

Community Rights Support Facility

Call for CV, Expression of Interest and Motivational Letter

January 9, 2020

Background

The Land Rights Law of 2018 provides a second chance to communities across Liberia to formalize their customary land rights or land claims. Although the law has been hailed as groundbreaking, it is not a first in Liberia. The Hinterland Law of 1949 states: “Title to the territory of the Republic of Liberia vests in the sovereign state. **The right and title of the respective tribes to lands of an adequate area for farming and other enterprises essential to the necessities of the tribe remain inherent in the tribe** to be utilized by them for these purposes; and **whether or not they have procured deeds from Government, delimiting by notes and bounds such reserves, their rights and interest in and to such areas, are a perfect reserve and give them title to the land against any person or persons whenever**”. This progressive provision changed over time to *‘rights to occupy and use’*.

The Land Rights Law of 2018 has therefore re-opened the door to communities to secure their land tenure for today and future generations. The process laid down in the law, while not overly complicated, does require careful facilitation and support – to ensure that the process is inclusive, decisions are broad-based and complies with the legal requirements.

A small number of Liberian NGOs are actively supporting a limited number of communities to go through the process of formalizing their customary land rights. However, to bring this to scale and make such facilitation support accessible to any community that wants it – there is a need for a large contingent of facilitators and other support agents.

The Community Rights Support Facility is being established to mobilize a critical mass of support agents to facilitate communities to go through the process, provide technical assistance to communities on different aspects of community land governance in their formative years, and capacity building through mentoring or *hand-holding* as they engage with the formal sector.

IDH, Social Entrepreneurs for Sustainable Development (SESDev) and individual civil society actors are collaborating to set up the facility and make it operational in 2020. Thereafter, it will take on a life of its own, and operate independent of the organizations and individuals involved in the formation.

Community Rights Support Facility

The Community Rights Support Facility or CR Support Facility is and shall be a charitable, not-for-profit corporation established for the following objectives and or purpose:

1. To support implementation of the Community Rights Law of 2009, the Land Rights Law of 2018, and other laws related to natural resources through collaboration with relevant government Ministries, Agencies and Commissions, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and communities;
2. Facilitate and support communities to formalize their customary collective community land and forest tenure rights and strengthen their stewardship of the natural resources within their domain;

3. Provide technical assistance including training, mentoring and other capacity building support to communities to strengthen local governance and improve local stewardship of natural resources, especially land and forest, across Liberia;
4. Mobilize resources to support implementation of the Community Rights Law and Land Rights Law, and capacity building at the local, regional and national levels for sustained support to communities across Liberia; and
5. Develop programs and plans aimed at promoting community stewardship of their land, forest and other natural resources.

The CR Support Facility adopts a different approach or model of organizing. Instead of recruiting staff on short or long-term contracts, the Facility will:

- 1) Mobilize all those with interest in supporting its objectives and intentions, provide specialist training on different aspects of the customary land formalization process, and recruit professionals with expertise in various areas of need;
- 2) Identify and invite individuals with needed expertise (expatriates and Liberians living abroad¹), relevant skills and capacity, at the community, county and national levels to sign-up;
- 3) Those that complete the specialist training on customary land formalization will then go through a vigorous selection process, and the successful candidates will be placed on a roster to be activated and deployed (based on availability) as needed;
- 4) Maintain a very small secretariat to provide program and administrative support to teams that are activated to implement specific aspects of the customary land formalization process.

Our target is to mobilize 100 support agents by the end of 2020.

This approach will allow us to build a large team with diverse expertise, support dozens of communities simultaneously, and significantly keep the cost of support low by working with local facilitators that are already resident in the different parts of the country.

CV and Expression of Interest

Individuals with one or more elements of the profiles below should submit their CV and a motivational letter explicitly expressing their interests and motivation for engaging with the CR Support Facility to crsf.liberia@gmail.com:

- 1) Trainers with background in rural development, peace-building, and facilitation;
- 2) Lawyers with interest in providing low-cost or pro bono support to communities;
- 3) Technicians with background in forestry, natural resource governance and management; and
- 4) Practitioners working on land rights, community organizing, social empowerment.

Individuals with undergraduate degrees in sociology, development studies, agriculture and forestry, and other social sciences are also encouraged to submit their CV and letters of interest. Those with practical experiences in any aspect of community development are also encouraged to send in their CV and letters.

¹Those outside of Liberia will have opportunities to provide remote support including reviewing and commenting on program plans, policy documents, and project outputs as appropriate. Others that are available and able to travel will also have opportunities to provide support on the ground.