granted the largest amount of land for permanent land use (16.2 ha) to 13 members. In comparison, the Kanneh Family has granted 19 members permanent use rights over 15.5 ha, the Boima Family 9 ha to 11 users, the Koroma Family 7.5 ha to 8 members, and the Jusu Family 2.3 ha to 2 members.



The *Pewama Permanent Land Use Rights* map reveals, however, that there is no obvious spatial pattern to permanent land use rights, suggesting that Land Ownership Claims within the community are not clearly defined. The five original Land Owning Families appear to have been granting land use rights across the entire area in a seemingly arbitrary manner, indicating that distinct land ownership is not a concept which is practiced in Pewama and may explain why the community has refused to identify and demarcate the Land Ownership Claims of individual families. These grassroots realities may have significant impact in the future on the government's intention to map Ownership Claims across the country.

Community Needs & Status Quo²⁵

Pewama's needs are very similar to the ones of other rural villages across the world. Agriculture is the most important source of food, closely followed by bush meat and fish. At present, the community uses both streams (i.e. the Kpaya and Huenyo) for fishing. Hunting of larger game takes place in the mountainous and forested Eastern parts of the municipality, but also closer to the settled village-area for smaller animals (such as the cutting grass) which are commonly found around swamps. Hunting and fishing takes place throughout the year.

The Huenyo is the main source of potable water for the community. However, many community members also drink from the Kpaya while at their fields. This poses a problem, as both streams are also used for defecation, the disposal of waste and the washing of clothes. Recognizing this problem, the community chose *Water Pollution* as their priority barrier to socio-economic development and environmental sustainability (for details, see below).

The community has two latrines of which one is out of order and not being used at all. Most members prefer open defecation at one of eight sites around the settled village-area. Some also defecate on their farm.

With the exception of fishing, hunting and farming, most activities take place very close to the settled village-area.

There is no school at Pewama and some of the community's pupils walk to Sienga or the Chieftom Headquarter Town Baiwalla to get education. As the way to school is far, illiteracy among the community members is high. Many children do not go to school at all. The community, however, offers teenagers informal, vocational training opportunities (which mostly rely on the village's blacksmith and carpenters).

In the context of the community's current land use, the members expressed the following ideas on how to promote socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability in Pewama:

- Form new farm groups to make farming more productive and increase yields.
- Expand the production of cash crops and better maintain the existing plantations.
- Select and manage sites for artisanal mining to generate community income.
- Plan agricultural operations with the entire community to avoid deforestation and protect the community's existing sources of potable water.
- Regulate the logging of timber and plant new trees to halt environmental degradation and biodiversity losses.

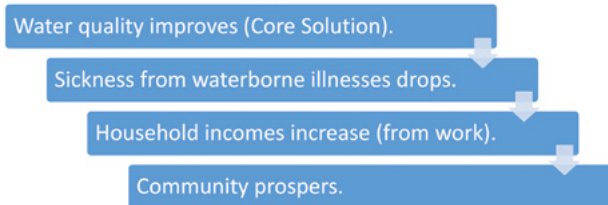
Developmental Barriers and Solutions²⁶

The community identified five top barriers to socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability in Pewama. These are:

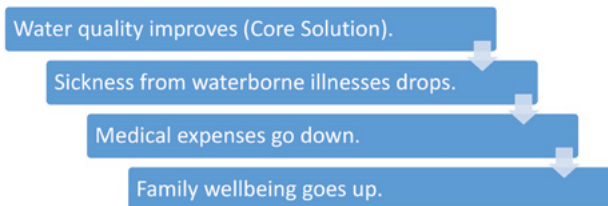
1. Low level of general knowledge and skills
2. Poor systems for food storage and preservation
3. A lack of support from third parties to enhance the community's agricultural productivity
4. **Water pollution (Priority Barrier)**
5. Hunger

Using the pair-wise ranking method, the community members selected *Water Pollution* as their top barrier and developed the following three *Solution Trees* to address the problem:

Solution Tree: Community Elders and Leaders



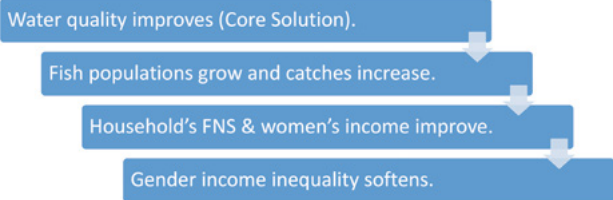
Solution Tree: Male Youth



25 Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage III, Step 2.3.1

26 Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage III, Step 2.3.2

Solution Tree: Women



The Community Vision ²⁷

Against the background of the developmental barriers discussed during the Social Capital Mapping and the community's needs identified during the Status Quo Mapping, the community members' vision of municipal land use by 2023 aims at increasing agricultural production (of both, food and cash crops), protecting the most pristine parts of Pewama's forests, while at the same time allowing for the continued commercial use of exotic trees and the hunting of bush animals. It also pursues the objective of improving the water quality of the two community streams.²⁸



The Vision Map (see below) divides Pewama's municipal land into five distinct land use zones for (1.) food production, (2.) nature conservation, (3.) agro-forestry establishment, (4.) agri-investments, (5.) timber harvesting and (6.) hunting.

The *Food Production Zone* covers about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the entire municipal area of Pewama indicating a strong, continuing importance of agriculture for the community in the medium term. The sections of Nyandehun, Sakiema, Gbongboyama, Njeh and Bakaboi fully fall within this zone. While the community expects its demand for food to grow over the coming years and acknowledges that its extensive traditional agricultural practices have negative effects on the environment, it does not see a need to intensify its production. This may also be owed to the fact that agriculture serves best as a means to protect and enforce Land Ownership Claims and prevent other, neighboring communities from encroaching. Against the backdrop of a low land pressure in Pewama and a prevailing perception that land is not a limiting factor to food security, securing Land Ownership Claims takes precedence over an intensified agricultural production.

Directly North of the settled village-area and in the extreme South of Pewama's municipal area, the community earmarks two (rather small) areas as *High Conservation Value Zone*. Most of the zone is densely forested and features an abundance of wildlife. The community recognizes the relevance of intact forest resources for its sustained supply of safe, potable water and a pleasant micro-climate with lower temperatures and more rain. In order to strengthen the existing ecosystem, the community agrees not to use the area directly North-West of the settled village-area (i.e. parts of Hungoma and Yorguma) until population growth will make it necessary.

²⁷ Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage III, Step 2.3.3

²⁸ Pewama is the only community using the water from these streams. There are no other riparian communities which would benefit from an improved water quality.

Adjacent to the *High Conservation Zone* in the extreme South of the municipality is an exclusive *Hunting Zone*. Besides this exclusive zone, hunting will continue in most parts of the municipal area.

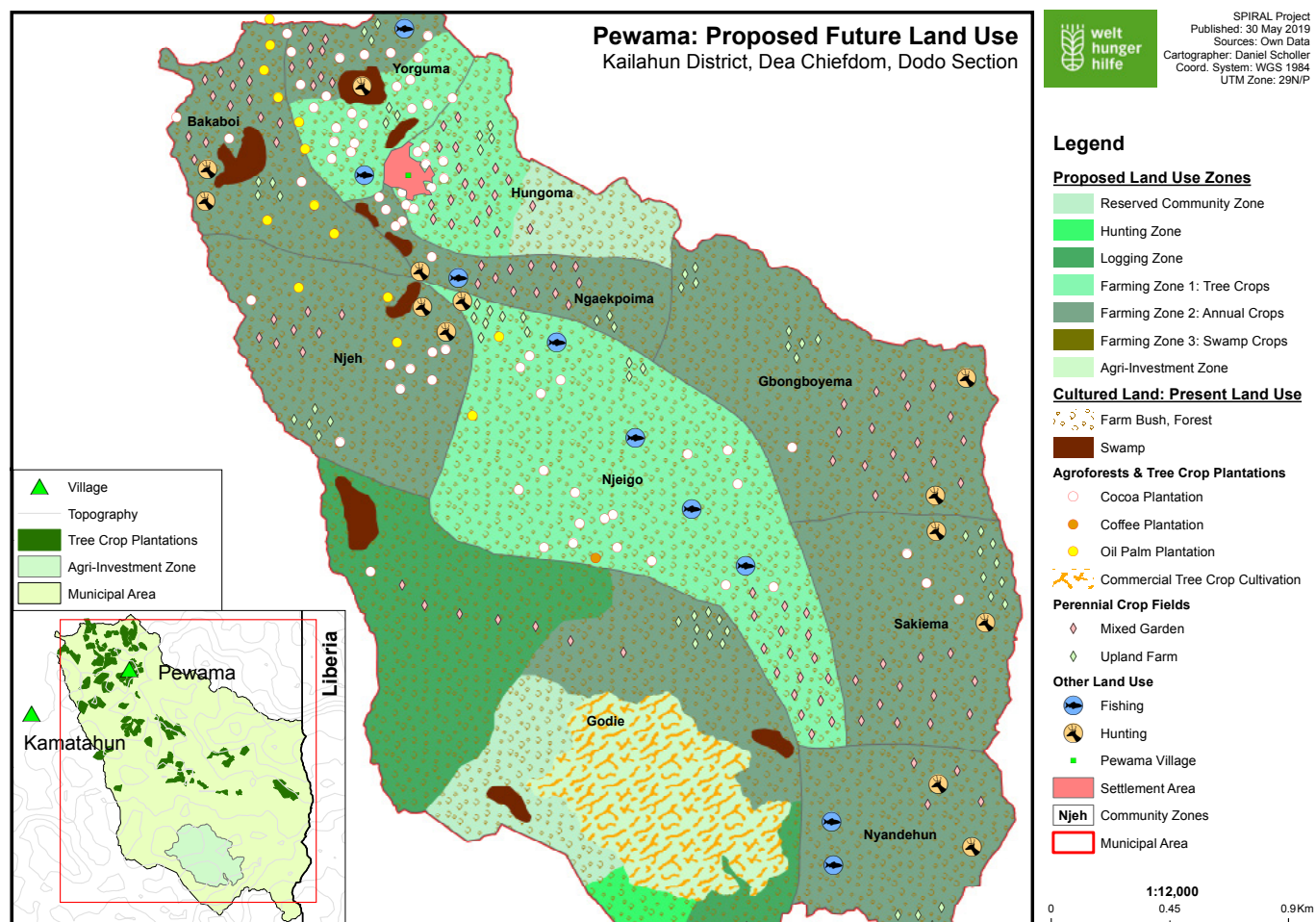
The *Agro-Forestry Zone* expands over Njeigo Section in the central parts of the municipal land and a narrow belt around the Western and Northern parts of the settled village-area. The community agrees to continue to maintain the existing tree crop plantations (most of which lie within other zones). This means that there will be a considerable expansion of the area dedicated to cash crop production in the future.

The *Agri-Investment Zone* covers about 47 hectares of land in the Southern part of the municipality. The community has pledged this land to an agri-business operator. Besides the existing pledge, the community members agree not to earmark any additional pieces of land for commercial investments. Along the border with Liberia, however, artisanal mining shall take place.

The *Logging Zone* consists of two small pieces of land in Godie Section, both of which overlap with the local *Food Production Zone*.

In general, the **Southern parts** of Pewama’s municipal area feature a diverse, but fragmented land use pattern including logging, hunting, farming, conservation and commercial development. While the **Central parts** are mainly dedicated to new agro-forestry establishments, the entire **Eastern parts** are earmarked for the farming of food crops. The **Western parts** feature farm bush and inland valley swamps for rice production and the **North-Eastern parts** hold two small portions of land for conservation and agro-forestry establishment.

Addressing the priority barrier of *Water Pollution*, the community decides to use the waters of the Huenyo River for drinking and the ones of the Kpaya for fishing and washing. Additional latrines will be built to discourage open defecation – a project the community has committed to take on.



Pewama's Action Plan ²⁹

Poor water quality is responsible for waterborne illnesses like diarrhea and scabies. It also minimizes fish stocks. In order to improve water quality and reduce pollution the community agrees to undertake the following actions:

Short Term	
Action:	Raise awareness on the impacts of water pollution on people's wellbeing and fish.
Operatives:	The Community of Pewama; Government
Due Date:	March 2019
Medium Term	
Action:	Formulate by-laws on water use.
Operatives:	The Community of Pewama; Development Agencies
Due Date:	August 2019
Long Term	
Action:	Monitor and enforce the implementation of the by-laws.
Operatives:	The Community of Pewama
Due Date:	December 2019

3.1.2 Gunsua

Gunsua was first established approximately 400 years ago with five original Land Owning Families. Over the last few hundred years, these five families have remained and still constitute all of the Land Owning Families in Gunsua. All community members are part of a Land Owning Family, and can trace back their lineage to a single descendant. The stability and insularity of Gunsua can in part be attributed to its highly remote location, making it difficult to access and have external communication.

Unlike the other villages, Gunsua has large swaths of land not tied to any one sub-family, but owned by the community as a whole. Gunsua's land use entails upland farming (rice, cassava, banana, plantain, pineapple, peanuts), lowland farming (rice, cassava, potato, beans, eggplants, pepper, okra, grains, banana and plantain), tree-based crops (cacao, coffee, oil palm, kola and fruits), and undesignated land

(forest and swamps). Gunsua exhibits very similar development challenges and needs to other villages, including poor storage and preservation systems, a lack of agricultural support, water pollution, a poor road network, and a lack of seedlings. The community decided that improvement of the poor road network was its most urgent need. Although the community's needs were similar, Gunsua has a more varied and extensive list of strengths, including the potential for large tree crop plantations, a sense of unity, natural vegetation and protection against climate change effects, the ability to work in groups and farming cooperatives, the self-reported willingness to accept change, and the ability to attract investors.

3.1.3 Mbenahun

Mbenahun was established during World War II starting with two Land Owning Families, eventually growing to eleven. Like Pewama, the Ownership Claims of sub-families fall within community boundaries, encompassing the entire village. In terms of land use, the community engages in upland farming (rice, cassava, banana, plantain, pineapple), lowland farming (rice, cassava, potato, beans, eggplant, pepper, okra, grains, banana, plantain), tree-based crops (cocoa, coffee, kola, palm oil, oranges, lemons), and undesignated land (forest and swamps).

Mbenahun has numerous needs like the other villages, including poor road networks, lack of knowledge and skills, inadequate farming patterns, poor food management and storage systems, hunger, a lack of labor, effects of changing weather patterns, and others. Mbenahun did not take part in Stage III of the exercise and as a result does not have a top barrier or strengths cited.³⁰

²⁹ Paragraph consolidates findings from PLUP/LTA Exercise Stage III, Step 2.3.3

³⁰ The Land Use Rights Map of Mbenahun is an example of a sketch map conducted in Stage I.

The similarities and differences in land use policy and rights among the communities can make it difficult to ascertain the general structure of land governance. The complexity is not helped by the fact that none of the communities' by-laws regarding land have been written down. As a result, most community members do not have a clear understanding of the differences between land ownership and land use; many Land Users assume to be land owners once they've used a piece of land, possibly a tree crop plantation, for many years. Undocumented rules and laws bear the risk that they can be contested, amended and interpreted with flexibility, depending on the situation.

3.2.2 Women's Land Rights

It is well documented and understood that communities curtail women's Land Use Rights. The ways in which women experience limited land rights is dictated by social rules on the division of labor that say what, where and how women can use land. Across all villages, women's rights to land are usually much more limited in spatial extent than those of men, although their livelihoods also greatly depend on land. Women mostly grow vegetables, fruit, and other small agricultural products in small gardens or swamp land, in areas relegated specifically to them. In each village, a few women have tree crop plantations, but overwhelmingly men use the bigger portions of land to cultivate cash crops, and use land in certain areas described as "sacred" for men. Due to these access limitations, women's use of land is often much more intensive than that of men. With land issues and decisions, men also dominate leadership and decision making, however, the women's leader, who represents the interests of female Land Users, is invited to land discussions. The other ways women can voice their opinions is through inter-marriage with a non-land owning husband and at community meetings.

3.2.3 Land Disputes and Conflict Resolution

In a setting where every community member uses land and rights are steeped in complex networks, disputes and land issues are unavoidable. The most common causes of conflict within or between villages happen when (A.) women's rights to land are violated or abused within Land Owning Families, (B.) there is a disagreement over boundaries, (C.) companies introduce programs and use land without free, prior and informed consent, and when (D.) by-laws are not enforced with fairness. In the event that a dispute arises between several Land Users or between Land Users and the respective Land Owning Family, mediation usually happens directly between the involved families or in a local "traditional" court. Very often, family meetings are attended by Traditional Authorities, blurring the lines between family-internal dispute resolution and court-resolution.

3.2.4 Tenure Security

Land Users' long-term tenure security is considerably better, if they use land which is owned by their family. Often times, members of one Land Owning Family farm on land belonging to a different Land Owning Family, which is recognized as legitimate. As differences between land ownership and land use are not clearly understood, it happens regularly that Land Users "change" their common name to one which is associated with the Land Owning Family controlling the land they use. Users do so in order to secure their Use Rights and even imply certain Ownership Claims causing irritations and sometimes leading to conflict within the community.

In addition, existing Land Ownership Claims seem to be of significant concern to Land Owning Families. The communities have more land than they need to maintain their livelihoods and as a result, other communities encroach without permission. In order to reduce the risk of encroachment, the Land Owning Family representatives often allow Land Users to establish farms and even Hamlets in seemingly odd places, for example, places very far from the village or outside of specific land use zones. Such Hamlets serve as "outposts", deterring members of other communities from entering land which they do not have claims to.

3.2.5 Community Safety

Concerns over safety influence the pattern and method in which community members farm. In the more remote communities of Gunsua and Pewama, men and women farm in lines together. The line formation method is a defense mechanism to help protect each other from wild animals or people. The communities feel protected working closer to other village members since they can easily reach out for help in case of an attack. The men also prefer working in a line formation to ensure that they do not stray too far away from their wives. The sketch maps reveal that most gardens (which are commonly cultivated by women) are placed near plantations, allowing men and women to work in close proximity.

3.2.6 Community Development Challenges

Communities experience development challenges across many areas and cite very similar barriers and needs. While the community members expressed pride and ownership over their self-built community structures and facilities, they also reported poor conditions in road networks, access to WASH (latrines/water), access to health facilities, access to primary and secondary education, agricultural productivity, storage facilities for farmers and rice milling facilities as key challenges.

The communities were nearly unanimous in describing the barriers they face economically, environmentally, and in their overall livelihood. In terms of cultivating land, the communities cited weeds, wild animals, inadequate support to address pests, poor road networks, insufficient labor, poor knowledge and skills, and inapplicable varieties as major issues. Upon reflecting on why their communities are food insecure, the community members named the number of dependents of their households, inadequate farming patterns, lavishness during festive seasons, debts owed to produce buyers, and poor food management and storage systems. The communities also experience climate-related challenges such as seasonal weather effects and variations (early and late rains), as well as hunger, erosion and high school dropout rates due to mining. Lastly, all communities express concern towards mining and logging and the effects it has on education, climate change, deforestation, the extinction of animals, and resource depletion.

In addressing these issues, the communities generally lack the necessary resources. Neither in Mbenahun, nor Pewama or Gunsua Community Development Funds exist.

3.2.7 Conflict Aversion

The communities exhibit a pervasive fear of inter- and intra-community conflict around borders and land ownership. Traditionally, the boundary between two villages is being defined by the point at which two people meet after having left at the same time from their village, walking in the direction of the other village. The precision of traditional boundary marking leaves room for confusion and possible disputes between neighboring communities. Additionally, most elders are reluctant to let land documentation continue out of fear of losing decision-making competences or triggering conflict. It can be the case that communities feel they might have illegitimate claims over municipal lands which might be rejected by neighboring villages. For example, Gunsua originated from a Hamlet associated with the larger neighboring village Bandajuma. While approximate boundaries between the two communities have been defined, there has been no will to demarcate and map such boundary. Consequently, the Coordination Team struggled to convince the community of Gunsua to choose clarity over its boundaries rather than avoiding their documentation in hopes of skirting conflict.

3.2.8 The Age Divide (Power Asymmetries)

For issues beyond fear of inter-community conflict, elders were also reluctant to share information over boundaries with the younger community members, though the youth have an expressed interest in participating in land documentation. Knowledge of municipal boundaries is uncommon and thus grants elders a level of power and the potential to inform community-wide actions and decisions. From the perspective of the youth, knowing the boundaries and terrain helps with identifying areas suitable for farming, logging and mining.

3.2.9 Community Concepts

The sensitivity surrounding community borders, as indicated above, stems from the precariousness of Land Ownership Claims and migration patterns. Land Ownership Claims change as the population grows and certain Use Rights evolve. Depending on the size of a village and land pressure, individuals and families may move a sizeable distance away within the community to be closer to their plantations and crops, for which they exercise Ownership Claims and Use Rights over. Additionally, Land Owning Families may send people to remote areas of their land to deter encroachment by neighboring communities. Initially these small clusters of people form a Hamlet - still associated with the original village, but physically detached as an 'outpost'. Over time, as the population grows and Use Rights cement or solidify into Ownership Claims, the Hamlet becomes a Satellite Community, which is recognized as being independent from the original village. As a result, the boundaries of the original village shift and the Satellite Community's Ownership Claims become incorporated into their own distinct community boundaries. This pattern of outgrowth, migration and land use shapes communities. As boundaries continue to change, there will be a marked potential for conflict and anxiety overshadowing documentation.

3.2.10 Land Use and Ownership Concepts

Mapping areas of need and creating vision plans for land development consistently raised questions on the differences of Land Ownership Claims and land use. A gap between provisions of the law and the actual realities in the communities lead to the conflation of Land Ownership Claims and Use Rights, since often times land use is considered as land ownership by community members. Confusion in distinguishing these two concepts is compounded by the fact that traditionally, Land Use Rights devolve over time into Land Ownership Claims, though it is slow and generally requires the consensus of all Land Owning Family members. Interestingly, in Gunsua community members do not attribute much relevance to land ownership, as it was discovered during the vision mapping that everyone descends from the founder of the village. This is likely a finding specific to Gunsua and in general related to the size of a village. Larger communities may not share this built-in sense of familiarity. The way in which Land Use Rights and Ownership Claims transform has thus far not compelled the communities to document land rights. However, as land pressure increases and the planning of land use gains momentum, this may become of greater relevance.

Furthermore, land use decisions often seem to align with existing Land Ownership Claims of specific families. Family heads exerted considerable influence over the vision maps and decision-making process, despite the entire community participating. While the reasons are unclear, members with Land Ownership Claims may also have wanted to hinder Strangers from influencing the decision-making process.

3.2.11 Land Use Patterns

The communities demonstrate similar use patterns in terms of non-agricultural activities and farming. The main sources of income derive from timber, cocoa, coffee, petty trading, palm oil, diamonds, charcoal, bananas and plantains. In land cultivation, tree crop production is most abundant and dominant. Other land uses include logging, fruit and vegetable gardening and rice farming. While both, men and women engage in farming, there is a clear division of labor (as noted earlier). Men farm a multitude of agricultural products and almost always manage and exert much stronger Ownership Claims over the tree crop plantations in a community. Women, on the other hand, primarily cultivate gardens with small crops like eggplant, pepper, okra, cassava, and groundnut.

At least half of each of the community's municipal land is currently unused, but each village has different land pressure. Both, Mbenahun and Pewama have more plantations, gardens, farms and swamps dispersed throughout their land. Gunsua, however, has less cultivation relative to the other villages and has more 'vacant' land. In order to deter members of other communities from encroaching upon Gunsua's land, the Land Owning Family representatives often allow land users to establish farms and even hamlets in seemingly odd places, for example, places very far from the village or outside of land use zones. In this context, the lack of legal tenure security for the community (i.e. the lack of titles, boundary demarcations and land use/survey plans) in combination with low land pressure drives land fragmentation.³²

3.2.12 Needs, Barriers and Development

In Status Quo mapping, the communities identified distinct zones to meet their needs for food, water, hygiene and education. In food consumption, the communities mapped different zones for hunting and fishing. For WASH, community members demonstrated sensitivity in creating separate 'use' areas. For example, fishing and drinking happens in different streams and in light of malfunctioning latrines, communities specifically define areas for open defecation. In education, both, Pewama and Gunsua have one footpath to schools, with little other formal learning opportunities such as, carpentry, tailoring, and blacksmithing.

In communicating and identifying barriers, there are many areas for development. In order to make a vision map, the communities voted on top barriers to socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability. Community members were particularly excited about voting over barriers to development. The exercise revealed existing and potential future land-related problems and helped them to develop adapted solutions on their own. There was a common feeling of ownership and empowerment triggered by an understanding that the communities could address issues themselves. In fact, many of the barriers were immediately actionable and the community members intend to implement solutions on their own, irrespective of external support from NGO's and the government. In Pewama, for example, the community plans to monitor and evaluate well sources and streams to improve water quality.

32 See Chapter 3.1.1 (Pewama: Permanent Land Use Rights) for an example of existing community land use patterns in Pewama Village.

3.2.13 Environmental Conservation

The vision maps prioritize land use decisions driven by considerations of socio-economic progress, such as increased cash and food crop cultivation. Environmental sustainability was also a key development question presented to the communities, but was deprioritized in consideration of economic opportunities. For example, the community members assigned the most densely forested areas to future cash crop production zones. As forested areas are generally suitable for cocoa and coffee production, cash crop cultivation drives deforestation if planning processes are not regulated and jeopardizes environmental sustainability. In another example, the community members of Pewama decided to decrease the areas for commercial, licensed-based logging and reserve larger tracts of primary, forested land for logging and building materials for their own sale, in order to avoid regulations.

Among the communities, food security was also a high priority; vast portions of municipal land, much more than needed in the medium-term plans, were set aside for food production. The strong emphasis on food production appeared to be twofold - while communities desire a more stable source of food and income, it also serves as a means of enforcing Ownership Claims and authority over land.

4 METHODOLOGICAL LEARNINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPLEMENTORS

The LTA/PLUP methodology collects information regarding village land history, land use- and ownership patterns and community boundaries, land stakeholders, social capital, natural resources, local development challenges and future land use planning to engage communities in intentional, community-implemented development, economically and environmentally sound land decision-making, and generate awareness and information sharing with all members of the community. In addition, the findings of an LTA/PLUP Exercise can inform potential investors about the availability, use and ownership patterns of land, investment risks to a community's future food security and the available local resources. The three stages successfully captured many points the Implementators had aimed to understand better. As land rights and tenure systems are not understood well in Sierra Leone and have not been extensively documented until this point, the methodology has constraints that should have been considered in retrospect. Below, the strengths and weaknesses of the approach are outlined and recommendations for future exercises made. The learnings do not attempt to make policy recommendations and should be viewed as exclusively for those with the intention of undertaking an LTA/PLUP Exercise.

Take a Holistic Approach

As clearly laid out, Land Use Rights and Ownership Claims are not documented and the differences between them are not well understood. Land rights and users are vulnerable to open interpretation, manipulation, and variance as a result. In addition to possible confusion, the by-laws do not address a host of issues that may come up as land pressure increases, families grow and settlements expand. Attempting land documentation on its own without the other presented stages (for details, see Chapter 2) would surely create a weaker, less inclusive, and only partial understanding of the tenure system. While the Project successfully took a holistic approach, the methodology can be improved by integrating elements of "legal awareness creation" into future LTA/PLUP Exercises to further address the complex network of land use and ownership. Such efforts could, among others, address the legal differences between land ownership and use, the classification of subsistence farmers as lease holders, the legal relevance of land tenure assessments and mapping, or the legal security of a smallholder's customary use rights. It could also enhance the community's understanding of its rights in the interaction with large-scale agri-business investors. The Implementors should further collaborate with paralegals whenever the Coordination Team addresses women's access

to land. Women face systematic and cultural barriers in accessing land and participating in farming activities beyond the recognized division of labor. By-laws and legal sessions would work to combat gendered views entrenched in cultural and social structures.

Conduct a Socio-Economic Baseline Study

LTA/PLUP Exercises require prior knowledge of the realities on the ground and the context of a community in order to be successful. Prior to the LTA/PLUP, the Project administered a vulnerability assessment to every head of household in all project villages to understand indicators such as sources of livelihood, level of education, social capital and networks, access to healthcare and land use.³³ The results delineated clear patterns and findings that enhanced how best to work in communities and areas that should be of focus. It's recommended that the LTA/PLUP Exercise go hand-in-hand with a baseline study of an area.

Consider Future Trends & Challenges

Communities' understanding of land rights, networks and use can be fragmented making community-wide plans for the future difficult. An LTA/PLUP is helpful in presenting a consolidated, fuller picture for the communities to not only make future plans, but address trends and challenges that will inevitably impact them over the coming decades, such as climate change and increased land pressure. While the Project addressed these future challenges, it had not identified and incorporated them into the LTA/PLUP Methodology early enough; it's recommended that future LTA/PLUP Exercises weave awareness of these challenges throughout the entire exercise and put additional focus during Land Use Planning.

Respect the Elders and Empower the Youth

The elders in the community hold high-level knowledge of land rights and boundaries in communities that other members do not possess. It's important to respect the elders who are the custodians of the land and include them in many aspects of the exercise. At the same time, the LTA/PLUP Exercise should strive to keep an inclusive and unbiased approach by working with different community members, especially youth. The youth demonstrated a desire to actively participate and learn about the community's municipal land. Empowering youth with knowledge may better equip a community to plan for its future. The Project successfully balanced working with and respecting elders and including a variety of different people at each step.

33 Werner, Annie (2018)

Consistently Engage Authorities and the Community

Land mapping revealed that regular engagement throughout the exercise and on all levels is absolutely essential, especially for the Chiefdom Council. After the VVC commenced planning, it became clear that municipal boundary documentation required the support of the Chiefdom Council. In Dea Chiefdom, the Paramount Chief was instrumental in rallying the Target Villages behind WHH, OVP and Lizard Earth in conducting the LTA/PLUP Exercise and allay the community members' concerns over potential boundary disputes.

Including neighboring villages is also highly important. Before and during the Municipal Boundary Documentation, the Project visited all target and neighboring communities. While each community assigned representatives and agreed on a time schedule for the mapping, the Section Chief of one community boycotted the exercise. The VVC had forgotten to officially inform him of the land mapping exercise in advance. Only after formally reaching out to the Chief (who, in reality, had long heard of the ongoing activity) the Coordination Team and VVC received representatives from the respective neighboring communities and secured their consent to participate in the LTA/PLUP Exercise. The Chiefdom Council was essential in brokering the agreement with the disgruntled Chief.

Hand Over All Outputs to the Community

At the conclusion of the exercise, the Project had a large meeting with the Chiefdom Council and all Traditional Authorities, where the Coordination Committee handed over all of the information collected, including maps, land use and history, Ownership Claims, etc... The community should have absolute ownership over the process empowering them to use the tools and new knowledge to instigate change for themselves, whether implementing programs and solutions or advocating for necessary government services. Feeding back the information diminishes the expectation of an NGO or charity coming in and actualizing interventions for them.

Pay Attention to Timing

The timing of land documentation is important in maintaining a gender-inclusive approach. Although mapping was carefully planned, it was conducted at a busy farming time when women had to stay behind and work. As a result, few women participated. At a different period of the year, however, women would likely have contributed more to mapping.

Showcase Villages that had an LTA/PLUP

Clear comprehension of the exercise emerged much later than anticipated and would have been ideal. The community members of Gunsua and Pewama indicated that they fully understood the value of the LTA/PLUP Exercise only after having participated in the Visioning Exercise in Stage III. In future exercises of a similar nature, promoting village exchanges between communities who have already completed an LTA/PLUP Exercise and those who are currently undergoing it, may help to enhance general understanding and secure an earlier buy-in by the community.

5 GUIDE FOR IMPLEMENTORS

Below, this document provides a step-by-step guide to the LTA/PLUP Exercise which aims at guiding government extension officers, as well as NGO-staff and land-related investors in conducting an LTA/PLUP Exercise, but may also serve as a source of reference for local communities, Traditional Authorities and other stakeholders.

The guide is structured according to the methodology described in Chapter 2 and focuses on the first three stages (i.e. Consensus Building, Awareness Creation and Sketch Mapping; Land Mapping; and Participatory Action Planning) outlining the key steps of each. However, a strict step-by-step approach may neither be always feasible nor recommendable. Instead, implementation should rather be guided by pragmatism, as well as considerations of time and costs. Close co-operation with Traditional Authorities, community leaders, ordinary members, support organizations and other stakeholders is always recommended.

How to use this Guide

For each stage, the guide outlines the General Objectives, Target Group(s), the Process and Expected Outputs. Outputs are documents that are required as key sources of information and data for following stages. The Process outlines the main exercises and activities that are recommended in order to achieve the stages' objectives and outputs.

STAGE I

Consensus Building, Awareness Creation & Sketch Mapping



2.1.1 Meeting with Community Leadership and Stakeholder Analysis

2.1.2 Village and Land History

2.1.3 Transect Walk

Objectives

- Secure the support and buy-in of the traditional authorities and community elders
- Identify Land Owning Families, key decision-makers and other key stakeholders in land
- Understand community development and major land use activity over time
- Apprehend the community's social texture, business activity and key features

Process

- Explain the aims, objectives and steps of the LTA/PLUP Exercise and secure the buy-in of the community leadership
- Ask the town chief to invite the community's key decision-makers in land to a focus group
- Ask the participants to narrate the community history and conduct a stakeholder analysis with them
- Walk around the village with a few community members, identify community features and observe socio-economic activity
- Have the chief schedule a meeting with the community a few days later

Expected Outputs

- Scheduled community meeting
- Documentation of relevant stakeholders in land and Land Owning Families
- Completed Village & Land History Form, incl. an understanding of inter-community relationships & land disputes

Target Group(s)

- Community elders
- Traditional authority representatives
- Heads of Land Owning Families

STAGE I

Consensus Building, Awareness Creation & Sketch Mapping



2.1.4 Facilitated Group Discussion with the Entire Community

Objectives

- Introduce the LTA/PLUP Exercise, obtain consensus around its objectives and secure ownership
- Identify gendered norms, by-laws and decision-making processes around land use in the community
- Identify marginalized social groups and understand land use patterns

Expected Outputs

- Agreed implementation timeline
- Documented information on land ownership, land use patterns and possible disputes
- Compilation of norms, by-laws and decision-making processes, esp. considering the role of women and marginalized groups

Process

- Provide an overview of the LTA/PLUP Exercise and put it into political and economic context
- Listen to concerns. Then agree on the implementation process, timeline and roles & responsibilities
- Identify by-laws and decision-making processes on land use

Target Group(s)

- Entire community
- Members of hamlets within community boundaries

STAGE I

Consensus Building, Awareness Creation & Sketch Mapping



2.1.5 Social Capital Mapping

Objectives

- Create a first visual representation of the village, community lands and major infrastructure (such as roads)
- Understand the social capital existing in the community
- Identify immediate community needs

Expected Outputs

- Completed Social Capital Form
- List of social assets (community spaces, clubs, skills) that the community can later use to achieve its vision

Process

- In sand, ash, or color chalk identify and delineate municipal boundaries and roads.
- Draw the borders of sections within the community
- Select and symbolize five or so key social assets
- Discuss the map probing into the community's social needs and obtain community endorsement

Target Group(s)

- Entire community

STAGE I

Consensus Building, Awareness Creation & Sketch Mapping



2.1.6 Natural Resource Mapping of the Village

Objectives

- Create a sketch map of the community to obtain an understanding of the existing natural resources (incl. land) and their uses
- Determine the existing land ownership claims in the community and identify the Land Owning Families
- Identify major land use zones
- Understand the types of agricultural activity taking place, existing cultivation patterns among social groups (esp. women and youth) and individual/collective land use rights

Expected Outputs

Three sketch maps depicting:

- Land ownership claims and land use zones (by elders & heads of Land Owning Families)
- Land use rights (by women)
- Land use rights (by male youth)

Process

- Copy the sand map of the previous exercise onto a sheet of paper and have the community elders and heads of Land Owning Families identify existing land ownership claims and land use zones (incl. forest, farm bush, tree crop plantations, swamps, responsible investments, and communal use zones)
- Have women draw their land use rights on translucent paper
- Have male youth draw their land use rights on translucent paper
- Have the various groups present their maps and discuss, then overlay and reconcile the maps and obtain community endorsement (make sure to pay attention to potential problems & areas of conflict)

Target Group(s)

- Entire community, divided by elders, male youth and women

STAGE I

Consensus Building, Awareness Creation & Sketch Mapping



2.1.7 Formation of a Village Volunteer Committee (VVC)

Objectives

- Establish a community group (i.e. the “VVC”) to facilitate the exercise, provide support to the Implementor and serve as a first point of contact for the other community members
- Strengthen community ownership and create structures which may aide the members in achieving their vision after the exercise

Expected Outputs

- An operational Village Volunteer Committee

Process

- Explain what a VVC is and which responsibilities it has, and the importance of including a diverse set of people
- Have the community appoint volunteers to the VVC in a participatory manner. Ideally, the committee has 3 to 4 members and is gender-balanced
- Gain endorsement of the VVC from the community

Target Group(s)

- Entire community

STAGE I

Consensus Building, Awareness Creation & Sketch Mapping



2.1.8 Focus Group Discussion with the Village Volunteer Committee

Objectives

- Align the VVC behind the objectives of the exercise and secure its support
- Have the VVC fully prepared for the next stages of the LTA/PLUP Exercise
- Establish an Action Plan for Stage II and agree on a timeframe for its implementation
- Frame the Key Developmental Issue in the community for the visioning in Stage III

Expected Outputs

- An Action Plan for Stage II
- Key Developmental Issue and framing question

Process

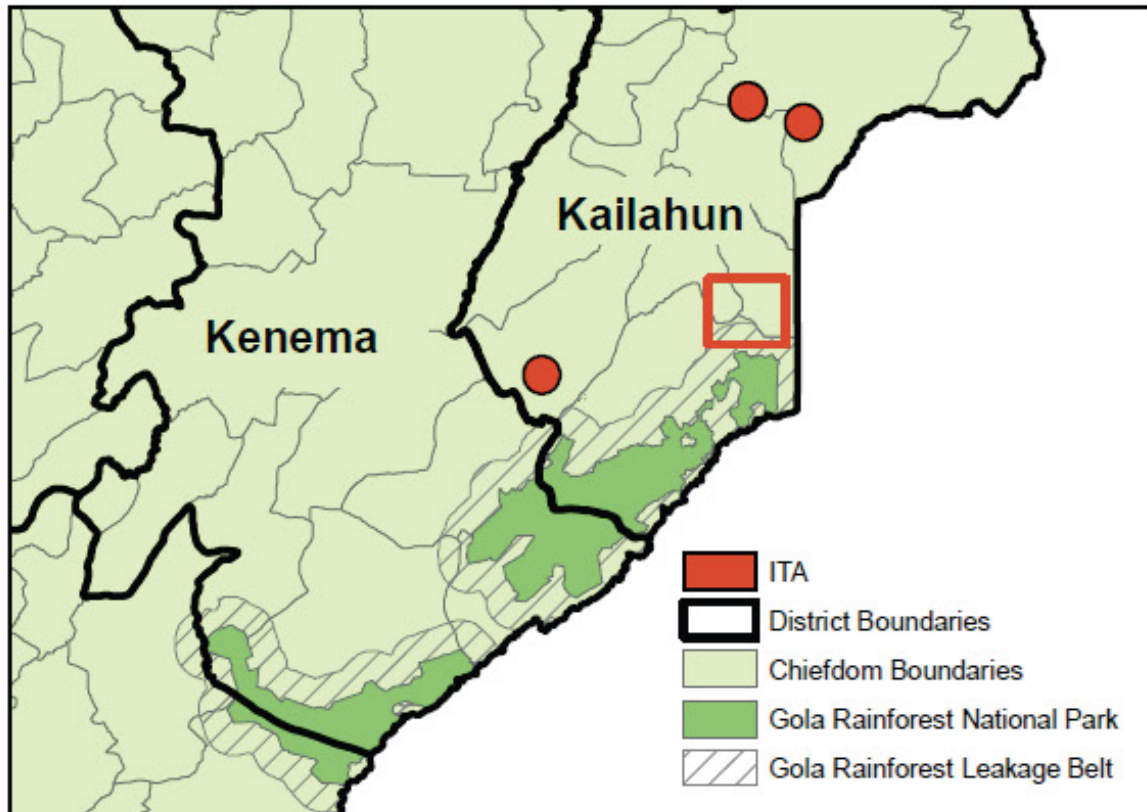
- Clarify the objectives of Stages II and III and agree on a specific Action Plan and timeframe for Stage II
- Introduce the concept of a Key Developmental Issue to the VVC; then propose and jointly define an issue
- Develop a framing question for the defined Key Developmental Issue for further discussion with the community in Stage III

Target Group(s)

- Members of the VVC

STAGE I

Consensus Building, Awareness Creation & Sketch Mapping



2.1.9 Consensus-building on Maps and Feedback Session	
<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formally close Stage I by sharing all collated outputs and findings with the community Verify and endorse the social capital and natural resource sketch maps as the basis of the Land Use Rights Documentation (for details, see activity 2.2.3) of Stage II Answer any remaining questions and build common grounds regarding the objectives of Stages II and III 	<p>Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review all activities done prior and present the collated findings (incl. the Village and Land History Form, Social Capital Form, and other Reporting Forms) to the community Review the sketch maps and have the community verify them Prepare the community for Stage II and have the VVC present its Action Plan developed during the Focus Group Discussion (for details, see activity 2.1.8) Answer any remaining questions and ask for feedback
<p>Expected Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> n/a 	<p>Target Group(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entire community

STAGE II

Land Mapping



2.2.1 Municipal Land Documentation

Objectives

- Stimulate the inter-community dialogue on community boundaries and areas of jurisdiction
- Strengthen the partnership with neighboring communities by identifying and geo-referencing joint boundaries together
- Know the area under a community's jurisdiction and its resources

Target Group(s)

- Target- & Neighboring Communities
- Community Delegation(s)

Expected Outputs

- Community Delegations
- Municipal Land Documentation Work Plans
- Completed 1.1 Village Registration Q.
- Demarcated physical boundaries
- Completed 1.2 Municipal Land Mapping Questionnaire
- Community-endorsed Municipal Land Map

Process

- Sensitize the community and all neighboring villages on the aims, objectives and proposed operating procedures of the exercise and secure their buy-in
- Ask each community to form Community Delegations responsible for the physical identification of community boundaries in the field
- Create a Work Plan with all Community Delegations (providing for the teaming-up of two delegations for the joint documentation of shared boundaries)
- Register and geo-reference the Target- and all neighboring Villages by administering the 1.1 Village Registration Questionnaire
- Identify, blaze and mark the boundary of the Target Village (if applicable, together with the delegation(s) from the respective neighboring village(s))
- Dissolve disputes as they arise, if possible. If not, register and consign them to the trad. authorities
- Geo-reference the blazed boundary by administering the 1.2 Municipal Land Mapping Questionnaire
- Create and present a Municipal Land Map and gain the endorsement from the community

STAGE II

Land Mapping



2.2.2 Land Ownership Claims Documentation

Objectives

- Strengthen the social cohesion among Land Owning Families within a community by jointly identifying and geo-referencing each family's ownership claims
- Understand the land ownership patterns on the community's land

Target Group(s)

- Land Owning Families
- Family Delegation(s)

Expected Outputs

- Family Delegations
- Completed 2.1 Land Owning Family Registration Questionnaire
- Ownership Claims Documentation Work Plan
- Demarcated physical land ownership claims
- Completed 5.1 Land Ownership Claims Q.
- Endorsed map of land ownership claims

Process

- Sensitize the community on the purposes of the exercise and secure the members' general buy-in
- Identify the Land Owning Families in the community (for details, see activity 2.1.1.) and register them by administering the 2.1 Land Owning Family Registration Questionnaire
- Ask each Land Owning Family to form a Family Delegation responsible for the physical identification of its ownership claims in the field
- Create a Work Plan with all Family Delegations; use the Natural Resource Map drawn-up during activity 2.1.6 as a reference guide
- Ask the Family Delegations to identify, blaze and mark the boundaries of their land ownership claims
- Dissolve disputes as they arise, if possible. If not, register and consign them to the village authorities
- Geo-reference all ownership claims by administering the 5.1 Land Ownership Claims Questionnaire.
- Create and present a map of land ownership claims and gain the endorsement from the community

STAGE II

Land Mapping



2.2.3 Land Use Rights Documentation

Objectives

Register and map all Land Use Rights in a community to:

- Understand how much land in a community is presently used by its members
- Identify existing land use patterns and verify land use zones
- Understand and visualize land tenure arrangements in the community context

Target Group(s)

- Entire community
- All Land Users
- Elders and heads of Land Owning Families

Expected Outputs

- Land User Register
- Completed 3.1 Household Registration Q.
- Completed 4.1 Non-Household Entity Reg. Q.
- Mapping Schedule and Mapping Team
- Completed 6.1 Land Use (Permanent Crops) Q.
- Completed 6.2 Land Use (Temporary Crops) Q.
- Completed 4.2 Non-hh Entity Land Use Q.
- Endorsed Land Use Map

Process

- Sensitize the community members on the purposes of the exercise and secure their consent and buy-in
- Conduct a Land User Analysis and register all households with Land Use Rights by administering the 3.1 Household Registration Questionnaire
- For commercial businesses and government agencies (which hold Use Rights) administer the 4.1 Non-Household Entity Registration Questionnaire
- Ask the heads of all households and non-household entities to identify their Land Use Rights on the Natural Resource Map (see activity 2.1.6); then also identify areas under communal use arrangements
- Establish a mapping schedule and a Mapping Team; then engage all Land Users to map their Use Rights by administering the 6.1 Land Use (Permanent Crops)-, and 6.2 Land Use (Temporary Crops) Questionnaires
- For non-household entities administer the 4.2 Non-household Entity Land Use Questionnaire
- Map the areas under communal use arrangements by liaising with the village authorities and administering the 6.3 Communal Land Use Questionnaire
- Create a Land Use Map and present it to the community for discussion and endorsement; consign arising disputes to the village authorities

STAGE III

Participatory Action Planning



2.3.1 Information Review and Status Quo Mapping

Objectives

- Review and establish consensus on the information collected in Stages I and II
- Build a common understanding of socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability with the community
- Identify immediate community needs and understand how and where those are met

Target Group(s)

- Entire community
- VVC

Expected Outputs

- Documented information on the Key Developmental Issue
- Status Quo Map

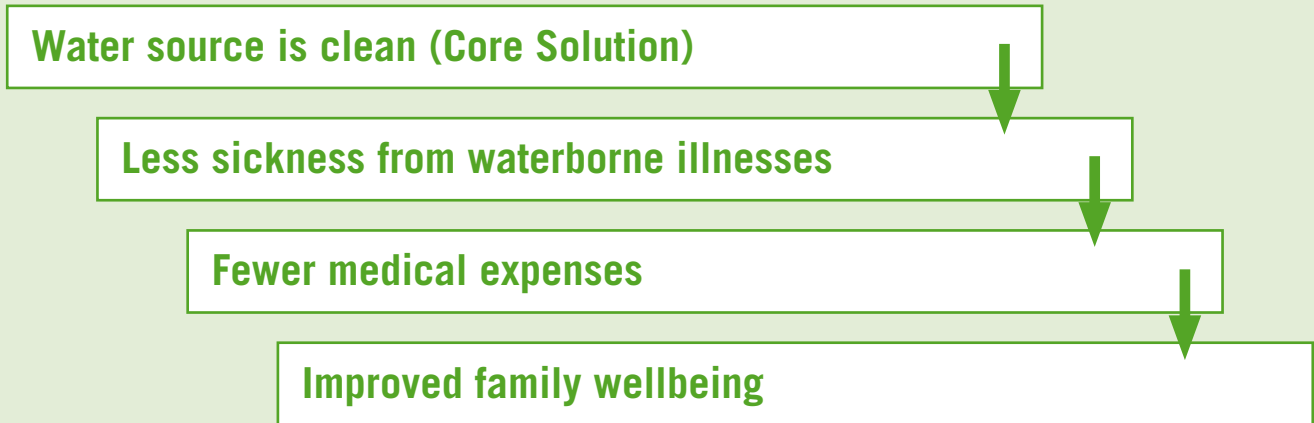
Process

- Clarify the aims and objectives of Stage III and obtain the community's consent to proceed
- Present and review the outputs of Stages I and II under a strengths-based approach emphasizing the community's existing positive social capital or productive assets
- Ask the VVC to present the Key Developmental Issue defined in activity 2.1.8 to the community and state the framing question (e.g. "How can you use your land to promote socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability?"); then discuss
- Present the community needs that were identified in Stage I (see activities 2.1.5 and 2.1.6) and encourage the community to discuss how it addresses its most basic and immediate needs incl. Eating, Drinking, Defecation, and Learning
- Create a Status Quo Map which visualizes where each of these activities take place

STAGE III

Participatory Action Planning

Example Solution Tree



2.3.2 Developmental Barriers and the Design of a Solution

Objectives

- Know the community's most urgent barrier to socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability
- Identify community-led solutions to the community's most urgent barrier

Target Group(s)

- Entire community

Expected Outputs

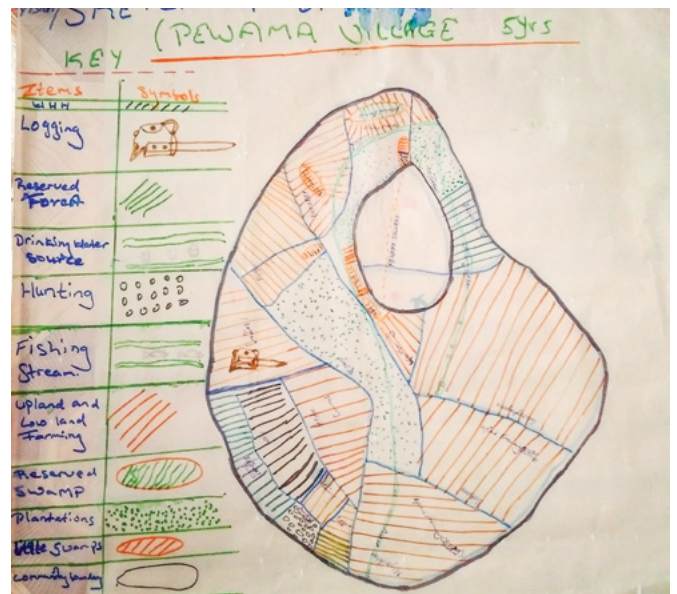
- A community-elected priority barrier
- Three Solution Trees

Process

- Present the barriers to land productivity, food resilience and environmental sustainability that the community identified in Stage 1 (see activity 2.1.5)
- Discuss further barriers to socio-economic progress and environmental sustainability with the community; then ask the members to rank and narrow the identified barriers down to five
- Use a pair-wise ranking method for the community to select the most urgent barrier
- Break the community into three groups (incl. women, male youth and elders) asking each group to flip the barrier into a solution and identify the effects of such solution (i.e. the "Solution Tree")
- Have one member from each group present the groups' Solution Tree and associated developmental vision to the community
- Review all solutions together; if possible, highlight components of a vision of land use that had been missing in the discussion

STAGE III

Participatory Action Planning



2.3.3 Visioning

Objectives

- Establish a land-based community vision towards socio-economic development and environmental sustainability
- Build consensus around an Action Plan which outlines clear steps towards achieving this vision

Target Group(s)

- Entire community

Expected Outputs

- Land-based Community Vision
- Land Use Sketch Map
- Action Plan

Process

- Explain the objectives of the Visioning Exercise to the community members; then ask them how they intend to use their land to promote socio-economic progress and environm. sustainability in the future
- Obtain a traced map with the outline of the village and encourage the community members to create a Land Use Sketch Map depicting the future of their community; discuss the following points before starting the exercise:
 - how far into the future do we want to look?
 - how can we use our land better than now?
 - what land uses do we want to promote?
 - which land use zones (incl. farming, forest, commercial development, conservation, etc.) fit with our vision?
 - how can we best meet our immediate needs?
- Facilitate the development of an Action Plan to make the vision actionable; address the **How? Where? Who? When? and What?**

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APPENDIX

Land Documentation Assessment Modules

Assessment Module	Questionnaire / Form
1 Municipal Land Documentation	1.1 Community Registration Questionnaire 1.2 Municipal Land Mapping Questionnaire
2 Land Owning Family Registration	2.1 Land Owning Family Registration Questionnaire
3 Household Registration	3.1 Household Registration Questionnaire
4 Non-Household Entity Registration	4.1 Non-Household Entity Registration Questionnaire 4.2 Non-Household Entity Land Use Questionnaire
5 Land Ownership Claims Documentation	5.1 Land Ownership Claims Questionnaire
6 Land Use Rights Documentation	6.1 Land Use (Permanent Crops) Questionnaire 6.2 Land Use (Temporary Crops) Questionnaire 6.3 Communal Land Use Questionnaire

Land Documentation Questionnaires: Key Questions

Key Questions

1.1 Community Registration Questionnaire

1. What is the name and location of this community?
2. In which category does this community fall (i.e. Target Village, Associated Village, Other Village)?
3. What is the first-, middle-, and last name of the village chief?
4. How many households live in this community?
5. What is the income-generating activity with the greatest economic relevance for the community?
6. What is the income-generating activity with the second-greatest economic relevance for the community?
7. What infrastructure does the village feature?
8. How can this village be accessed?
9. [Geo-reference] What are the coordinates of the mosque/church?
10. Add questions, as required.

Key Questions

1.2 Municipal Land Mapping Questionnaire (referenced to Questionnaire 1.1)

1. What is the name of the community which you want to map?
2. [Geo-reference] Map the municipal boundaries.
3. How many participants have taken part in the Municipal Land Mapping Exercise?
4. What are the names and roles of the participants and which village do they represent?
5. Who in the community knows who owns what land?
6. Who can people outside the community ask to find out who owns what land?
7. Add questions, as required.

Key Questions

2.1 Land Owning Family Registration Questionnaire

1. What is the name of the Land Owning Family?
2. Who is the Land Owning Family's Main Representative (incl. Name, Date of Birth, Gender, Cell Phone No., and Place of Residence)?
3. Who is the Main Representatives' Deputy (incl. Name, Date of Birth, Gender, Cell Phone No., and Place of Residence)?
4. Who is the Land Owning Family's Bush Head (incl. Name, Date of Birth, Gender, Cell Phone No., and Place of Residence)?
5. What is the Land Owning Family's Home Village?
6. How many land (polygons) does your family claim ownership over?
7. Who makes decisions about land use and production?
8. How do you organize decision-making processes?
9. Who oversees the management of the family land?
10. Add questions, as required.

Key Questions

3.1 Household Registration Questionnaire (administered with the Head of Household)

1. What is your First-, Middle-, and Last Name?
2. What is your Date of Birth and Gender?
3. What is your Mobile Phone Number?
4. How many members does your household have? Disaggregate by Male (σ) and Female Dependents (φ).
5. How many household members are under the Age of 6 / 19 / 66 Years ($\sigma + \varphi$)?
6. What are your household's main sources of income?
7. Does your family own land in this community?
8. If yes: Which Land Owning Family do you belong to?
9. Does your household cultivate food crops? If yes, which and on how much land?
10. Does your household grow cash crops? If yes, which and on how much land?
11. What are your household's Land Tenure Rights to your Cash Crop (i.e. Cocoa / Coffee / Cashew) fields?
12. Add questions, as required ... (for example on religion, language, access to leadership, nutrition, health, etc.)

Key Questions

4.1 Non-household Entity Registration Questionnaire

1. What is your First-, Middle-, and Last Name?
2. What is your Date of Birth and Gender?
3. Whose interests do you represent (incl. Government, Private Sector Entity, Other)?
4. What role do you have within your entity?
5. In which sector does the entity operate and what is the main economic activity?
6. Add questions, as required.

Key Questions

4.2 Non-household Entity Land Use Questionnaire (referenced to Questionnaire 4.1)

1. [Geo-reference] Map the leasehold.
2. For how long and since when has this land been leased?
3. Which Land Owning Families have Ownership Claims over this land?
4. How is your Land Use Right documented?
5. Add questions, as required.

Key Questions

5.1 Land Ownership Claims Questionnaire (referenced to Questionnaire 2.1)

1. Which Land Owning Family has claims over this land?
2. [Geo-reference] Map the Land Ownership Claim.
3. What is the Customary Ownership Regime applicable to this land?
4. When was this land acquired?
5. How has the land been acquired?
6. How is the land demarcated?
7. Who settles disputes over the land?
8. What is the main structural domain?
9. What is the spatial distribution of the structural domain in the mapped area?
10. What is the landform of the mapped area?
11. Which rock defines the mapped area?
12. What is the dominant surface?
13. What is the dominant soil type?
14. Does erosion occur?
15. Add questions, as required.

Key Questions

6.1 Land Use (Permanent Crops) Questionnaire (referenced to Questionnaire 3.1)

1. [Geo-reference] Map the field.
2. What is the dominant crop on this field (esp. cocoa, coffee, cashew, oil palm, rubber, kola)?
3. What are your intercrops?
4. How is the shade pattern on this field?
5. In which year was this field established?
6. Are you part of a certification scheme?
7. How much did you harvest last season?
8. What are your land tenure rights to this field?
9. Which Land Owning Families have Ownership Claims over this land?
10. Add questions, as required.

Key Questions

6.2 Land Use (Temporary Crops) Questionnaire (referenced to Questionnaire 3.1)

1. [Geo-reference] Map the field.
2. What is the temporary land use of this field (i.e. crops, fallow, pastures)?
3. How long has your household been using this field for this specific land use?
4. What are your household's land tenure rights to this field?
5. Which Land Owning Families have Ownership Claims over this land?
6. If not fallow or meadow/pasture: Which crops does your household cultivate on this field?
7. If not crops: How is the meadow/pasture being used?
8. Add questions, as required.

Key Questions

6.3 Communal Land Use Questionnaire

1. [Geo-reference] Map the area under the communal use arrangement
2. Who has Ownership Claims over this land?
3. What is this area used for?
4. Who has access and use rights to this area?
5. What is the communal use arrangement? How is this area being governed? And by whom?
6. Add questions, as required.

Guiding Questions for Exercises 2.1.1–2.1.8

Guiding Questions

Exercise 2.1.1: Meeting with Community Leadership & Stakeholder Analysis

Who are the Land Owning Families, key decision makers, Land Users and other community stakeholders in this village?

Guiding Questions

Exercise 2.1.2: Village and Land History

1. Who are the major decision makers in this community?
2. What did the village look like at: the date of establishment, [x] number of years ago, and presently?
 - A. Enquire about the numbers of households at that time.
 - B. Who were the key Land Owning Families at that time?
 - C. Identify the key agricultural activities of that time and the extent of uncultivated land.
3. Looking back at these three points of time, when have there been the most land disputes? What have those land disputes been about?
4. What are the current methods used for resolving land disputes?

Guiding Questions

Exercise 2.1.3: Transect Walk

1. What are the current main business and agricultural activities in this community?
2. Where are the major local farming businesses?
3. Are there currently any commercial enterprises with access to land in the community?
4. What and where are other important community features?

Guiding Questions

Exercise 2.1.4a: Facilitated Group Discussion with the Entire Community (By-Laws, Disputes and Decision Making)

1. Are there existing by-laws around land use and ownership in this community?
2. Are these by-laws well understood by all community members?
3. Are there land disputes in this community? How do they get solved?
4. Are there people who do not own, but use land in this community to support themselves? In what way do they do so?
5. Do those people who use the land have a voice in decision making?
6. Are there Hamlets that lay within the municipal boundary of your community?

Guiding Questions

2.1.4b: Facilitated Group Discussion with the Entire Community (Gendered Norms around Land and Women's Role in Land)

1. What can women do, that men can also do?
2. What do women do, if they want to make their voice heard in this community?
3. How do women in this village have their voices heard when they have concerns about land?
4. How can we promote the voices of all community members?

Guiding Questions

Exercise 2.1.5: Social Capital Mapping

1. Where are the village boundaries and any roads that cross the village?
2. Into how many sections is the community land divided?
3. What are the key social assets inside the community (no more than five)
4. What is the human capital in the community?
 - Do you have a young and strong workforce for manual labor? Do you have skilled labor in carpentry and masonry etc.? Do you have people who can capably lead and plan with the community? Do you have traders or agents for traders inside this village?
5. What is the social capital in the community?
 - What working groups exist in the community? Do you have a savings group? Do you have groups that effectively enforce by-laws? How well do you as a community think they can work together?

Guiding Questions

Exercise 2.1.6: Natural Resource Mapping of the Village

- A. Elders:** To map existing Land Ownership Claims and Land Use Zones
 1. Where are the village boundaries?
 2. Where are the main settlements (incl. Hamlets)?
 3. Where are the portions of land which are claimed by the different Land Owning Families?
- B. Male Youth:** To map Land-based Activities and Land Use Rights
 1. Where have you established your fields (for upland and lowland farming, and tree crops)?
 2. Where do you have fallow land which you consider to have Use Rights over?
- C. Women:** To map their Land-based Activities and Land Use Rights
 1. Where have you established vegetable gardens and other fields?
 2. Where do you have fallow land which you consider to have Use Rights over?

Guiding Questions

Exercise. 2.1.7: Formation of a Village Volunteer Committee (VVC)

1. What character and competences should the members of the VVC in your opinion have?
2. Which 3–4 community members do you consider to have the required character and competences?

Guiding Questions

Exercise 2.1.8: Focus Group Discussion with the Village Volunteer Committee

1. Looking at the social capital and the land resources at your disposal, what do you want to accomplish in the next five years?
2. What are the main barriers to you achieving this vision?

Aggregated Village-level Findings (Template)

Name of Village / Community

Village	Size of Municipal Land [hectares]	Number of Households	Number of Community Members
		29	169
	Number of Female Adults	Number of Male Adults	Number of Female Adults with Use Rights
	Number of Male Adults with Use Rights	Number of Land Owning Families	Number of People Non-Affiliated (Strangers)
		5	0
Land Ownership	Number of Community Members Associated with Land Owning Families	Names of Land Owning Families	Number of Community Members Associated with Land Owning Family [...]
	169	Ngoyor, Njaa, Koroma, Sheriff, Swaray	
	Size of Land Ownership Claim [ha]	Number of Land Ownership Claims per Family	
Land Use	What are the land uses within the municipal area [ha]	Land Use Zones	
Land Use by Men	How much total land (ha.) is cultivated by men	How much total land (ha.) is cultivated for IVS swamp by men	How much land is cultivated for perennial crops by men
	How much total land (ha.) is cultivated for annual crops by men	How many men cultivate land for IVS Rice	How many men cultivate land for perennial crops
			18
	How many men cultivate annual crops		
Land Use by Women	How much total land (ha.) is cultivated by women	How much total land (ha.) is cultivated for IVS swamp by women	How much land is cultivated for perennial crops by women
	How much total land (ha.) is cultivated for annual crops by women	How many women cultivate land for IVS Rice	How many women cultivate land for perennial crops
			6
	How many women cultivate annual crops		
	48		

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