



Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF)

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LIBERIA

Core details

Population:

4,128,572

WTO accession:

In progress

Poverty head count (%):

N/A

Share of international non-oil trade (%):

0.702

Per capita growth rate (%):

7.1

Value of non-oil goods traded (in US\$ million):

709

WB Trading Across Borders rank:

N/A

Employment in non-traditional export sectors:

N/A

In 2007, Liberia joined the Integrated Framework (IF) programme and undertook a [Diagnostic Trade Integration Study \(DTIS\)](#) [1] which was validated in 2008. The DTIS brought together Liberia's trade community (with representatives from private sector, Government and civil society) to agree on which activities were most critical from a list of challenges identified in consultations.

Moreover, the study was written in tandem with the 2008 Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) to make sure development and trade were interlinked. As an outcome, the DTIS deepened the analysis of the issues in the PRS and through the Action Matrix, offered the next practical steps in dealing with constraints to trade expansion.

Main Projects Ongoing

Description of the projects (objectives and interventions):

Under the EIF, Liberia's Tier 1 'Support to National Implementation Arrangements (NIAs)' project has been under implementation since November 2009, having been approved by the EIF Board in October 2009. The Tier 1 Project aims at supporting Liberia's integration into the global trading system through strengthening the country's capacity to formulate and implement trade policies including the priority areas identified in the DTIS Action Matrix, facilitate the mainstreaming of trade in the national development plan, and improve donor coordination on Aid for Trade (Aft).

Liberia's Tier 1 project has been extended into phase 2 with approval from the EIF Board in May 2014, after a satisfactory Tier 1

Mid-term evaluation in 2013. The Tier 1 phase 2 project (May 2014 to May 2016) will continue to facilitate Liberia's transition into the regional and global trading systems as an active player with a competitive domestic private sector and a supportive trade and business environment through trade mainstreaming.

Main progresses to date:

In 2013, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoCI) established a Single Projects Implementation Unit (SPIU) which brought the previously external EIF National Implementation Unit (NIU) into the Ministry premises and structures. In addition to EIF Tier 1 staff, the SPIU houses an Overseas Development Institute Fellow as well as project staff, Government civil servants and officials working on the Swedish National Board of Trade project, and the African Development Bank funded Programme of Assistance to Trade Support Institutions in Liberia.

The SPIU, a core part of the three-year strategic plan of the Ministry, aims to broaden the overall mandate of the MoCI-sanctioned and EIF-funded NIU to an umbrella unit with the broad goal of coordinating, monitoring and evaluating project related activities of various MoCI donor-funded projects. Integrating and embedding these projects and programmes within the MoCI structure under the SPIU further ensures the transfer of knowledge and sustainability of trade-related projects.

Liberia has updated its DTIS with the assistance of the World Bank. The DTIS Update (DTISU) approved in August 2012 by the EIF Board, was developed under the theme 'Leveraging Trade for Economic Diversification and Inclusive Growth'.

Liberia Standards Laboratory is now operational with assistance from UNIDO. Work is also underway with UNIDO, FAO and STDF to develop an EIF Tier 2 project strengthening Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures in line with the WTO SPS Agreement and establishing a National SPS Committee as well as an authority in charge of food safety.

On 29 April 2014, the President of Liberia, H.E. Ms Ellen Johnson Sirleaf launched the National Trade Policy (NTP) and the National Export Strategy (NES) at the National Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Conference and Trade Fair in Monrovia. The NTP and NES vision is to boost the capacities of private sector and re-connect the country with regional and global markets. Moreover, the NES and the NTP set out to boost employment generation, improve livelihoods and reduce poverty by promoting a balanced relationship between trade integration, sustainable development and social inclusion.

The NTP as Liberia's first policy document holistically addresses issues related to trade. Its main objective is to promote the integration of Liberia into the global economy through increasing the competitiveness of its businesses, with a focus on the agricultural, industrial and services sectors. The NTP was finalized with the support of ITC and had received prior support from the EIF Tier 1 project, and builds on input from the DTISU.

Likewise, the NES was developed with support from ITC and targets the development of five priority sectors: cassava; cocoa; fish and crustaceans; oil palm; and rubber. The strategy also targets three trade-support functions – access to finance, quality management, and trade logistics and facilitation – which have a positive impact on the export competitiveness of all sectors. Work is underway on exploring the opportunities offered by tourism and the furniture sectors through the EIF.

The EIF has facilitated the establishment of a WTO Reference Center at MoCI and setup a resource center for trade-related activities at the Liberia Chamber of Commerce.

The EIF has also provided a key platform to bring public and private sector together for an effective dialogue on improving the business climate. As such, public private dialogue now takes place through the Liberia Better Business Forum. This is further enhanced by Liberia's active MSME programme.

Liberia's National Development Plan, the Agenda for Transformation (2012-2017) is in place and aims to support the achievements of the country's long-term strategy (National Vision 2030 Strategy). Moreover, the EIF Tier 1 project support facilitated the National Trade Mainstreaming Workshop in 2012 which brought together a variety of stakeholders and involved discussions on inclusion of trade into the National Vision 2030 Strategy.

In 2012, the EIF supported a technical workshop on the WTO Accession and regional integration processes, as well as leveraging of bilateral resources to support the accession process from Sweden.

Furthermore, with EIF support, there has been increased inter-ministerial linkages in the preparation of foreign trade statistics (bringing together the Ministries of Finance; and of Commerce and Industry; the Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services; Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs; Central Bank of Liberia etc.).

A survey on informal Cross-Border Trade has also been completed, to be finalized for submission to policymakers and stakeholders. In terms of capacity building and outreach, the NIU team participated in the first M&E and Communications Regional Workshop for African Anglophone countries held in Zambia in April 2013. Additionally, Monthly Trade Bulletins and Quarterly Trade Reviews have been prepared and students from the Department of Economics at the University of Liberia have been involved in the trade mapping exercise. Liberia also features in the [EIF country profile series](#) [2] and the EIF film, "[Trade Works](#) [3]", which have been widely used to promote the visibility of the programme's objectives as part of the national trade agenda.

In September 2011, the NIU also supported the private sector by conducting a National Trade Fair. The trade fair brought together small businesses to showcase their products and establish a 'Made in Liberia Trade Store'.

Outlook:

With UNIDO, FAO and STDF support, Liberia is developing an EIF Tier 2 project proposal in respect to SPS capacity building.

Liberia is also developing two feasibility studies under the EIF on tourism and furniture sectors.

Work is also underway by MoCI to include an implementation matrix in the NTP, building on the DTISU and the NES to act as the Medium-Term Programme.

Results

With support from the EIF to boost trade, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has automated its national Business Registry and reduced the time it takes to register a business – reforms have helped to boost Liberia’s ranking in the World Bank’s *Doing Business Survey* from 167 in 2008 to 144 in 2014.

The Import Permit Declaration is now only required for importation of food and medicines and the threshold for pre-shipment inspection has increased from US\$1,000 to US\$3,000. In line with concerted trade facilitation efforts, the Port of Monrovia has increased competitiveness in the sub-region and launched a one-stop shop centre bringing together customs, commerce and other agencies.

The Liberia Standards Laboratory is now operational with assistance from UNIDO, also supported by an ongoing national Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) standards framework study. And, with EIF support, new Tier 2 projects are in the pipeline to strengthen SPS measures in Liberia in line with the WTO SPS Agreement, with work already under way to establish a National SPS Committee as well as an authority in charge of food safety. Complying with standards will assist Liberia to get on to the trading platform by increasing its competitiveness to access wider international markets for some of its major exports like vegetables, fruits and other agricultural commodities.

Links

The Republic of Liberia, Ministry of Commerce and Industry
<http://www.moci.gov.lr/> [4]

State of implementation

| TIER 1 OUTCOME AND INDICATORS | | | | | |
|--|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Outcome 1: Sufficient institutional and management capacity built in Liberia to formulate and implement trade-related strategies and implementation plans | | | | | |
| Outcome 1 indicators | Baseline | '10 | '11 | '12 | |
| O1.1: Support to NIAs (Y/N) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | |
| O1.2: DTIS Action Matrix (Date) | 2008 | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| O1.3: Fiduciary capacity (1-5) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | |
| O1.4: Trade strategy updated (Y/N) | 2010 | 0 | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| O1.5: Trade Strategy quality (1-5) | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| O1.6 Trade strategy implemented (1-5) | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |

Outcome 2: Liberia mainstreams trade into its national development strategies and plans

| Outcome 2 indicators | Baseline | '10 | '11 | '12 |
|--|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| O2.1: Trade in the National Development Plan (1-5) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| O2.2: Trade in Productive Sector Strategies (Y/N) | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| O2.3: Public-Private Dialogue (1-5) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

Outcome 3: Coordinated delivery of trade-related resources (funding, TA, etc.) by donors and implementing agencies to implement Liberia's priorities following the adoption of the DTIS Action Matrix

| Outcome 3 indicators | Baseline | '10 | '11 | '12 |
|---|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| O3.1: Annual joint sector implementation overview (Y/N) | Yes | Yes | Yes | N/A |
| O3.2: Frequency of Government-Donor consultation in trade (1-5) | Yes | Yes | Yes | N/A |
| O3.3: UN-CEB Cluster activities based on DTIS Action Matrix (Y/N) | No | No | No | N/A |
| O3.4: Joint donor initiatives in trade (Y/N) | No | No | No | N/A |

Outcome 4: Liberia secures resources in support of initiatives that address DTIS Action Matrix priorities

| Outcome 4 indicators | Baseline | '10 | '11 | '12 |
|--|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| O4.1: Medium-term Programme (1-5) | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| O4.2: Government budget contribution (Y/N) | Yes | Yes | Yes | N/A |
| O4.4: Number and amount of projects funded from DTIS Action Matrix (in US\$ million) | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

Financial information

DTIS Update

Starting date / End date

21/08/2012

Approved Budget

200,000

Board Approval Date

22/10/2009
Disbursement
200,000
Expenditure Reported
165,150
MOU Approval Date
21/08/2012
MOU Expiry Date
31/07/2015
Phase:
Implementation

NIA Support

Starting date / End date
17/11/2009
Approved Budget
1,499,900
Board Approval Date
22/10/2009
Disbursement
1,154,900
Expenditure Reported
1,052,594
MOU Approval Date
10/11/2009
MOU Expiry Date
30/06/2016
Phase:
Implementation

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