

GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA, DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS'  
AND CIVIL SOCIETY SUMMIT  
MONROVIA, LIBERIA  
15-16 APRIL 2010

*Theme: Maximizing High Quality Aid for Growth & Development*

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES ON AID EFFECTIVENESS AND NGO INTERVENTIONS IN LIBERIA

*Statement of delegates attending the High Level Summit on Aid Effectiveness, 15 & 16 April 2010.*

The Government of Liberia, Development Partners and Civil Society convened in Monrovia, Liberia on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of April 2010 to engage in a constructive dialogue focusing on the Government's priorities and guiding principles for the mobilization, coordination and management of aid in Liberia. Over 200 participants comprising Government Ministers, heads of other branches of Government, leaders from the UN system, heads of missions and representatives of bilateral and multilateral institutions, and civil society organizations attended Liberia's first ever High Level Summit on Aid Effectiveness.

As Liberia approaches HIPC completion, this Summit serves as a timely opportunity to discuss approaches to changing the way aid is delivered and used in order to bring about more effective and sustainable results. Liberia is entering into a new phase of development through the completion of the Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2011 and the launching of a National Vision. Within this context, the Liberian Government reaffirms the commitment to the five principles outlined in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the four principles outlined in the Accra Agenda for Action namely, ownership; alignment; harmonization and use of country systems; managing for results and mutual accountability, were reiterated in order to improve Liberia's impact in reducing poverty, increasing growth, and building capacity.

Collectively, the participants discussed aid effectiveness and NGO interventions in Liberia. Delegates also examined factors that impede better results and explored options for maximizing the effective use of development assistance to Liberia within the framework of Liberia's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Government is leading an inclusive process to prepare a National Aid Policy to reinforce its commitment to maximizing high quality aid and solidify its policy positions within the current fiscal year, which coincides with Liberia's achievement of HIPC Completion status. The following commitments are instrumental in achieving the implementation of the National Aid Policy:

- National ownership and leadership should drive the relationships between the Government, Development Partners and Civil Society.
- Aligning aid with the country's strategic plans (e.g. Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy and County Development Agendas) will ensure that development partner resources are supporting Liberia's priorities.
- Harmonizing assistance programs to minimize fragmentation and ensure coordinated support behind Government programs.
- Utilizing country systems for planning, Monitoring & Evaluation reporting and ensuring capacity development will improve the Government's ability to manage aid.
- Mutual accountability through Monitoring & Evaluation and reporting, including agreed upon indicators, is an effective way to ensure that lessons learned from aid can impact the ongoing policy dialogue.
- Investing in building country systems for effective aid coordination and management through institutional reform and increased capacity development.
- Clarifying institutional arrangements for aid coordination and management through the Ministry of Planning & Economic Affairs and the Ministry of Finance.

- Holding regular and frequent dialogue with all stakeholders to develop a strong aid delivery framework and coordination forum, including the future inclusion of NGO network representatives into the Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee (LRDC).

As Liberia enters a new phase of visioning and development planning, Government of Liberia, Development Partners, and Civil Society agree to renew partnerships for development, in line with the following principles:

- The Government will manage aid through an inclusive approach, engaging more with other national constituencies such as the Legislature, Private Sector and Civil Society.
- Country systems and processes that meet mutually agreed upon standards will be used to deliver aid as the first option; Development Partners will co-develop plans on increasing use of country systems with national leaders and work within the country-led division of labor.
- Development Partners will adapt conditions for the direction and management of aid to support national priorities and national /sub-national and sectoral development objectives.
- National authorities will strengthen the linkages between public expenditures and results, and information on aid will be made increasingly transparent, including Development Partner provision of information on planned aid to the country in a timely manner.
- Both the Government and Development Partners will improve efforts to have mutual assessment reviews, complemented with credible independent evidence, to identify aid management and implementation challenges and improvements.
- Aid impact shall also be determined by the ability to extend support to marginalized groups and the poorest of the poor.

Following discussion, the following were agreed upon as a way forward:

- i. **Developing a coherent aid policy;**
- ii. **Clarifying institutional responsibilities, division of labor and multi-level coordination mechanisms (national, county, and sectoral-level);**
- iii. **Developing a clear framework for program planning; and**
- iv. **Investing in participatory systems and tools for monitoring and evaluation.**

16 April 2010