



THE KHANA GROUP

ENDLINE IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE COMMUNITY LAND PROTECTION PROJECT IN LIBERIA

FINAL REPORT

MAY 2023

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USAID Contract Number: GS00F061GA / 7200AA18M00006
Communications, Evidence and Learning (CEL) Project

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Suggested Citation: Persha, L., G. Haugan, X. Liu, N. Taha, and R. Wendt. 2023. *Endline Impact Evaluation of the Community Land Protection Project in Liberia: Final Report*. Washington, DC: USAID Communications, Evidence and Learning (CEL) Project.

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ABSTRACT

Under the Communications, Evidence and Learning Project, NORC conducted an endline impact evaluation (IE) of the Community Land Protection Program (CLPP) and related follow-on programming in Liberia to support communities in formalizing their customary rights to communal land in accordance with Liberia's 2018 Land Rights Act (LRA). The programming took place during 2014-2022 in select communities in Lofa, Maryland and River Gee counties of Liberia. The purpose of the endline IE is to provide USAID with evidence-based learning on the impacts of CLPP and follow-on customary land formalization programming across six different outcome families: land governance; community empowerment; tenure security; land conflicts; community land development and natural resource conditions; and livelihoods. The evaluation particularly seeks to contribute to a growing evidence base on how the formalization of communal customary rights to land in communities impacts community land and natural resource management, and women's land rights and participation in land governance.

The endline IE was conducted nearly nine years after the start of CLPP programming and nine months since the conclusion of post-CLPP follow-on support. The IE adopts a quasi-experimental design and draws on household and community leader survey data collection across 79 communities (39 CLPP communities and 40 comparison group communities), a panel of 614 households surveyed at baseline (2014) and endline (2022), and qualitative data collected from 12 of the 39 CLPP communities at endline. The analysis estimates the average impacts of the land formalization interventions on households, and how impacts varied for youth-headed households, minority-headed households, poorest households and women. The qualitative data at endline provides additional information on program implementation and context issues, and insights into the reasons and mechanisms for impacts or lack thereof.

The results find strong evidence for CLPP's positive impacts across multiple indicators of land governance and community empowerment, while qualitative findings plausibly demonstrate how achievements in these domains have laid the foundations for improvements in tenure security, land conflict and natural resource management outcomes, in keeping with the intended theory of change. Important mechanisms for governance and community empowerment improvements include the creation of land and resource-related bylaws in the community, the establishment and strengthening of community-led land management institutions within communities, and widespread participation of households in all stages of the communal land formalization process.

The key concern highlighted by the IE is the lack of qualitative or statistical evidence for impacts on women's empowerment, substantive participation in land governance, and widespread improvements in women's land rights, despite CLPP's dedicated efforts in these domains. It is clear that future programs will need to continue to prioritize addressing gendered dimensions of customary land formalization, given the challenges in realizing meaningful change. An additional concern is around the delays communities experience in receiving the confirmatory survey and community deed by government, the final two steps in the customary land formalization process. The IE results suggest this could erode community confidence and contribute to a reversal of communities' hard-won governance gains and other positive effects of customary land formalization realized to date.

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ACRONYMS

ANCOVA	Analysis of Covariance
CEL	Communications, Evidence and Learning Project
CLDMC	Community Land Development and Management Committee
CLPP	Community Land Protection Program
CSI	Community Self-Identification
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DID	Difference in Difference
DDI	Bureau for Development, Democracy and Innovation (USAID)
EEl	Center for Energy, Environment and Infrastructure (USAID)
GD	Group Discussion
IE	Impact Evaluation
ILRG	Integrated Land and Resource Governance Activity
IRB	Institutional Review Board
KII	Key Informant Interview
LEVERAGE	Land Evidence for Economic Rights and Gender Empowerment
LLA	Liberia Land Authority
LRA	Land Rights Act
LRG	Land and Resource Governance (USAID)
MDE	Minimum Detectable Effect
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PE	Performance Evaluation
RCT	Randomized Controlled Trial
SDI	Sustainable Development Institute in Liberia
STARR	Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights
TOC	Theory of Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation team is grateful to the many survey respondents, qualitative discussion participants, town chiefs, elders and related community leaders and local authorities from the study communities in Lofa, Maryland and River Gee counties for their participation in this study. We also extend our thanks to SDI and ILRG program and local implementing partner staff, including Megan Huth at TetraTech, for their multiple inputs, discussions and generous knowledge-sharing on CLPP and ILRG implementation in the study communities over the course of preparations and data collection for this evaluation.

The endline impact evaluation benefitted from a strong data collection partnership between NORC and the Khana Group (TKG), who ably conducted the household survey, community leader survey and qualitative data collection under a tight timeframe and challenging field conditions. We particularly acknowledge the strong research coordination skills and tireless field efforts that Vennessa Smith, Ife Agbeja, Uchenna Moghalu, Jokua Gbassie and Ambrose Agyemang brought to the data collection, together with that of the many TKG enumerators, moderators and field supervisors. The team also acknowledges Kate Marple-Cantrell and The Cloudburst Group, which led initial design and prior phases of data collection for this IE, and provided baseline and midline rounds of survey data to the NORC team. Finally, the team appreciates the technical review and engagement on this study from Karol Boudreaux (USAID/DDI), Mulbah Forkpa (USAID/Liberia), Caleb Stevens (USAID/DDI), Jeremy Green (USAID/DDI), and others within USAID's Land and Resource Governance Division in the Bureau for Development Democracy and Innovation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EVALUATION PURPOSE

This report presents the results of an endline impact evaluation (IE) of the Community Land Protection Program (CLPP) and related follow-on programming in Liberia to support communities in formalizing their customary rights to communal land in accordance with Liberia's 2018 Land Rights Act (LRA). The purpose of the endline IE is to provide USAID with evidence-based learning on the impacts of CLPP and follow-on customary land formalization programming across six different outcome families: land governance; community empowerment, including a particular focus on women's land rights and participation in land governance; tenure security; land conflicts; community land development and natural resource conditions; and livelihoods. The IE was conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago under the Communications, Evidence and Learning (CEL) project.

The impact analysis draws on 2014 baseline household survey data collected from 1,091 households and 2022 endline household survey data collected from 1,163 households and 1,700 respondents, across 79 communities located in Lofa, Maryland, or River Gee counties of Liberia. The primary impact analysis draws on data from a panel of 614 households interviewed at baseline and endline. Findings and conclusions integrate the results from statistical estimates of impact with supplemental analyses, descriptive summary statistics, and qualitative data collected from a subset of communities at endline.

The endline evaluation findings:

- Estimate the impacts of support to customary land formalization in CLPP communities nearly nine years since programming began and nine months since the conclusion of post-CLPP follow-on support, on indicators across six outcome families and per evaluation design;
- Highlight where results differ from findings at 2016 midline;
- Integrate findings from qualitative data collection at endline to provide additional interpretation of results and discussion on potential mechanisms for impacts or lack thereof; and
- Contribute to evidence-based learning on the role that formal recognition of communal customary land rights and related establishment of land and resource bylaws and local governance institutions within communities can play in improving aspects of land governance, empowering women, other vulnerable groups and communities overall, and enhancing livelihoods while also incentivizing stronger forest conservation and more sustainable use of communal land and natural resources in the Liberian context.

CLPP ACTIVITY AND EVALUATION BACKGROUND

CLPP was implemented during 2014-2017 and sought to support communities to protect their community lands and natural resources and improve local land and resource governance for the overall benefit of communities. The program aimed to assist communities through legal empowerment, by-law development, governance strengthening, resource valuation, boundary mapping, and conflict resolution. It was designed to operate in 45 communities in three counties of Liberia, later reduced to 24 as a result of funding constraints, a nearly two-year programming pause and other challenges related to the 2014 Ebola Virus Outbreak in Liberia. Varying levels of activity completion across these communities was achieved by activity end in 2017.

During 2019-2022, USAID supported follow-on programming under its Integrated Land and Resource Governance (ILRG) task order to complete or restart the intended program activities in the initial set of CLPP communities, working through the same local implementing partner, the Sustainable Development Institute. A key focus of the post-CLPP support was for SDI to complete the full customary land formalization process in accordance with the 2018 LRA, in all of the intended CLPP communities. Among others, this included working with communities to complete community self-identification, adopt resource governance by-laws, establish elected and inclusive community land governance institutions (known as Community Land Development and Management Committees, CLDMCs), conduct community land identification and mapping of community boundaries, and formally document boundaries across neighboring communities via memoranda of understanding.

USAID independently commissioned a quasi-experimental impact evaluation of CLPP at the time of activity design and in collaboration with implementers, to obtain rigorous evidence-based learning on the impacts of customary land formalization and understand the effect of strengthening community-based land management institutions on tenure security and governance. Per IE design, 45 communities were selected to receive the CLPP interventions and an additional 45 communities that would not receive CLPP activities were selected by the IE design team to serve as comparison group communities. Baseline data collection was conducted in 2014, at which time the community sample was reduced to 79 communities. A midline evaluation was conducted in 2016, approximately 10 months after CLPP activities began in earnest, which found some evidence for impacts at that time on indicators of land governance and tenure security.

EVALUATION DESIGN, METHODS , QUESTIONS AND LIMITATIONS

DESIGN AND METHODS

The CLPP endline IE maintains the same overarching evaluation design as conceptualized at baseline: a quasi-experimental difference-in-difference (DID) approach with statistical matching to assess household-level impacts of the CLPP interventions. Under the DID evaluation design, a comparison group of communities was selected prior to baseline and confirmed via statistical matching on observable community and household characteristics. This represents the counterfactual situation, or what would have happened in CLPP communities had they not received the CLPP and follow-on ILRG customary land formalization interventions. The DID design at endline estimates the impacts of the CLPP and follow-on ILRG activities (collectively referred to as ‘CLPP activities’) on various outcomes of interest as the difference between the outcome levels for households in CLPP communities and those in the comparison group communities, controlling for various factors.

The evaluation utilizes baseline and endline household and community leader survey data from the 79 communities in the baseline sample (39 CLPP communities and 40 comparison group communities), together with qualitative data collected at endline in a subset of 12 of the CLPP communities. The core impact results are obtained via an ANCOVA model that utilizes a panel dataset of 614 households across baseline and endline to estimate household-level Average Treat Effects. Heterogeneity analyses are also conducted to explore how impacts may have varied for four population sub-groups of interest: youth-headed households, minority-headed households, poorest households and women.

Qualitative data collected via key informant interviews (KIIs) with community leaders and members of CLDMCs, and gender-disaggregated group discussions (GDs) held with women and men from 12 of the

CLPP implementation communities provide additional depth of information on key program implementation and context issues and mechanisms for observed impacts or lack thereof. At endline, the overall IE design retains its validity and the household panel sample remains well-powered to detect fine-scale impacts.

QUESTIONS

Per evaluation design, the endline IE focuses on five areas of inquiry on whether and how CLPP:

1. Strengthens the land tenure security of rural communities;
2. Improves perceptions of governance and increases accountability of local leaders;
3. Helps communities to document their land and to codify rules;
4. Protects women’s land rights and those of marginalized groups (substantive and procedural);¹ and
5. Leads to conservation and sustainable natural resource use.

The endline IE team uses statistical models to estimate CLPP’s causal impacts, drawing on a set of indicators across six outcome families as shown in the table below. The endline IE maintains the same outcome families and most of the existing hypotheses and indicators that were developed by the IE design, baseline and midline team.

Outcome Family	Hypotheses: <i>Households in communities receiving the CLPP intervention will ...</i>	Primary and Secondary Indicators
1. Land Governance	H1: ... have different perceptions of local land governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived accountability of community leaders and decision makers over land and natural resources • Trust in community leaders involved in land and natural resource governance (fairness) • Perceived capacity of local leaders to manage communal natural resources sustainably • Perceived transparency of leaders in decision-making processes • Satisfaction with community leaders and land governance processes in the community • Land governance index • Participation in land and resource rules, meetings, monitoring, enforcement and conflict resolution • Prevalence of written land and resource bylaws (household awareness of bylaws) • Perceived inclusivity of community decisions on investors and receipt of benefits • Relative power of various community actors in land and resource decisionmaking
2. Empowerment	H2: ... perceive different capacity of local leaders to negotiate with government actors and outside investors in the instance of a proposed land concession.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of laws regarding customary land rights and natural resource management • Knowledge of women’s legal rights to land • Knowledge of individual and community rights around engaging with outside investors • Knowledge of communal land boundaries

¹ Members of minority groups include respondents from a non-majority religion or non-majority ethnic group in their town.

Outcome Family	Hypotheses: <i>Households in communities receiving the CLPP intervention will ...</i>	Primary and Secondary Indicators
3. Tenure Security	H3: ... perceive different access rights, levels of tenure security, and protection of land their household customarily uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived risk of encroachment on communal land by various actors Perceived risk of encroachment by type of communal land Perceived rights over customary farmland Knowledge of community ownership of communal land
4. Land Conflict	H4: ... experience a different number of land conflicts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevalence and severity of land conflicts Household satisfaction with conflict resolution processes
5. Community Land Development and Natural Resource Condition	H5: ... report different levels of natural resource conservation and community land development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement in unsustainable forest practices Perceived forest and other natural resource conditions: forest size, density, water quality and animal density Perceived loss of tree species Valuation of communal forest land
6. Livelihoods	H6: ... have different livelihood and welfare outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of household land ownership Amount of land farmed by household prevalence of poverty

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

The well-powered household panel sample at endline, treatment fidelity across CLPP and comparison groups that was maintained since baseline, and ability to examine gendered effects across respondents within households constitute key strengths for measuring CLPP’s impacts at endline, together with utilization of a mixed-methods qualitative and quantitative approach that enables triangulation of findings across multiple sources and allows for more substantive interpretation of the statistical impact results.

The endline IE has the following key limitations or potential sources of bias:

- **Lack of receipt of a confirmatory survey or community deeds by endline**, as the Liberian Land Authority (LLA) had not yet issued these to any community, meant that endline results are based on findings from communities that do not yet possess the final legal documentation of the communal land rights as set out by law, which could affect their level of confidence in their land rights and related tenure security measures. However, CLPP communities had received a Certificate of Completion of Community Self-Identification from LLA.
- **Lack of baseline data for some impact indicators** which necessitated using a cross-sectional approach to analyze impacts for these indicators that cannot fully account for potential confounders, hence results are interpreted as suggestive rather than causal. However, this limitation primarily relates to a single outcome family (land conflict) and is somewhat mitigated by the ability to draw on substantial qualitative data and additional descriptive statistics from the survey data to gain insights on patterns and trends over time and how they related to CLPP’s activities.
- **Smaller than anticipated household panel dataset due to insufficient respondent and household identifying information at baseline.** The endline IE team sought to reinterview as many of the same households from baseline as possible but expected fairly high attrition given that nearly a decade had elapsed since baseline. Household attrition from the baseline sample was 25 percent, or 322

households, and overwhelmingly a result of household relocation from the community. However, additional households were lost from the panel analytic sample, despite being surveyed at both rounds, due to insufficient identifying information and apparent data errors at baseline that prevented the endline team from matching some endline household observations with a corresponding observation in the baseline dataset provided. While the resulting household panel is smaller than anticipated for this reason, the endline impact analysis is still well-powered.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

LAND GOVERNANCE

- Impact analysis suggest CLPP has led to substantial positive impacts on multiple indicators of land governance. This includes significant increases in households':
 - Agreement that leaders punish rulebreakers (12.2 percentage point increase);
 - View that leaders do not act in secret (8.7 percentage point increase);
 - Combined rating of leaders per an index of multiple aspects of perceived leader capacity, trust and satisfaction (15.3 percentage point increase).
- Impact results provide evidence for households' improved perceptions of community leaders, while comparison households' view of leaders saw little change or even declined over the same time period.
- CLPP also led to a significant increase in household participation in land governance and awareness of land-related bylaws in the community. This includes higher likelihood that households:
 - Help create bylaws (16.4 percentage point increase);
 - Attend land meetings in the community (8.4 percentage point increase);
 - Monitor rule-breaking (8.1 percentage point increase);
 - Report presence of bylaws in the community (24.5 percentage point increase);
 - Are satisfied with bylaws (8.9 percentage point increase)
 - Report an elected CLDMC in the community (15.7 percentage point increase)
- Households perceive the relative power of CLDMCs in their community to have increased, while the perceived power of paramount chiefs on land decisions in communities has declined as result of CLPP.
- The endline results expand substantially on positive trends for land governance reported at midline and suggest that CLPP's achievements on land governance have grown as communities continued to receive comprehensive support to complete the customary land formalization process over time.
- There is evidence that poorest and youth-headed households saw significantly greater improvements on several indicators, while women and minority-headed households had more negative outcomes on certain important indicators of land governance participation and leader perceptions.
- Qualitative findings provide strong support for the impact results and confirm widespread awareness of and participation by community members in customary land formalization processes, including boundary harmonization, establishment of community land governance institutions, and bylaws development.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

- Impact analyses suggest CLPP increased the likelihood a household knows some or all of their communal land boundaries, by 6.5 and 8.2 percentage points, respectively. CLPP also increased the likelihood a household knows that women have a right to inherit land under the LRA, by 9.3 percentage points.
- Results at endline do not find evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on household's knowledge of other legal aspects of the LRA. Households in the comparison group had gained a similar level of awareness on several aspects of the LRA by endline.
- Poorest households had a significantly greater improvement on knowledge of women's land rights, while women and youth-headed households had less positive results regarding knowledge of some specific or more nuanced elements of customary land rights under the LRA.

-
- Qualitative findings suggest CLPP was effective at increasing household knowledge of communal land rights per the LRA and empowering communities to conduct communal land management responsibilities. Participants highlighted that trainings, boundary harmonization and other program support had led to greater peace between communities, fewer land disputes, and ability to assert their right to exclude, negotiate with and obtain financial or in-kind benefits from outsider resource extractors on their land.

TENURE SECURITY

- Results at endline do not find evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on indicators of tenure security. This includes households' perceived risk of losing land to different internal and external actors, and their perceived rights to household farmland. Cross-sectional analyses also find no evidence for a change in households' perceived tenure security over communal farmland, forestland or townland.
- Subgroups analysis suggests that CLPP led to improvements for minority-headed households with respect to tenure security and their perceived rights to farmland, including the right to decide who inherits farmland, plant rubber trees and an overall bundle of rights index.
- Contrary to the impact results, qualitative findings provide strong support for CLPP's role in helping community members feel more secure about their communal land. Participants highlighted knowledge they gained from trainings about their legal land rights, and the role of boundary harmonization in reducing their concerns over future land disputes as key mechanisms for their improved tenure security. There is also descriptive and qualitative evidence that household concerns at midline about land expropriation by investors or elites have dissipated at endline.
- However, many households remain concerned about unresolved boundary disputes with a neighboring community, or obtaining the community deed from LLA. CLPP's focus on communal rights and management of farmland, forestland and townland may also have left community members less sure of their security over farmland that individual households customarily used within the community, particularly in the absence of mapping and documentation efforts specifically for that land.

LAND CONFLICT

- Similar to midline, results at endline do not find evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on the prevalence or severity of land conflict, or households' perceived satisfaction with land conflict resolution. At endline, 19 percent of households (N=221) reported experiencing a land conflict in the previous year, and the share was similar across CLPP and comparison communities.
- Contrary to the impact results, qualitative findings strongly suggest that households perceive CLPP led to fewer land disputes and a reduced likelihood of future land conflicts. CLPP's boundary harmonization process and the establishment and functioning of the CLDMC were seen as the key mechanisms for this. However, unresolved boundary disputes between neighboring communities along some portion of their boundary was an ongoing source of conflict in several CLPP communities.

COMMUNITY LAND DEVELOPMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCE CONDITIONS

- Impact analyses suggest that CLPP led to a 15 percentage point increase, on average, in the likelihood a household perceived water quality was increasing in their community. Endline results do not find evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on other indicators of communal land development or forest conditions. Where there were changes since baseline, they were similar in magnitude and direction across CLPP and comparison households.
- Results suggest CLPP improved youth-headed households' outlook on forest conditions. This included a perception that forest animals, forest density, forest size and water quality in the community are increasing.
- Qualitative data at endline suggests that many CLPP communities have taken important steps to lay the foundations for improved natural resource use and governance in their communities into the future, and at least some communities have begun to exercise stronger forest use and management practices. Several land governance mechanisms appear to contribute to this, as discussed in previous findings chapters.
- Qualitative data also suggest that many CLPP communities feel their community lands are better protected as a result of customary land formalization. The main reason was that boundary harmonization and widespread knowledge of communal boundaries made it possible for communities to assert their rights

over outside resource extractors in a clarified geography, and to more effectively monitor communal members and others in accordance with bylaws that communities passed.

- Many CLPP communities have small-scale (typically logging or mining) investors or large companies operating on their communal lands, although this appears to be under-reported in the survey data. There is anecdotal evidence at endline that CLPP's support has helped at least some communities to successfully negotiate with and obtain financial and in-kind benefits from these outside resource extractors. But, not all of these communities have had a positive experience.

LIVELIHOODS

- Similar to midline, results at endline do not find evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on the indicators of livelihoods that were assessed. There is also no evidence for heterogeneous effects by population subgroups. The household survey contains few livelihoods indicators, but results are corroborated across household, leader survey and qualitative data at endline.
- Qualitative data at endline does provide anecdotal evidence that small-scale improvements to communities' economic situation via CLPP's envisioned pathway is underway in at least some CLPP communities, although this is not happening at scale.
- Participants from 7 of 12 communities in the qualitative sample felt their community was prospering more relative to five years ago, and they directly attributed this to CLPP's customary land formalization support. In these cases, communities appear to have successfully negotiated permissions and fees with companies or artisanal groups logging or mining on their communal land, received payments as agreed to, collected and managed those funds transparently and used the funds for small-scale community improvements.
- Positive examples of CLPP's effect on community prosperity involved small-scale investors or individual businessmen, which may have been more manageable for communities than engaging with large companies or concessionaires where the knowledge and power disparities are likely much greater.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Manage expectations regarding the multi-year time frame and continued NGO/CSO engagement required to complete boundary harmonization, ensure strong and participatory implementation of customary land formalization and achieve important impacts within communities.
- Consider testing multiple strategies and messaging to encourage changes to patriarchal norms regarding women's land rights, and to obtain women's substantive participation in community land governance. The current focus on awareness-raising and increasing the number of women in leadership positions are important steps, but on their own do not appear to be sufficient.
- Because LLA's work to conduct confirmatory surveys and issue community deeds lags behind the earlier elements of the formalization process, it is essential to ensure that systems are in place for communities to liaise with LLA after program implementation, to help facilitate follow-ups and community access to services as needed. There is also concern this lag could erode community confidence and contribute to a reversal of communities' hard-won governance gains in the interim.
- To help strengthen linkages between communal land governance, enhancing livelihoods and achieving more sustainable forest use and conservation in ways that are mutually reinforcing, include explicit support that helps communities to plan and manage their forest resources for longer term sustainability in the context of extractive forest enterprises and outsider investor presence.

INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an endline impact evaluation (IE) of the Community Land Protection Program (CLPP) and related follow-on programming in Liberia to support communities in formalizing their customary rights to communal land in accordance with Liberia’s 2018 Land Rights Act (LRA). The endline IE was commissioned by USAID’s office of Land and Resource Governance in the Center for Energy, Environment and Infrastructure (USAID/DDI/EEI) and conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago under the Communications, Evidence and Learning (CEL) project, as part of the Land Evidence for Economic Rights and Gender Empowerment (LEVERAGE) activity. The evaluation was conducted in three counties of Liberia where CLPP was implemented and where USAID has supported customary land formalization, strengthening women’s land rights and resource governance for more than a decade.

The endline IE uses a mixed-methods quasi-experimental approach to assess the impacts of CLPP and follow-on programming to support customary land formalization in CLPP communities, on indicators across six themes (referred to as ‘outcome families’ throughout this report): Land Governance, Community Empowerment², Tenure Security, Land Conflict, Community Land Development and Natural Resource Conservation, and Livelihoods.

The impact analysis draws on 2014 baseline household survey data collected from 1,091 households, and 2022 endline household survey data collected from 1,163 households and 1,700 respondents, across 79 communities located in Lofa, Maryland, or River Gee counties of Liberia. The primary analysis makes use of data from a panel of 614 households interviewed at baseline and endline. Findings and conclusions integrate the results from statistical estimates of impact with supplemental analyses, descriptive summary statistics, and qualitative data collected from a subset of communities at endline. The endline data collection, analyses and reporting maintain the same overarching focus and approach as the 2014 evaluation design and a midline performance evaluation conducted in 2016.

This report:

- Summarizes findings for endline data collection conducted in December 2022 and January 2023;
- Provides statistical analyses and estimates of the impacts of customary land formalization; support in CLPP communities nearly nine years since baseline data collection in Feb-March 2014, on indicators across six outcome families and per evaluation design;
- Highlights where results differ from findings at 2016 midline;
- Integrates findings from qualitative data collection at endline to provide additional interpretation of results and discussion on potential mechanisms for impacts or lack thereof; and
- Presents overall conclusions and recommendations related to the evaluation questions and overarching development hypotheses.

The endline findings provide an opportunity to assess impacts on households and communities across the set of customary land formalization interventions that were envisioned under CLPP, four years after the passage of the LRA in Liberia and nine months after the conclusion of those interventions in the

² This includes a focus on women’s land rights and empowerment, among others.

treatment communities in the evaluation sample.³ The evaluation contributes to a small but growing body of studies focused on strengthening the evidence base for whether and how formalization of communal customary land rights may lead to a range of hypothesized governance, empowerment, tenure security and related social and economic effects.⁴

CUSTOMARY LAND CONTEXT IN LIBERIA

Liberia operated under a dual land tenure system for most of its history that applied statutory common law to areas that had been settled by Americo-Liberians, primarily along the coast and in urban areas, while informal customary tenure regimes were dominant among indigenous populations throughout the country's rural interior that drew on customary norms and lineage-based governance systems and power structures to determine land rights.⁵ Historically, rural Liberians are heavily dependent on subsistence and small-scale commercial agriculture, while competition for land and resources has long been a source of conflict in the country. Historical grievances and broader conflict over land and natural resource rights was a significant driver of Liberia's 14-year civil war, which ended in 2003.⁶ A large proportion of the country's land area is held under commercial logging, mining or other concessions, and inequities around land use, access and ownership for women, minority and other vulnerable groups, and rural communities in general have long plagued the country.

In response to these and related land pressures and challenges, and as part of post-war peace agreements, the Government of Liberia committed to undertaking substantial land reforms that resulted in the adoption of a Land Rights Policy in 2013, followed by the passage of the landmark LRA in 2018. The LRA codified and formally recognized customary tenure and the customary land rights of rural communities, provided stronger protections for women's land rights, and equal protections for both customary and private land. The law also provided a clear route for customary land holders and Liberian communities who use land under long-standing customary norms and practices to establish formally recognized ownership rights to their land, via five broad steps as established by the LRA (Figure 1). The process typically begins with community self-identification (CSI) followed by documentation and mapping of community land, establishing by-laws and self-governance structures, a confirmatory survey to be conducted by the Liberian Land Authority (LLA) and eventual deeding of community land by the LLA.

The LLA is responsible for implementing the LRA. It became operational in 2017 and completed its transitional establishment phase in late 2018. As a relatively young agency, the LLA's five-year strategic plan through 2023 focuses on, among others, institutional capacity building, developing Standard Operating Procedures related to land administration services and specific provisions of the LRA, and a range of related tasks to bring the agency to fully operational status.

³ These interventions were started under CLPP and completed in March 2022 under follow-on support via USAID's Integrated Land and Resource Governance (ILRG) Activity. (Tetra Tech (2022). *Annual progress report, FY 2022, including quarterly report, July – September 2022*. Washington, DC: USAID Integrated Land and Resource Governance Task Order under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights II (STARR II) IDIQ.)

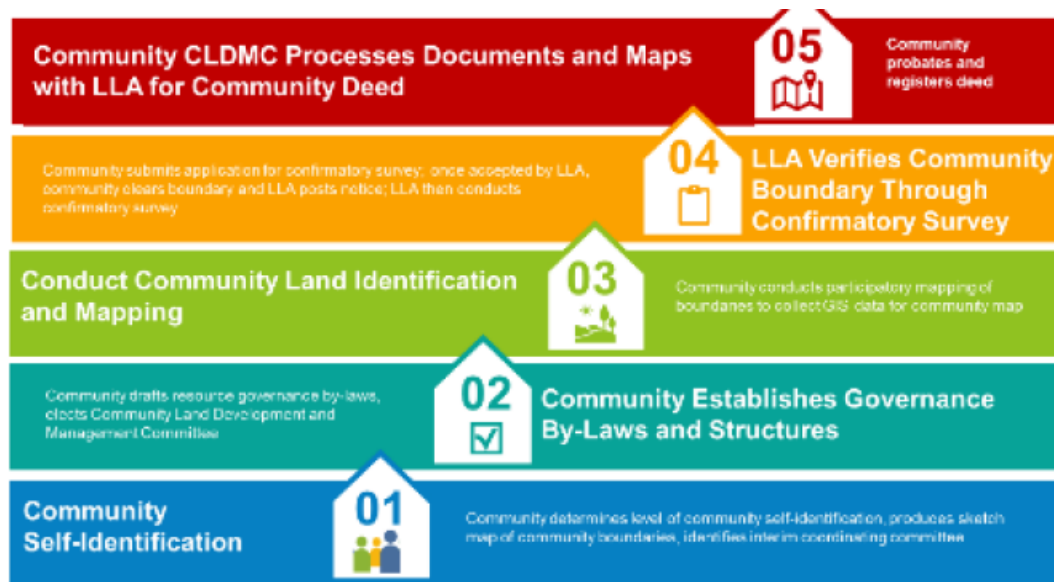
⁴ And is therefore distinct from the somewhat larger and also growing evidence base focused on similar outcomes with respect to formalization of *individual* customary land rights within communities.

⁵ Namubiru-Mwaura, E., A. Knox and A. Kaiser Hughes. 2012. *Customary Land Tenure in Liberia: Findings and implications from 11 case studies*. Liberia Land Polity and Institutional Support Project. USAID.

⁶ Marple-Cantrell, K, H. Huntington, B. Ewing, A. Hartman. 2017. *Community Land Protection Program: Midline Performance Evaluation Report*. The Cloudburst Group.

Within that context, donor support and community-based work to pilot the draft and final LRA and implement elements of customary land formalization in communities has been concurrent in Liberia with LLA’s establishment. SDI’s implementation of CLPP and its follow-on activities are among a set of projects that began piloting the customary land formalization process in communities during the years prior to the passage of the LRA, and in doing so have been able to generate substantial lessons learned, refine processes and develop best practices that in turn also helped to inform and finalize elements of the LRA.⁷ Work to further develop and refine a standardized set of tools, templates, processes and guidelines for implementation of the LRA in communities is currently ongoing by the LLA and various donor-funded projects.⁸

Figure I. Five Steps for Recognition of Customary Land Under the LRA⁹



Rigorous impact evaluations of communal customary land formalization programs are uncommon in the land sector, although there is recognition of the need to expand the evidence base for the impacts of such programs.¹⁰ The endline IE of CLPP and related follow-on programming to formalize communal customary land rights in accordance with the LRA is therefore well-situated to contribute important learning around the effects of communal land rights formalization on a range of cross-cutting development objectives, the extent to which effects might differ for different types of households, and potentially gain insights into the reasons why and mechanisms underlying observed effects or lack thereof. Evidence-based learning on these issues in the Liberian context is particularly timely given

⁷ Examples include: Kaba, A. M. Gaurav, R. Geddeh, S. Siakor, J. Otto, R. Knight. 2013. *Community Guide to Protecting Community Lands and Resources*. Kaba, A. 2015. *Complexities of Community Self-Identification in Liberia*. SDI and Namati.; *Lessons from the Field*. Sustainable Development Institute and Namati.; Knight, R. 2019. *The Challenge of Protecting Community Land Rights: An Investigation into community responses to requests for land and resources*. Namati.

⁸ For example, the LLA is working with USAID-supported implementers to develop tools and processes such as model community by-laws, checklists for community self-identification and guidance for the establishment of community land development and management committees.

⁹ Figure source: Tetra Tech, 2020. *Guidelines for the Recognition of Customary Tenure in Liberia*. Washington, DC: USAID Land Governance Support Activity Task Order under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights (STARR) IDIQ. Note that some of the initial steps may be done in different order than as depicted. More recently, boundary harmonization is also recognized as an additional step, for a total of six.

¹⁰ Lawry, S. Et al. 2016. *The Impact of Land Property Rights Interventions on Investment and Agricultural Productivity in Developing Countries: A systematic review*. 3ie Systematic Review Report 14. London: International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie); Higgins, D., Balint, T., Liversage, H., and P. Winters. 2018. Investigating the impacts of increased rural land tenure security: a systematic review of the evidence. *Journal of Rural Studies*. 61:34–62.

ongoing national land reforms in Liberia. This includes substantial efforts by the LLA and multiple donors to expand the implementation of customary land formalization in accordance with the LRA, ensure intended communities objectives are achieved and scale it up across many more communities in Liberia.

CLPP ACTIVITY AND EVALUATION BACKGROUND

COMMUNITY LAND PROTECTION PROGRAM IN LIBERIA: 2014-2017

CLPP was implemented in the focal communities for this evaluation by the Sustainable Development Institute of Liberia (SDI) during 2014-2017, with donor support initially from Namati, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development and other non-USAID sources, followed by USAID funding. The program initially aimed to operate in 45 communities in Lofa, Maryland and River Gee counties, and sought to support communities to protect their community lands and natural resources and improve local land and resource governance for the overall benefit of communities. To do so, CLPP specifically aimed to assist communities through legal empowerment, by-law development, governance strengthening, resource valuation, boundary mapping, and conflict resolution.

Interventions under CLPP were organized into five components as listed below. CLPP conceptualized these components to work in stages, beginning with extensive governance strengthening within communities and concluding with formal legal recognition of communal land rights and livelihoods benefits to communities as a result of their land and natural resource rights. CLPP ultimately focused on the first three of these components, as the LRA remained in draft form throughout the activity lifetime:¹¹

1. **Community empowerment**, including provisioning of legal education and awareness training on rights and responsibilities in the context of decentralized land management, such as supporting the development of community land use and resource management plans and bylaws;
2. **Boundary harmonization and land conflict resolution**, including boundary negotiation with neighbors to define the limits of community land, boundary demarcation via GPS/surveying, planting boundary trees, and signing memoranda of understanding.
3. **Strengthening good governance**, with emphasis on strengthening the rights of women and marginalized groups by addressing intra-community power dynamics, including developing and adopting bylaws for community land and natural resource management and electing a diverse, accountable governing body to manage community lands and natural resources;
4. **Completing government land registration** procedures for communal lands; and
5. **Preparing communities to prosper** by teaching basic negotiation tactics, creating Community Action Plans, integrating livelihood support, and supporting communities to regenerate local ecosystems.

CLPP was developed amidst substantial national land reforms in Liberia that led to the adoption of a revised Land Rights Policy in 2013 that aimed to formally recognize customary land rights and address a number of land-related inequalities and grievances. CLPP's implementation also took place during the development of the Land Rights Act that was eventually passed in 2018 after CLPP concluded. CLPP

¹¹ Marple-Cantrell, K, H. Huntington, B. Ewing, A. Hartman. 2017. Community Land Protection Program: Midline Performance Evaluation Report. The Cloudburst Group.

assisted communities to demarcate and protect their land and resources according to the process set out in the draft Land Rights Act.¹²

Evaluation baseline data collection in the focal treatment communities for the CLPP evaluation took place approximately 2 months prior to the start of CLPP implementation in those communities. However, the severe 2014-2016 outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease in Liberia began soon after the baseline data collection and start of CLPP implementation,¹³ and led to a pause in CLPP implementation from July 2014 until March 2016. This substantial pause, together with funding constraints, resulted in SDI dropping 21 communities from the planned list of treatment communities. By activity end in 2017, CLPP implementation had reached 24 of the initially planned 45 communities.¹⁴ However, implementation challenges led to varying levels of completion in these communities across the planned activity components: initial community empowerment steps had mostly been completed across most of the communities, boundary harmonization work was roughly halfway done, GPS surveying had not been done, and the intended work to strengthen community governance was mostly incomplete.¹⁵

USAID support for post-CLPP programming, under ILRG, returned to full implementation across all of the treatment communities in the IE baseline sample. Given programming pauses and related challenges that slowed progress during CLPP, varying levels of completion of each stage in a given community and that several elements would need to be redone across all of the communities to align with new templates, guidance or requirements that had been released by LLA since CLPP's conclusion, post-CLPP programming under ILRG restarted the process from stage one in all of the CLPP treatment communities in the baseline IE sample (see additional details below).

POST-CLPP SUPPORT TO IMPLEMENTATION UNDER ILRG: 2018 - 2022

After the CLPP activity end, USAID supported the continuation of communal customary land formalization activities in the CLPP treatment communities primarily under the Integrated Land and Resource Governance (ILRG) task order under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights II (STARR II) Indefinite Delivery / Indefinite Quantity contract.¹⁶ This programming took place in the field primarily during August 2020 through March 2022 after experiencing a delayed start-up due to the COVID-19 pandemic which began in 2020.

USAID's post-CLPP support via ILRG engaged SDI to restart or complete as needed CLPP Components I through 4 in the 23 communities that received some level of intervention activities under CLPP, and to also complete the full implementation of Components I through 4 in the other communities that

¹² See Knight et al 2013 for additional context.

¹³ The 2014 outbreak was the largest Ebola Virus Disease outbreak in history, resulted in 10,678 cases and 4,810 deaths in Liberia, and caused widespread disruptions in the country and throughout West Africa. The outbreak in Liberia began in March 2014. The country was declared Ebola-free on June 1, 2016. Additional history and context: [CDC](#) and [WHO](#).

¹⁴ The treatment communities that were dropped at that time were located in Maryland and River Gee counties. The criteria implementers used to choose the remaining 23 treatment communities introduced selection bias into the IE treatment sample, as communities were selected on the basis of interest, level of land conflict, accessibility and logistical feasibility (See 2016 Midline Evaluation Report). This is less salient at endline since post-CLPP programming under ILRG returned to the full set of treatment communities from baseline and restarted all steps of the CLPP process in all communities.

¹⁵ Tetra Tech. (2019). *Liberia Activity Implementation Plan*. Washington, DC: USAID Integrated Land and Resource Governance Task Order under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights II (STARR II) IDIQ.)

¹⁶ Continuation of activities in a small number of the CLPP IE treatment communities that were part of the 2014 baseline data collection took place under USAID's Land Governance Support Activity (LGSA) or Tenure Facility support instead. SDI was the local implementing partner for each of these, and followed a similar set of interventions, timelines and end goals for all.

were originally planned for inclusion in the CLPP activity. The post-CLPP support thus aimed for SDI to complete the full customary land formalization process in all of the treatment communities in the IE baseline sample as initially planned under CLPP.¹⁷

The ILRG programming used a similar approach as CLPP and was implemented by the same local implementing partner, SDI. Building on experiences under CLPP, the ILRG activity particularly sought to strengthen the gender dimensions of the programming to increase the potential to achieve positive impacts around gender-biased norms for land and natural resources in the communities. ILRG also focused on achieving Component 4 of the CLPP activity plan in cooperation with the LLA, as this had not been possible until the LRA was passed after CLPP activity end. Overall, the enhanced CLPP approach under ILRG was seen as providing the foundation for GOL to implement the LRA at scale.¹⁸

In accordance with CLPP approaches, ILRG ultimately worked with the selected communities to:

- Complete community self-identification
- Adopt resource governance by-laws
- Establish elected and inclusive community land governance institutions¹⁹
- Conduct community land identification, GPS mapping of community boundaries and finalize MoUs between neighboring communities to formally document boundaries²⁰
- Obtain Certificates of Completion of Community Self-Identification from LLA, which formally recognized each community as a customary land-owning community
- Where community boundaries had been harmonized and no border conflicts were present, work with the communities to liaise with the LLA so that they could eventually receive a confirmatory survey from LLA to validate community boundaries and maps
- Assist communities to obtain a community land deed from LLA as feasible²¹



Neighboring community members shake hands in agreement on the community boundary.

Ultimately, per ILRG quarterly and annual reporting, the activity supported 31 communities in Lofa, River Gee and Maryland counties, covering all of the initial communities in the CLPP baseline IE sample, reached an estimated 167,619 people (49 percent of whom were women) and worked to formalize customary land rights over 364,672 hectares of land.²² At the time of activity end, eight communities

¹⁷ Some communities chose to consolidate into larger 'town clusters' as part of the community self-identification stage of the process, resulting in a smaller number of treated 'town clusters' by the conclusion of ILRG programming. The number of communities referenced across different IE and Activity documents varies over time as a result of this consolidation.

¹⁸ ILRG Liberia Activity Implementation Plan.

¹⁹ Including conducting trainings on legal aspects of women's land rights and participation in community land governance.

²⁰ No confirmatory surveys had been conducted by LLA in the CLPP communities by program end or IE endline data collection.

²¹ At the time of ILRG programming the LLA was still determining the steps and costs involved for this and had not yet formalized the process for the LLA to register community deeds and for communities to receive a statutory deed. As such, this step was considered outside of ILRG's manageable interest. No communities in the IE sample had received a deed from LLA by the time of IE endline data collection. To the evaluation team's knowledge, the LLA also had not issued a deed to any community in Liberia by the time of IE endline.

²² Tetra Tech. 2022. *Annual progress report, FY 2022, including quarterly report, July – September 2022*. Washington, DC: USAID Integrated Land and Resource Governance Task Order under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights II IDIQ.

(two in River Gee, three in Maryland and three in Lofa) still had an outstanding boundary dispute with a neighboring community along some portion of their boundary.²³

CLPP IMPACT EVALUATION DESIGN AND MIDLINE UNDER ERC: 2014-2017

Recognizing the importance of CLPP for national level land reforms in Liberia and USAID land programming, USAID implemented an IE of the CLPP activity under its Evaluation, Research and Communication (ERC) project during 2014-2017, and in collaboration with CLPP implementers. The stated objective of the CLPP IE was to understand the effect of strengthening community-based land management institutions on tenure security and governance. The CLPP IE was designed to use a quasi-experimental evaluation design to measure impacts of CLPP across six outcome families: land governance; community empowerment; tenure security; land conflict; community land development and natural resource condition; and livelihoods.²⁴

Per IE design, 45 communities were selected to receive the CLPP interventions and an additional 45 communities that would not receive CLPP activities were selected by the IE design team to serve as comparison group communities. Baseline data collection was conducted in 2014, at which time the community sample was reduced to 79 communities due to data loss at baseline (39 CLPP and 40 comparison communities).²⁵ A midline evaluation was conducted in 2016, also under ERC, approximately 10 months after CLPP activities began in earnest due to the 2014 Ebola outbreak and related delays and funding constraints. The 2016 midline results were reported in terms of the average treatment effects. Impact heterogeneity was also examined for four population sub-groups of interest: women, youth-headed, poorest and minority households.

The 2016 midline evaluation found some evidence for significant positive effects of CLPP activities on indicators from two of the six outcome families: Land governance and Tenure security. The strongest results related to land governance. Households in CLPP communities were more likely to be involved in developing land rules, and to express confidence in their leaders' ability to protect their forests, their ethical behavior, and in the clarity and fairness of their decision-making processes. The midline evaluation also concluded that CLPP had led to an increase in the systematic creation of land rules and their enforcement, and positive impacts for women with respect to their attendance at land meetings.²⁶

At midline, there was no statistical evidence for impacts on indicators of community empowerment, land conflict, community land development and natural resource conditions, or livelihoods, nor for differential impacts on other sub-groups of interest.

ENDLINE IMPACT EVALUATION OF CLPP AND ILRG ACTIVITIES UNDER CEL

Despite implementation challenges noted above, USAID deemed the programmatic and policy-oriented learning opportunities from CLPP and its associated impact evaluation to be sufficiently high to conduct

²³ Tetra Tech. 2022. *Quarterly progress report, January – March 2022*. Washington, DC: USAID Integrated Land and Resource Governance Task Order under the Strengthening Tenure and Resource Rights II (STARR II) IDIQ.

²⁴ Marple-Cantrell et al. 2017 *Community Land Protection Program (CLPP) Midline Evaluation Report*. USAID.

²⁵ Per the baseline IE team's baseline report, "Issues with the electronic data collection software caused data to be lost permanently for 11 communities." (p.3). For additional IE design and related details, see: Hartman, A., H. Huntington, K. Marple-Cantrell and B. Ewing. 2016. *Evaluation of the Community Land Protection Program in Liberia: Baseline Impact Evaluation Report*. The Cloudburst Group.

²⁶ Marple-Cantrell, et al. 2017. *Community Land Protection Program: Midline Performance Evaluation Report*. The Cloudburst Group.

an endline round of data collection and analysis for the CLPP IE. Among other reasons, by 2022 ILRG's follow-on support in CLPP communities continued to be one of the earliest, most advanced and largest pilots of the LRA in Liberia,²⁷ and its SDI-led programming over more than a decade had also substantially informed the drafting and finalization of the LRA, related implementation guidance for communities and NGOs or CSOs supporting them to formalize their customary land rights, and served as a source of learning and development of best practices for other CSOs and local implementers.²⁸ Moreover, USAID's post-CLPP support to customary land formalization in the CLPP communities, via ILRG, largely restored the validity and power of the impact evaluation per intended IE design.

The IE is also conducted in an important natural resource conservation context: forested landscapes within a global biodiversity hotspot under strong deforestation and degradation pressure from outside resource extractors, and where communities rely on shifting agriculture and forest resources alike as key contributions to their livelihoods and economic well-being. The IE is thus well-situated to provide evidence-based learning on the role that land and resource governance programming -- specifically the formal recognition of communal customary land rights and related support to land and resource bylaws development and local land and resource governance institutions within communities -- can play in improving land governance and livelihoods while also incentivizing stronger forest and biodiversity conservation and more sustainable use of communal land and natural resources in the Liberian context.

The CLPP IE is also the largest rigorous mixed-methods impact evaluation of customary land formalization in Liberia under the LRA to date, to our knowledge. It is therefore importantly situated to provide evidence-based learning on a wide range of issues for the Liberian land sector and national stakeholders, and the broader global community of practice interested in processes and results related to formalized recognition of communal customary land rights, and its intersection with community-based land governance, sustainable natural resource use, livelihoods and empowerment issues.

USAID commissioned the endline IE for late 2022, after the conclusion of the rainy season in the implementation areas²⁹ and corresponding to nine months after completion of ILRG's implementation. This included community self-identification, boundary harmonization, by-laws development and adoption and establishing land governance institutions in all of the CLPP communities. The endline IE is conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago under the CEL project. The NORC endline IE team drew on baseline and midline datasets and related materials provided by the contractor for those rounds and maintained the IE design and updated survey instruments from midline to the extent possible.

The NORC endline IE differs from midline in some key ways: it returns to collecting data across the full sample of communities at baseline, and surveys both the primary male and primary female decision maker within households to enable more nuanced examination of gendered effects. The NORC team also developed a new set of qualitative instruments and updated qualitative approach aligned with learning interests for endline, and refined the list of outcome indicators reported at endline to reduce

²⁷ Persha, L., and Mittelberg, T. 2021. *Lessons Learned from Community Pilots of the Land Rights Act in Liberia: Final Report*. Washington, DC: USAID Communications, Evidence and Learning (CEL) Project.

²⁸ This includes USAID/Liberia's long-standing assistance to the Government of Liberia to support land and resource governance reforms, support for several pilots of the LRA via CLPP, LGSA, ILRG or other programming, and the current Liberia Land Management Activity that is expanding LRA implementation to a larger set of communities during 2021 – 2025.

²⁹ Due to inaccessibility of many communities during the rainy season, and generally consistent with seasonality of baseline and midline data collection, although impact indicators are not strongly dependent on seasonality.

redundancies and strengthen the focus on those most aligned with the intended theory of change.³⁰ The endline IE aims to assess impacts on households and communities across the set of customary land formalization interventions conceptualized under CLPP, four years after the passage of the LRA and nine months after the conclusion of ILRG’s implementation in the treatment communities in the IE sample.

EVALUATION PURPOSE, AUDIENCE, AND USES

PURPOSE AND USES

The purpose of the endline IE is to provide USAID with evidence-based learning on the impacts of CLPP and follow-on customary land formalization programming across six different outcome families: land governance; women’s and community empowerment; tenure security; land conflicts; community land development and natural resource conditions; and livelihoods. The evaluation particularly seeks to contribute to a growing evidence base that provides insights on how the formalization of communal customary rights to land in communities impacts community land and natural resource management, and women’s land rights and participation in land governance.

The endline IE specifically aims to assist USAID/W, USAID/Liberia and the Government of Liberia to better understand the impacts of communal customary land rights formalization in the Liberian context. Among other uses, the IE findings are anticipated to provide learning to help inform USAID program design and obtaining gender-equitable outcomes, the ongoing development of LRA regulations and standard operating procedures, and implementation of the LRA at scale in coming years.

AUDIENCE

The primary audiences for the IE findings are USAID/DDI/EEI, the Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Hub, the Liberia Mission, and the Government of Liberia, including the Liberian Land Authority and the Forestry Development Authority. Secondary audiences include SDI and other CLPP and ILRG local implementing partners, local government authorities and other local NGOs and CSOs in the Liberian land sector who are working to implement customary land formalization in Liberian communities under the LRA. More broadly, this IE is also relevant to CSOs, national and international stakeholders and donors involved in the work to strengthen the LLA and implementation processes for the LRA, empower communities and scale up the implementation of the LRA in communities throughout Liberia. The IE findings may also be of interest to the broader global community of practice engaged in land formalization activities in customary and/or communal settings.

EVALUATION DESIGN

THEORY OF CHANGE

In keeping with prior rounds for this evaluation, the CLPP and follow-on customary land formalization activities conducted under ILRG, and the ensuing IE design, operated under the following anticipated theory of change as conceptualized by CLPP implementers:

³⁰ See additional details in the analytic approach section of the report.

IF	Communities acquire knowledge of their legal rights, receive training and support on how to access those rights, resolve boundary disputes with neighboring towns, and demarcate the boundaries of their lands; and
	Communities agree on equitable and transparent community land and natural resource governance rules and elect diverse, representative community members to a land governance body.
THEN	Communities should feel more confident in their land tenure security;
	Communities should be empowered to protect their rights to the community land;
	Women and minorities should enjoy better protection of their rights and greater levels of participation; and
	Community resources should be used more efficiently, leading to increased productivity and development.

IE DESIGN OVERVIEW

The CLPP endline IE maintains the same overarching evaluation design as conceptualized at baseline: a quasi-experimental difference-in-difference (DID) approach with statistical matching to assess household-level impacts of the CLPP interventions.³¹ The evaluation utilizes baseline and endline household and community leader survey data from 39 of the intended 45 CLPP and 40 of the intended 45 comparison group communities as identified at baseline³², together with qualitative data collected at endline in a subset of 12 of the CLPP communities. Under the DID evaluation design, comparison group communities were selected prior to baseline and confirmed via statistical matching on observable community and household characteristics, and represent the counterfactual situation, or what would have happened in CLPP communities had they not received the CLPP and follow-on ILRG customary land formalization interventions. The DID design at endline estimates the impacts of the CLPP and follow-on ILRG activities (collectively referred to as ‘CLPP activities’ hereafter, for simplicity) on the various outcomes of interest as the difference between the outcome levels for households in CLPP communities and those in the comparison group communities.

The 2022 endline IE also employs a mixed-method approach to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of trajectories of outcomes and reasons why the program may or may not have achieved expected results. Quantitative data for impact and related statistical analysis is collected via household and community leader surveys. Three analytic approaches are used to estimate impacts: a core model in addition to two alternative approaches conducted as robustness checks. The core impact results are obtained via an ANCOVA model that utilizes a household panel dataset across baseline and endline and controls for the baseline value of the outcome variable and county fixed effects, along with controls for respondent characteristics at baseline, including gender, education, belonging to an ethnic minority, and poverty status, as well as community-level controls for location within a mining or forest concession area, travel time to nearest population center, and distance to nearest road.³³ In addition, we conduct a DID specification with household and time period fixed effects that draws from the same baseline to endline household panel sample as the ANCOVA model, as well as a repeat cross-sectional model with community-level fixed effects that utilizes data from all household observations from baseline and endline, and controls for the same household- and community-level characteristics described for the

³¹ Hereafter, we use “CLPP”, “CLPP’s activities” or “CLPP’s interventions” to also include the post-CLPP follow-on customary land formalization activities conducted in CLPP communities under ILRG.

³² The first footnote in the baseline report describes that the baseline evaluation team permanently lost data for 11 CLPP communities, which left the endline team with a sample of 34 CLPP communities and 79 communities overall.

³³ These controls are consistent with model specifications from the midline evaluation.

ANCOVA model. In keeping with previous rounds of the evaluation, four survey experiments are also conducted to gain additional perspectives of survey respondents at endline on key issues.

Qualitative data is collected via key informant interviews (KIIs) with community leaders and members of Community Land Development and Management Committees (CLDMCs), and gender-disaggregated group discussions (GDs) held with women and men from 12 of the CLPP implementation communities. The qualitative data aims to obtain additional depth of information on key program implementation, context and land-related issues, understand reasons for observed impacts or lack thereof, unintended consequences, and enable a greater understanding of potential mechanisms and the role of context factors in achieving program impacts or not across the range of outcome families covered by the IE.

Cluster-based intervention: The CLPP and follow-on programming were community-wide interventions that were implemented in each of the selected CLPP communities. All households in a given CLPP community were able to participate in any of the various aspects of the customary land formalization process. The participatory nature of the process and efforts by implementers to obtain full community involvement meant that all households were aware of and affected by the interventions, while many or most households in a given community also directly participated in various aspects of the process.³⁴

Comparison group construction: The comparison group for the CLPP IE consists of households in communities that are similar in community and household context as CLPP communities but did not receive customary land formalization activities. Prior to baseline, CLPP and comparison communities were selected through a randomization process that differed by county³⁵, but it was not feasible to implement a truly randomized control trial (RCT) evaluation design due to the logistics of community accessibility. The endline team used entropy balancing to obtain a matched comparison sample on the basis of observable household and community characteristics at baseline. Balance tests conducted at baseline and endline confirmed the absence of any meaningful differences between the CLPP treatment and comparison group on the basis of observable household and community characteristics, thus viability for the intended impact analysis.³⁶

Definition of treatment: The treatment indicator used for the impact analysis at endline follows the same approach as the 2016 midline. An indicator variable was constructed that equals 1 for towns or town clusters that were assigned to receive the CLPP intervention at the evaluation design phase prior to baseline in 2014, and equals 0 for towns or town clusters that were assigned as comparison group communities in 2014 and did not receive the CLPP interventions.

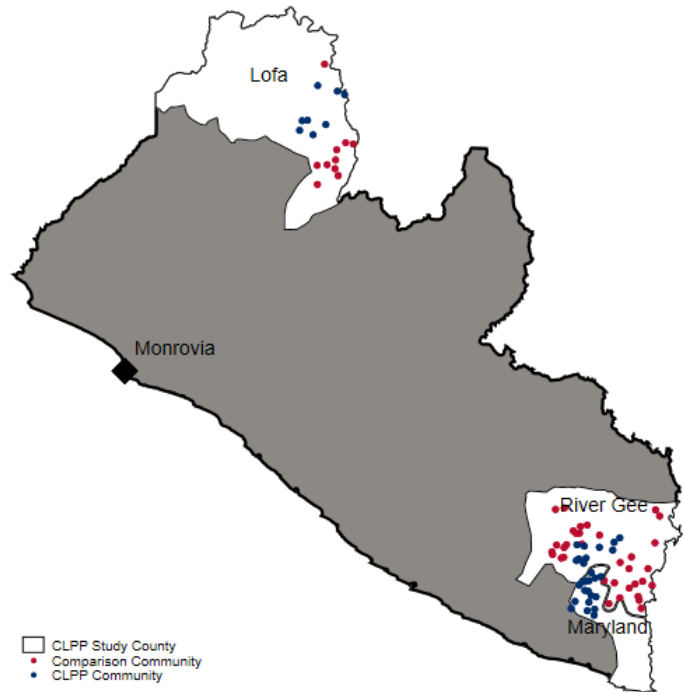
³⁴ As reported by implementing partners and also supported by endline qualitative data collection and household survey data.

³⁵ Per the baseline report: "Treatment was assigned to towns randomly in Lofa county. In River Gee and Maryland counties, the CLPP program implementation team divided the counties into four blocks or 'quadrants' of towns...From these four quadrants, two were randomly selected as treatment areas and the other two became control areas" (Hartman et al., 2016).

³⁶ See the CLPP IE baseline report and pre-analysis plan for baseline and midline balance, power and additional IE design details, available here: <https://www.land-links.org/evaluation/community-land-protection-program-clpp-liberia/>

Figure 2 shows the approximate locations of the 79 CLPP and comparison communities at endline, across the three implementation counties. For completeness, locations are shown according to how communities identified at baseline.

Figure 2. Map of CLPP and Comparison Communities at Endline



EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The CLPP IE was designed to focus on the following overarching research question: **“What is the effect of strengthening community-based land management institutions on tenure security and governance?”**³⁷

Per evaluation design, the endline IE focuses on five areas of inquiry on whether and how CLPP:

1. Strengthens the land tenure security of rural communities;
2. Improves perceptions of governance and increases accountability of local leaders;
3. Helps communities to document their land and to codify rules;
4. Protects women’s land rights and those of marginalized groups (substantive and procedural);³⁸ and
5. Leads to conservation and sustainable natural resource use.

OUTCOME FAMILIES, HYPOTHESES AND INDICATORS

The endline IE team uses statistical models to estimate CLPP’s causal impacts, drawing on a set of indicators across six outcome families. The indicators are used as dependent variables in causal statistical models that estimate the impacts of CLPP. The endline IE maintains the same outcome families and most of the existing hypotheses and indicators that were developed by the baseline and midline contractor.³⁹

In addition to estimating average effects on households of the customary land formalization interventions implemented by CLPP and follow-on programming, for each of the indicators in Table I, the IE team also conducted heterogeneity analysis to explore how impacts varied for four population sub-groups of interest: youth-headed households, minority-headed households, poorest-households, and gender of respondent.⁴⁰

³⁷ Marple-Cantrell et al. 2016. *Community Land Protection Program (CLPP) Performance Evaluation (PE) Pre-Analysis Plan*. USAID. The Cloudburst Group.

Marple-Cantrell et al. 2017. *Community Land Protection Program (CLPP) Midline Evaluation Report*. USAID. The Cloudburst Group.

³⁸ Members of minority groups include respondents from a non-majority religion or non-majority ethnic group in their town.

³⁹ This includes substantial updates to indicators and new indicators added at midline by the midline evaluation team.

⁴⁰ Based on respondent characteristics at 2014 baseline.

Table 1: Outcome Families, Evaluation Hypotheses and Key Outcome Indicators⁴¹

Outcome Family	Hypotheses: <i>Households in communities receiving the CLPP intervention will have...</i>	Primary and Secondary Indicators
1. Land Governance	H1: ... different perceptions of local land governance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived accountability of community leaders and decision makers over land and natural resources • Trust in community leaders involved in land and natural resource governance (fairness) • Perceived capacity of local leaders to manage communal natural resources sustainably • Perceived transparency of leaders in decision-making processes • Satisfaction with community leaders and land governance processes in the community • Land governance index • Participation in land and resource rules, meetings, monitoring, enforcement and conflict resolution • Prevalence of written land and resource bylaws (household awareness of bylaws) • Perceived inclusivity of community decisions on investors and receipt of benefits • Relative power of various community actors in land and resource decision making
2. Empowerment	H2: ... perceive different capacity of local leaders to negotiate with government actors and outside investors in the instance of a proposed land concession.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of laws regarding customary land rights and natural resource management • Knowledge of women’s legal rights to land • Knowledge of individual and community rights around engaging with outside investors • Knowledge of communal land boundaries
3. Tenure Security	H3: ... perceive different access rights, levels of tenure security, and protection of land their household customarily uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived risk of encroachment on communal land by various actors • Perceived risk of encroachment by type of communal land • Perceived rights over customary farmland • Knowledge of community ownership of communal land
4. Land Conflict	H4: ... experience a different number of land conflicts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence and severity of land conflicts • Household satisfaction with conflict resolution processes
5. Community Land Development and Natural Resource Condition	H5: ... report different levels of natural resource conservation and community land development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement in unsustainable forest practices • Perceived forest and other natural resource conditions: forest size, density, water quality and animal density • Perceived loss of tree species • Valuation of communal forest land
6. Livelihoods	H6: ... have different livelihood and welfare outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of household land ownership • Amount of land farmed by household • prevalence of poverty

⁴¹ We list primary and secondary indicators that were also reported out on for the 2016 midline evaluation. See the 2016 midline evaluation report, Annex 3, and Pre-Analysis Plan for additional details on these indicators (available at: <https://land-links.org/evaluation/community-land-protection-program-clpp-liberia/>)

In addition to the primary and secondary indicators listed above, previous reporting rounds also considered pre-specified mechanism and context factors that were hypothesized to potentially provide additional information on mechanisms for change and conditions related to outcomes. Consistent with previous evaluation rounds, we examine these via descriptive analysis.

SAMPLE DETAILS AND QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION AT ENDLINE

The sample size for the CLPP IE was determined during the IE design phase in 2014 via a power analysis that sought to ensure the evaluation would have sufficient statistical power to detect policy relevant effect sizes for most of the outcomes of interest. The IE design aimed for 15 households to be surveyed in each community.⁴² The endline IE team revisited the same 79 communities from baseline and aimed to resurvey as many households and respondents within households as possible from the baseline sample. If the original respondent in a household could not be re-interviewed, they were replaced with another adult member of the household. If an entire household from baseline could not be identified or interviewed, the household was replaced using a random walk method.

The final sample at endline was 1,700 respondents across 1,163 households.⁴³ Taking into account community consolidation into larger ‘town clusters’ as a result of CLPP’s interventions, households are distributed at endline across 30 CLPP and 40 comparison group town clusters. Table 2 shows the community and household sample at endline by CLPP and comparison group status and county.

Table 2: Household Sample at 2022 Endline

County	Overall		CLPP Treatment		Comparison Group	
	Household N	Town Clusters N	Household N	Town Clusters N	Household N	Town Clusters N
Lofa	307	14	186	7	121	7
Maryland	238	13	238	13	0 ⁴⁴	0
River Gee	618	43	144	10	474	33
Total	1,163	70	568	30	595	40

DATA COLLECTION TIME FRAME

Household and community leader survey data collection at endline was conducted from December 5th, 2022 through January 12th, 2023. The data collection was led by the NORC IE team in conjunction with The Khana Group, a data collection firm with offices in Ghana, Liberia, and Nigeria. Preparations for the endline data collection included instrument pre-testing and piloting, a 2-day supervisor training, 6-day enumerator training, 1-day refresher training, and 2-day qualitative team training led by NORC together with TKG. TKG field staff included 32 enumerators and 6 field supervisors allocated into six teams for

⁴² The actual number of households surveyed per community varies somewhat across villages and is slightly lower in six communities where the total number of households in the community at endline was less than 15. At endline, communities where more than 15 households were completed between baseline and midline were capped at 20 households.

⁴³ The household sample size was 1,091 households at baseline and 1,163 at endline. The midline survey data is not used in the endline analysis because only half of the communities in the baseline and endline sample were surveyed at midline in 2016.

⁴⁴ There are no comparison group communities in Maryland due to the randomization method used to assign treatment in Maryland and River Gee counties: communities were divided into 4 geographic ‘quadrants’, of which 2 were randomly assigned to CLPP treatment and 2 were randomly assigned to the comparison group. See the CLPP IE Pre-Analysis Plan for more details.

the household survey and community leader survey data collection. Qualitative data collection was accomplished via two teams of trained group discussion moderators and note-takers. The survey and qualitative data collection was overseen in the field by two quality control officers, two field coordinators and a data manager. Data collection team members were all fluent in Liberian English and several local dialects, and approximately half were female. Endline survey data was collected via a cloud-based mobile data collection via tablets, using SurveyCTO.

Ethical approval for the study was received from NORC's Institutional Review Board in September 2022 (amended submission approved in November 2022), and from the Atlantic Center for Research and Evaluation⁴⁵ at the University of Liberia in November 2022. Verbal informed consent was obtained from all study participants prior to survey or qualitative interview/discussion.

DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE

The NORC endline team employed several strategies to ensure data quality, including: in-house programming and testing of the survey instruments in SurveyCTO to minimize data entry errors, ensure survey flow and logic, and improve quality control; and pre-testing and piloting of all instruments and qualitative tools in the field prior to endline data collection⁴⁶. NORC provides close oversight of data collection teams during survey fielding, including conducting high-frequency validation and reliability checks, daily data uploads during quantitative data collection and weekly production reports. The NORC team regularly reviewed the survey data for quality and provided necessary feedback to the local data collection firm during survey fielding. In addition, field supervisors observed one in six household surveys and conducted backcheck surveys on 10% of all completed household surveys.

DATA COLLECTION CHALLENGES

Given that endline data collection took place eight years after baseline and six years after the midline, the survey team encountered some difficulty tracking respondents and encountered a significant number of cases where households no longer lived in a given community in the sample. The absence of community location data or apparent errors in GPS data and community names at baseline led to challenges locating some communities at endline, but ultimately the endline team was able to liaise with community leaders and implementing partners to locate and confirm all communities in the baseline sample. Poor network connections in several of the communities at times contributed to data collection challenges and required data collection teams to travel outside of communities to upload completed surveys. Finally, the team encountered language barriers interviewing older female respondents in some communities, particularly in Lofa county. The endline team mitigated this issue by allowing the respondent to select a household member or other trusted community member to serve as an interpreter in cases where the enumerator was not able to speak the particular local dialect required to communicate with the respondent.

⁴⁵ ACRE. Formerly known as UL-PIRE IRB.

⁴⁶ 20 surveys were administered as part of survey pre-testing in advance of full enumerator training, with minor refinements made to the survey to improve clarity and fix logic errors. The pilot data collection effort consisted of 63 household surveys, 8 community leader surveys and 8 backcheck surveys, and also resulted in additional minor updates to the household survey and programming prior to launch of the full data collection effort.

SAMPLE CONSTRUCTION AND ATTRITION

The NORC team aimed to create a household-level panel at endline, in which the same households interviewed at baseline were re-interviewed at endline. The NORC team developed the community and household samples for endline utilizing materials received by the contractor who conducted the baseline and midline work in 2014 and 2016. This included respondent tracking sheets used for each community surveyed at baseline and/or midline. NORC also drew on implementer documentation and confirmation of implementation communities and locations, community name changes and how various communities from baseline had consolidated into town clusters by endline as a result of the customary land formalization process.

The endline IE team anticipated that it would not be possible to locate and resurvey all of the households from baseline, given that nine years had elapsed since baseline and also due to the lack of comprehensive identifying information for respondents at baseline.⁴⁷ Baseline survey datasets received by the endline IE team did not include respondent names or household GPS locations, requiring the endline team to work from PDFs of the handwritten tracking sheets from baseline enumerator teams to identify households at endline. While not ideal, the endline data firm was able to work with community leaders to identify most of the households listed on baseline fieldwork tracking sheets. The endline data firm made five attempts on different days and times to interview each household in the baseline sample per baseline tracking sheets. In cases where the firm did not reach the household target, the firm selected a replacement household in the community using a random walk method.

The rate of household attrition from the baseline sample was 25 percent at endline, a substantial increase over the 11 percent attrition reported at midline but not unreasonable given that nearly a decade had elapsed since baseline.⁴⁸ Among the 322 households that attrited out at endline, the overwhelming reason was that the household had relocated from the community.

The endline IE team conducted tests to check for attrition bias, which provided insights on whether there were differences in the attrition rate correlated with CLPP or comparison group status and that could introduce bias into the endline impact estimates. At endline, there was no statistically significant difference in the rate of household attrition across the CLPP and comparison group, and treatment status was not a significant predictor of the likelihood of household attrition.

PANEL DATASET CONSTRUCTION

Constructing the baseline to endline panel household dataset required the NORC team to match each household surveyed at endline to its corresponding observation(s) in the baseline dataset provided to NORC, which did not include respondent names or related identifying information because this was not collected during survey and also contained repeating household or respondent IDs across different communities, multiple duplicate observations and related issues that required resolution to create the

⁴⁷ For example, the baseline survey did not record respondent names or household GPS locations.

⁴⁸ The midline evaluation team found no evidence for attrition bias but retained replacement households at midline in their baseline to midline 'panel' analysis, and justified this under the assumption that replacement households located close to an attrited household would have similar outcomes (See 2016 midline evaluation report). The NORC endline team saw little merit to this assumption and did not follow this practice at endline.

household panel.⁴⁹ The NORC team conducted additional cleaning on the baseline dataset as needed to facilitate panel construction, and identified observations for the key respondents from each round to construct a unique household-level dataset.⁵⁰ Observations from the same household were linked across rounds using a unique ID consisting of the community id and household id, which remained consistent across survey waves. The primary difficulty arose from duplicate household observations in the baseline dataset and lack of sufficient information for some baseline households to facilitate identification of the primary respondent when multiple household members were interviewed. For example, some households in the baseline dataset had 10 or more different observations (which should not have been possible under the sampling protocols at baseline), and it was not always possible to identify the primary respondent for these cases that could confidently be matched to a corresponding endline observation. These challenges contributed to some additional loss of households from the panel sample for the analysis, resulting in a final baseline to endline panel household sample of 614 households (Table 3).

Table 3: Baseline-Endline Panel Household Observations

County	Overall		CLPP Treatment		Comparison Group	
	Household N	Town Clusters N	Household N	Town Clusters N	Household N	Town Clusters N
Lofa	125	14	82	7	43	7
Maryland	156	13	156	13	0	0
River Gee	333	39	79	10	254	29
Total	614	66	317	30	297	36

STATISTICAL POWER TO DETECT IMPACTS

Power calculations conducted at midline and for a reduced sample of 36 panel communities suggested the smaller midline sample, which also took into account community consolidation, was still powered to detect policy relevant effect sizes for most household-level outcomes. Those estimates suggested that Minimum detectable effects (MDEs) ranged from 0.10 to 0.40 standard deviations from control group means for the midline sample, depending on outcome. The midline analysis also planned to conduct a community-level analysis, which was largely redundant with the household-level analysis but only powered to detect large effect sizes (MDEs > 0.40).⁵¹

At endline, the overall IE design retains its validity and the household panel sample remains well-powered to detect fine-scale impacts even taking into account the community clustering and sample imbalances at endline. Power analyses conducted at endline indicate that MDEs range from 0.10 to 0.24 for nearly all outcomes assessed.⁵² The community-level analysis planned by the previous contractor and

⁴⁹ The NORC team aimed to reinterview at endline the same male and female primary decision makers within households from baseline, to the extent possible. However, NORC focused on creating a household-level panel dataset for analysis rather than a respondent-level panel, given insufficient identifying information for respondents within households at baseline.

⁵⁰ Key respondents were defined as the head of the household or the only respondent, in most cases. However, if there was more than one respondent and none were the head of the household, we followed a specific selection order: 1) spouse, 2) older son/daughter, 3) son/daughter, and 4) other relatives, in that order of preference.

⁵¹ See 2016 pre-analysis plan for additional power calculations conducted at midline.

⁵² See Annex B for a table summarizing illustrative power calculations at endline for key indicators.

conducted at midline has lower statistical power and as designed was largely redundant with the focus of the household-level approach, hence was not conducted at endline.⁵³

SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

The data collection at endline utilized two quantitative survey instruments, consistent with the 2016 midline evaluation:

1. A **Household Survey**, administered to two respondents per household in male-headed households (the primary male and female decision makers in the household) and one respondent in female-headed households (the primary female decision maker).⁵⁴ This survey lasted approximately 85 minutes per respondent.
2. A **Community Leader Survey**, administered to the Town Chief or Assistant Town Chief.⁵⁵ This survey lasted approximately 45 minutes. Select responses are used as an additional source of quantitative descriptive data about community-level processes and leader perceptions.



The endline household survey instrument utilized the survey instrument administered at 2016 midline and developed by the baseline and midline IE team. The NORC team made minor adjustments to the core survey instruments, corrected survey logic, relevancy or constraints where discovered and key for data collection and updated time periods or years over which recall questions were asked so that they were consistent with endline. The NORC team also added fields to record respondent names and gender, which had not been included in the instruments used in prior survey rounds and contributed to challenges in obtaining a household panel at endline. Fields were also added at endline to track replacement households and reasons for replacement. To minimize the introduction of issues that could affect data comparability or responses across rounds, no other changes or improvements to the survey instruments were made. The Community Leader Survey also utilized the same instruments administered at 2016 midline, made similar updates as on the household survey, and dropped an open-ended question module that the endline IE team deemed more substantively addressed via qualitative data collection.

At endline, the leader survey was conducted with 50 community leaders. Leaders were typically town chiefs, and in some cases quarter chiefs, or (uncommonly) elders or first settlers. The average age of community leader respondents was 54 years old and ranged from 28 to 83 years old. Leaders varied substantially in the level of education achieved: 18 percent (N=9) had no formal schooling, 30 percent (N=21) had had attended primary school, 28 percent (N=14) had completed junior high and 10 percent

⁵³ The endline team chose to drop the community-level analysis conceptualized at midline, not only due to low power but also because it was largely redundant with the household-level analysis, typically drawing on the same indicators.

⁵⁴ Consistent with baseline protocols. If either the primary male or female decision maker in the household was unavailable after five attempts, the survey team replaced that individual with another adult male or female decision maker in the household. The male and female primary decision makers were defined as the adult male and female heads who make key decisions about aspects of the household.

⁵⁵ If either of these individuals were unavailable after two attempts, the survey team interviewed an available community elder.

(N=5) had attended high school.⁵⁶ Half of the village leaders surveyed had been in their leadership position for at least 10 years, but this ranged from less than a year to 43 years on the upper end. The majority of leaders, 86 percent (N=43) were born in the community they lead. Among those who were not, all had lived in the community for 18 or more years. Most of the leader respondents were farmers, obtaining their primary source of income through subsistence farming (70 percent, N = 35), and or cash crops (26 percent, N = 13).⁵⁷ Communities in the sample are relatively small. Community leaders reported an average of 236 households and 1644 people living in their community during the endline data collection round, but half of the community leaders reported 75 or fewer households and estimated the total population in their community did not exceed 650 people.

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

Qualitative data collection for endline was conducted in 12 CLPP villages (4 communities in each of the 3 counties), concurrent with the household survey data collection. Two gender-disaggregated GDs of 8-12 participants each were conducted in each of the 12 villages, with women and men, for a total of 24 GDs. One mixed gender group KII of four community leaders (town chief, women's leader, and 1-2 CLDMC members) was also conducted in the same 12 communities, for a total of 12 group KIIs.

The four villages for qualitative data collection were selected within each of the three counties via stratified random sampling. The GDs and KIIs were conducted in Liberian English by trained moderators using semi-structured instruments and translated and transcribed for analysis. Qualitative instruments used at endline are in Annex A.



THE KHANA GROUP: QUALITATIVE TEAM TRAINING

ANALYTIC APPROACH

The endline IE uses a baseline to endline household panel dataset to assess impacts of the CLPP interventions on household-level outcomes across six outcome families. Because all households in a given community were exposed to the intervention activities, the main impact analysis obtains estimates of household-level Average Treatment Effects (ATE).

MAIN EFFECTS

Core reporting of impacts at endline is obtained using an ANCOVA model run on the baseline to endline panel household dataset. The estimation is based on the difference in means by treatment status obtained via regression using the endline data, while controlling for the baseline value of the outcome to reduce the estimator's variance. This approach estimates the average impacts for households in the CLPP treatment group, relative to the comparison group. While assignment of communities to CLPP treatment prior to baseline aimed to achieve something close to a true randomized assignment, the process could not guarantee balance across observable and unobservable characteristics of households

⁵⁶ On the upper end, one community leader in the sample had attended university (2 percent of sample).

⁵⁷ Two of the leaders surveyed reported their primary income was obtained from hunting or day labor.

and communities that might also be relevant for explaining changes in outcomes.⁵⁸ As such, the ANCOVA model is paired with entropy balancing, a statistical matching technique, to further improve balance across baseline values of relevant observable characteristics. Under the quasi-experimental IE design, any statistically significant differences in impacts between the CLPP and comparison groups are attributed to the CLPP intervention, given adherence to planned treatment and model assumptions.

The following specification is used:

$$[1a] \quad Y_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_{ij} + \beta_2 Y_{0ij} + \alpha H_{ij} + \gamma C_{ij} + u_{ij}$$

where Y_{ij} is the outcome measure of household i in community j at endline. T_{ij} is the binary treatment dummy and Y_{0ij} is the value for the outcome measure at baseline for household i in community j . H_{ij} and C_{ij} are vectors of household- and community-level control variables. u_{ij} are robust standard errors clustered at the level of town clusters, using Huber-White sandwiched standard errors (Lin et al., 2013). The treatment effect is obtained from β_1 .

While a difference-in-differences model is equivalent to differencing out the mean, the ANCOVA differences out the baseline value. The primary benefit of the ANCOVA model is that it has greater statistical power to detect effects, while being otherwise similar to the DID approach. The main caveat to the ANCOVA approach is that the model uses observations from the panel households only, therefore is not representative of households from baseline who could not be reached at endline.⁵⁹

SUPPLEMENTAL ANALYSIS: DID AND REPEAT CROSS-SECTIONS

The endline IE team also conducted two alternate approaches to estimating the impacts of CLPP's activities at endline: (1) a panel difference-in-difference model with statistical matching and household fixed effects, consistent with the midline main analytic approach; and (2) a repeat cross-sectional analysis that utilizes all baseline and endline household observations and employs statistical matching at the community level and community fixed effects. These alternative approaches are anticipated to result in less precise estimates of impacts due to the inclusion of a large number of fixed effects in the difference-in-differences model and greater variance in the repeat cross-section model. They are run as robustness checks for the main ANCOVA specification. The advantage to including these alternate models is the ability to show robustness to a more conservative approach for the panel sample with the difference-in-differences model, and to show robustness of the results to including households we do not have a panel for with the repeat cross-section model. Where results align across these additional approaches, this further strengthens our confidence in the patterns of impacts and significance that we observe, hence the overall validity of the impact results.

The main caveats to these alternative approaches are: The DID model is not representative of households from baseline data collection who could not be reached at endline. For the repeat cross-sections approach, there is less ability to control for unobservable household-level characteristics that may be correlated with outcomes.

⁵⁸ Tests for balance at baseline suggested no major differences across CLPP and comparison groups on the basis of most observable household and community characteristics examined but did suggest that comparison communities were more likely to be located near a land concession and to have a greater share of minority households.

⁵⁹ This may be less concerning, however, since most of these households are those who permanently relocated from the community since baseline and there is little reason or evidence to suggest their relocation related to land formalization.

SUPPLEMENTAL ANALYSIS: SURVEY EXPERIMENTS

In keeping with the IE approach at 2016 midline, we conducted supplemental analysis at endline for four survey experiments that were embedded in the household survey at midline. The intent was to gain additional perspectives of survey respondents on some key issues. The experiments followed a priming/endorsement experiment logic whereby survey respondents were randomly divided into two groups during the survey. Each group received one version of the experimental question set and statistically significant differences between average group answers, as obtained via multivariate regression controlling for household- and community-level characteristics, provide information about the validity of the prime or the endorsement (as applicable) embedded in the experiment. The four issues assessed via the survey experiments were:

- View of Liberian property reform for women (Outcome Family 2)
- Assessment of Land Rights Act (Outcome Family 2)
- Perception of the value of communal forest land (Outcome Family 5)
- Assessment of capacity of authorities to enforce investor accountability (Outcome Family 5)

HETEROGENOUS EFFECTS: SUBGROUPS ANALYSIS

The CLPP IE analysis is also concerned with detecting treatment effects among four specific subgroups as determined by baseline characteristics of the household and respondent: youth-headed households, minority-headed households, poor households, and women. To test for heterogeneous treatment effects, we include additional terms in the model in the specification in [1a] or alternate models to indicate the subgroup of interest and interact treatment status with that subgroup indicator. Other parameters remain the same.

The power to detect impacts is lower for the subgroup analyses relative to the average treatment effect, because the number of respondents per community who fall into a given subgroup is smaller than the overall number of respondents. Sample sizes for the different sub-groups analyzed are similar and are no more than a third of the sample size for the complete household panel. The NORC team's power calculations at endline suggest that MDEs range from 0.3 to 0.4 standard deviations from the mean, depending on outcome, across the four subgroups of interest for the CLPP IE (Table 4). This is approximately three times the MDES for the complete panel but is still reasonably well powered by standard conventions.⁶⁰

Table 4: Average Minimum Detectable Effects for CLPP Subgroups Analyses

Subgroup	% of HHs in Subgroup	Full Sample MDE (average across outcomes)	Subgroup estimated MDE
Youth	26.5	0.138	0.340
Minority	31.3	0.138	0.300
Poor	21.8	0.138	0.331
Female	27.2	0.138	0.326

⁶⁰ For example, see Bakker, A., J. Cai, G. Kaiser et al. 2019. *Beyond small, medium, or large: point of consideration when interpreting effect sizes.* Educational Studies in mathematics 102:1-8.

MULTIPLE TESTING

The 2016 midline used a false discovery rate (FDR) adjustment to p-values from each test conducted, to account for the potential for false positives on impacts given the number of hypothesis tests run within each outcome family. However, and as the literature also suggests,⁶¹ the 2016 midline team considered this correction to be too conservative, particularly since outcomes within each outcome family are often closely related. The 2016 midline evaluation therefore relied on the uncorrected p-values. We take a similar approach for endline, reporting results that are not adjusted for multiple hypothesis testing.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

STRENGTHS

The well-powered household panel sample at endline, treatment fidelity across the CLPP and comparison groups that was maintained since baseline, and ability to examine gendered effects across respondents within households constitute key strengths for measuring CLPP's impacts at endline. In addition, the mixed-methods qualitative and quantitative approach at endline enables triangulation of findings across multiple sources and allows for more substantive interpretation of the statistical impact results, identification of potential causal mechanisms by which observed impacts were achieved, and an understanding of how context factors may have influenced outcomes. It also enables deeper coverage on topics that may not lend themselves as well to quantitative measure, includes several themes related to women's empowerment, aspects of household participation in customary land formalization, land and natural resource use, management and governance, perceived benefits or unintended negative consequences of customary land formalization, and issues related to outside resource extractors operating in communities.

LIMITATIONS AND POTENTIAL SOURCES OF BIAS

Lack of receipt of community deeds in all of the CLPP communities: At the time of endline, no CLPP community had yet received the confirmatory survey of their communal land boundary by the LLA or the ultimate statutory community deed that they are eligible to receive per the LRA. However, CLPP communities had received a Certificate of Completion of Community Self-Identification from LLA, which formally recognized each community as a customary land-owning community. Per IPs and the endline IE team's qualitative data collection, communities were aware that these certificates were not the same as the final deed, but they did value having the certificate as an interim confirmation of their communal land rights. While receipt of the confirmatory survey and deed were outside of CLPP and ILRG's manageable interest, it is important to keep in mind that endline results are based on findings from treated communities that do not yet possess the final legal documentation of their communal land rights as set out by law, which could affect their confidence in their land rights and related tenure security outlook.

Lack of baseline data for some impact indicators due to the addition of new impact indicators and changes to survey questions at midline: Substantial changes were made to the household survey instrument at midline, including the addition of new survey questions, response choices, indicators, and changes to survey logic. Some of these changes were made with the intent of obtaining more nuanced outcome indicators but

⁶¹ For example see Gelman et al 2012.

mean that some indicators reported at midline cannot be constructed using data from the baseline sample. Some others can be constructed but the results are affected by changes to survey logic across rounds. The ANCOVA model helps to mitigate potential bias introduced by the latter issue. For indicators newly introduced at midline and for which no baseline data is available, the analysis at endline relies on a cross-sectional approach to analyze impacts, as was also the case for midline.⁶² This particularly affects the Land Conflict outcome family, where none of the impact indicators have corresponding data from baseline. The interpretation of these results is therefore suggestive only. Although it is not possible to fully mitigate this limitation, we gain some additional confidence in the trajectory of suggested effects by drawing on related qualitative data collected at endline.

Smaller than anticipated household panel dataset due to insufficient respondent and household identifying information at baseline: The endline IE team sought to reinterview as many of the same households from baseline as possible but expected fairly high attrition given that nearly a decade had elapsed since baseline. Household attrition from the baseline sample was 25 percent, or 322 households, and overwhelmingly a result of household relocation from the community. However, additional households were lost from the panel analytic sample, despite being surveyed at both rounds, due to insufficient identifying information and apparent data errors at baseline that prevented the endline team from matching some endline household observations with a corresponding observation in the baseline dataset provided. While the resulting household panel is smaller than anticipated for this reason, the endline impact analysis is still well-powered.

Response bias: The IE team recruited KII and GD participants for follow-on data collection through purposive, homogenous sampling to help ensure data from the most relevant sources available. Of the respondents who were available, there may be bias in the types of responses they gave because of an expectation that the study team was looking for a certain type of answer. To help mitigate this risk, the study team rigorously tested its discussion guides and protocols to ensure the absence of leading questions and priming that could skew responses, clearly communicated the study purpose, and employed moderator techniques to ensure respondents felt comfortable discussing openly.

Recall bias: Some of the discussion topics asked for respondent's recollections of past events, which may be difficult to remember accurately over time. Recall bias may lead to exaggerated negative or positive perceptions of past experiences, depending on aspects that are most remembered over time. To help mitigate this potential, the IE team worked to carefully design the qualitative instruments, ensure appropriate probing, and used triangulation across multiple data sources.

⁶² The endline team considered but ultimately did not see added-value to running a midline to endline analysis for these indicators for several reasons related to differences in the community sample, respondent sample, data quality, and lower frequency of several of the relevant indicators, all of which are anticipated to introduce substantial additional variability and contribute to lower power to detect meaningful differences. Among other reasons, data collection at midline took place after substantial implementation had already occurred in treatment communities, the community sample was half that of the baseline and endline sample and restricted to CLPP communities the implementer considered would be more amenable to treatment. Moreover, the results would not be comparable to the impact results across the full baseline to endline, while most of the indicators from the main outcome family affected (Land Conflict) are drawn from lower frequency events hence are only obtained from a subset of households in each round in any case.

OUTCOME FAMILY I: LAND GOVERNANCE

Strengthening land and resource governance within communities was a core objective of CLPP. The program conducted several activities aimed to achieve this, including trainings to raise awareness on legal aspects of the LRA and community rights and responsibilities to own and manage communal customary land, awareness-raising specifically on the rights of women and other marginalized groups, and support for participatory development and adoption of land and natural resource bylaws and local governance institutions.

The Land Governance outcome family focuses on household impacts related to these efforts, and includes several indicators of household perceptions of community leaders, participation in various aspects of communal land governance, awareness of land and resource governance bylaws, and perceptions of the relative power of various actors with respect to land decisions in their community.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- Impact analysis suggests CLPP has led to substantial positive impacts on multiple indicators of land governance. This includes significant increases in households':
 - Agreement that leaders punish rulebreakers (12.2 percentage point increase);
 - View that leaders do not act in secret (8.7 percentage point increase);
 - Combined rating of leaders per an index of multiple aspects of perceived leader capacity, trust and satisfaction (15.3 percentage point increase).
- Impact results provide evidence for households' improved perceptions of community leaders, while comparison households' view of leaders saw little change or even declined over the same time period.
- CLPP also led to a significant increase in household participation in land governance and awareness of land-related bylaws in the community. This includes higher likelihood that households':
 - Help create bylaws (16.4 percentage point increase);
 - Attend land meetings in the community (8.4 percentage point increase);
 - Monitor rule-breaking (8.1 percentage point increase);
 - Report presence of bylaws in the community (24.5 percentage point increase);
 - Are satisfied with bylaws (8.9 percentage point increase)
 - Report an elected CLDMC in the community (15.7 percentage point increase)
- Households perceive the relative power of CLDMCs in their community to have increased, while the perceived power of paramount chiefs on land decisions in communities has declined as result of CLPP.
- The endline results expand substantially on positive trends for land governance reported at midline and suggest that CLPP's achievements on land governance have grown as communities continued to receive comprehensive support to complete the customary land formalization process over time.
- There is evidence that poorest and youth-headed households saw significantly greater improvements on several indicators, while women and minority-headed households had more negative outcomes on certain important indicators of land governance participation and leader perceptions.

IMPACT ANALYSIS RESULTS

Figures 3-6 below present the overall impacts of the CLPP interventions at the time of endline data collection in Dec 2022 - Jan 2023.⁶³ The results for Outcome Family I provide fairly strong evidence for positive impacts of CLPP and follow-on customary land formalization programming on land governance within CLPP communities. There are positive and significant impacts for households across several of the indicators in this outcome family, including an increase in the likelihood a household reports the existence of written bylaws related to land and resources in their community (thus is knowledgeable about the existence of such bylaws, which were created in all CLPP communities), household participation in creating those rules, their satisfaction with land-related rules, attendance at land related meetings and participation in monitoring rule breaking within the community.

The results also provide evidence that CLPP and related follow-on programming positively impacted household perceptions of community leaders, including an increase in the likelihood that leaders are seen to punish rule breakers and are transparent in their actions. CLPP's activities also led to a significant and positive increase in an overall index of land governance that takes into account aspects of household trust in and perceived transparency, fairness and ethical behavior of leaders.

Importantly, the results also show that CLPP and related land formalization activities under ILRG led to a significant increase in the likelihood a household affirms the presence of an elected CLDMC in their community, while ladder of power results suggest that households perceive a significant increase in the power of the CLDMC on deciding land issues relative to other key decision makers.⁶⁴ The ladder of power results also suggest that the CLPP activities led to a decline in households' perception of the relative power of paramount chiefs with respect to land issues in their community.

⁶³ Core reporting of impacts is based on an ANCOVA approach.

⁶⁴ Specifically, the survey asked respondent to rank seven groups of actors on a ladder of power ranging from 1 to 10, regarding making decisions about the use and management of farmlands, townlands, forests and wetlands in the community.

IMPACT ESTIMATES CHARTS

Figure 3: Impact Results for Perception of Leaders

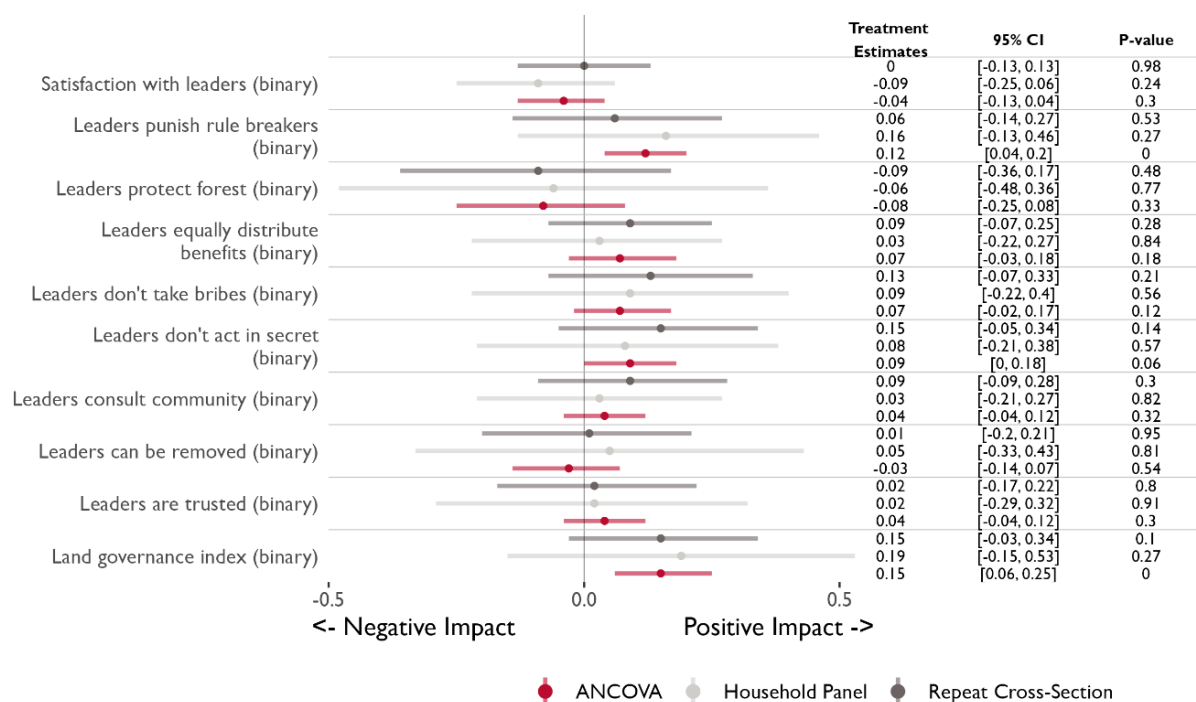


Figure 4: Impact Results for Land Governance participation

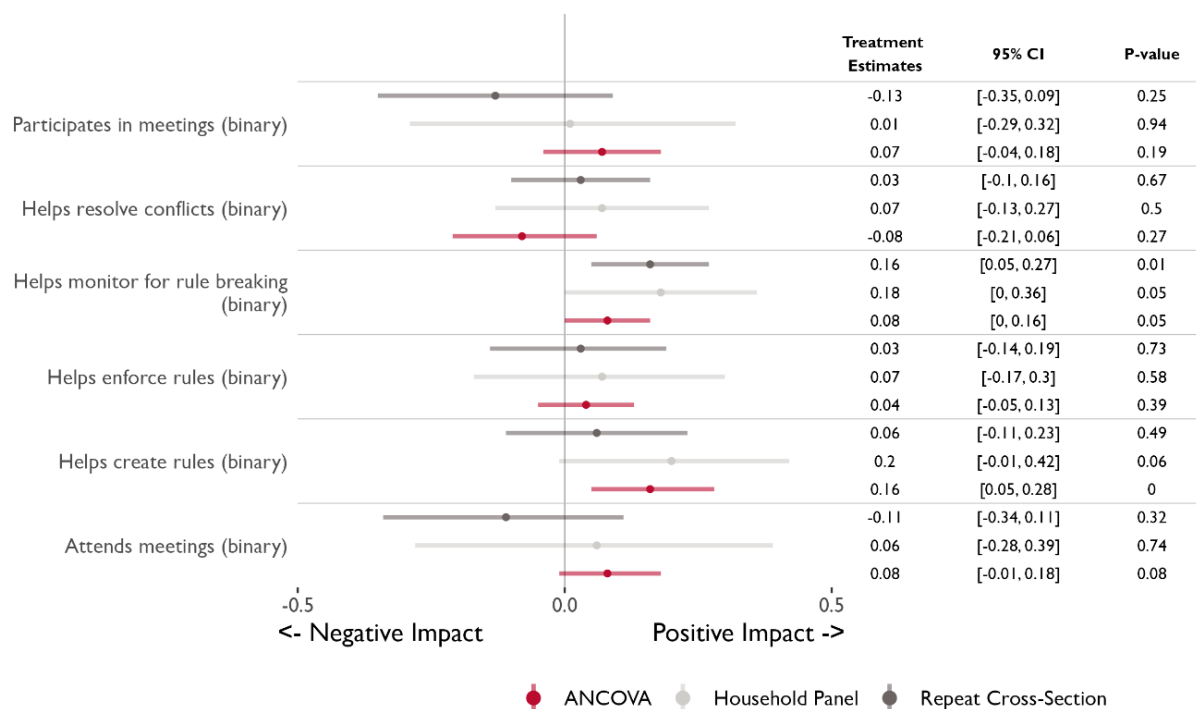


Figure 5: Impact Results for Bylaws Awareness and Investor Perceptions

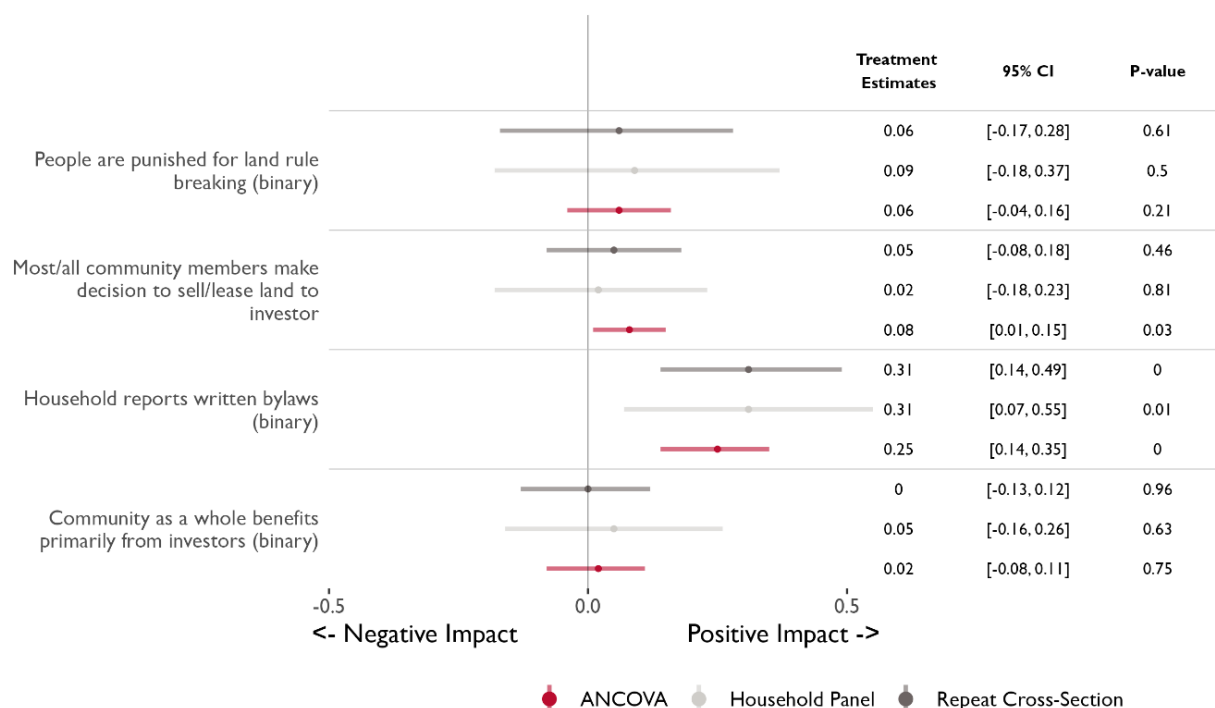
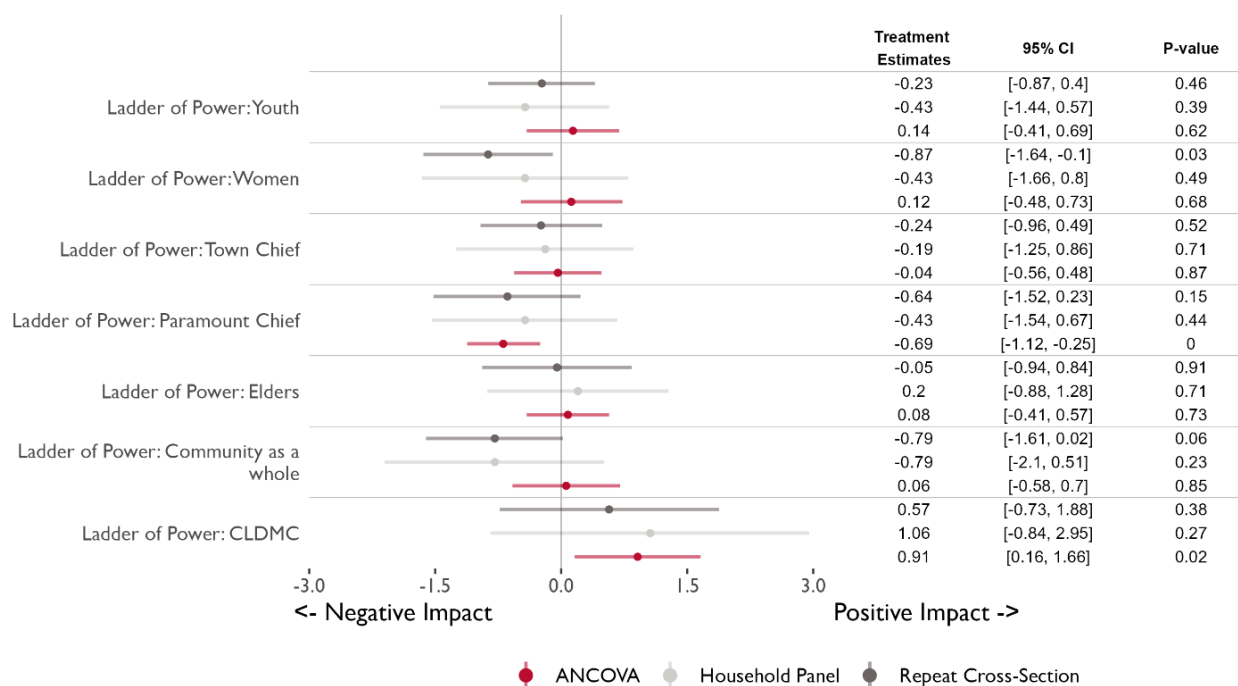


Figure 6: Impact Results for Land Decision-making Ladder of Power



With respect to *household perceptions of community leaders*, the endline impact results suggest that CLPP led to, on average, a 12.2 percentage point increase in households' perception of leaders with respect to

punishing rulebreakers ($p=0.003$)⁶⁵ and an 8.7 percentage point increase with respect to leaders not acting in secret ($p=0.058$). These treatment effects at endline represent a 15 percent increase over the baseline mean of 83 percent (on punishing rulebreakers) and a 13 percent increase over the baseline mean of 69 percent (on not acting in secret). Households in the CLPP and comparison group were similar on these measures at baseline. By endline, the share of CLPP households that rated their leaders well on these measures had increased substantially, while the share of comparison group households that did so either substantially declined (with respect to their views on leaders punishing rulebreakers) or increased by a very small amount (with respect to leaders not acting in secret).

CLPP also led to an average increase of 15.3 percentage points for households' combined rating of leaders per an index of land governance that takes into account multiple aspects of perceived leader capacity, trust and satisfaction. The effect size is fairly large, representing a 26 percent increase over baseline. The proportion of CLPP households above the sample mean increased from 57 to 70 percent from baseline to endline, while it decreased from 61 to 54 percent among households in the comparison group. On net, these results on household perceptions of leaders suggest improvements in CLPP communities since baseline, while there has been little change or even a decline in household perceptions of leaders in comparison group communities over the same time period.

In terms of *household participation in land rule creation and other aspects of land governance*, the endline impact results suggest that CLPP led to a 16.4 percentage point increase, on average, in the likelihood a household helps create land rules (0.005). At endline, 56 percent of CLPP households reported helping to create bylaws in their community, relative to 38 percent of comparison households. CLPP also led to significant impacts on the likelihood a household attends land related meetings (an 8.4 percent increase, $p = 0.085$) and helps monitor for rule breaking within the community (an 8.1 percent increase, $p=0.052$). At endline, 76 percent of CLPP households reported attending land related meetings, compared to 61 percent of comparison households. The proportion of households that reported helping to monitor rule breaking declined from baseline to endline across both treatment groups, but substantially less so for CLPP households. At endline, 39 percent of CLPP households reported helping to monitor rule breaking, compared to 30 percent of comparison households. A core CLPP activity was to establish a land governance committee in each community (the CLDMC) that was charged with monitoring land-related rules, among other duties. It is possible this contributes to the decline in monitoring participation at the household-level in CLPP communities at endline, as elected community members take on more of that responsibility.

The results also point to significant impacts of CLPP on the *presence and household awareness of written bylaws about land and resource use and management, household satisfaction with those rules, awareness of an elected CLDMC in their community, and the household's perception of the relative power of the CLDMC* within the community on aspects of land decision making. The magnitudes of impact on these important indicators are large: on average, a 24.5 percentage point increase in the likelihood a household reports the presence of written bylaws^{66,67} ($p < 0.001$), an 8.7 percentage point increase in household

⁶⁵ More specifically, the likelihood a household's rating of leaders with respect to punishing rulebreakers or not acting in secret was above the sample mean, on a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strong Agree).

⁶⁶ Household affirmation of the existence of written bylaws in CLPP and a CLDMC serve as proxies for household awareness of the bylaws and CLDMC, since the CLPP activities led to the creation of both of these in each CLPP community.

⁶⁷ Among CLPP households, the proportion of households that reported the presence of written bylaws in their community increased from 36 percent at baseline to 52 percent at endline, while the proportion of comparison group households that reported written bylaws in their community was 27 percent at endline.

satisfaction with those rules ($p=0.04$), a 15.7 percentage point increase in the likelihood a household reports the presence of an elected CLDMC in their community ($p=0.004$), and a 0.91 unit increase over the baseline mean of 4.1 (on a scale of 1 to 10) in a household's ranking of the CLDMC with respect to their power within the community on land-related issues ($p=0.018$).

The endline results also suggest that CLPP led to a 0.69 unit *decrease* in a household's ranking of the power of paramount chiefs on the same scale, over the baseline mean of 8.2 ($p=0.003$). This is also a positive result given CLPP's overarching objectives to strengthen the empowerment and inclusion of communities as a whole on land issues and move away from traditionally less transparent norms and decision-making on the same that historically was controlled by paramount chiefs, town chiefs, and other elites within the system. Finally, CLPP led to a 7.9 percent increase, on average, in the likelihood a household reports that most or all community members make decisions about selling or leasing land to an investor ($p = 0.026$).⁶⁸

NONSIGNIFICANT INDICATORS

Unlike the 2016 midline, the endline results do not find evidence for an impact of CLPP on some elements of leader satisfaction (for example, household perception they can remove, direct or admonish leaders, that leaders consult community members and equally distribute benefits), although the combined land governance index across a wide range of indicators is positive and significant at endline. For many of these indicators, the direction and magnitude of change from baseline to endline was similar across CLPP and comparison households.⁶⁹ Although the impact results were not significant for these elements of leader satisfaction, it should be noted that the qualitative data at endline provided no indication that communities are strongly dissatisfied with their leaders or encountering challenges with elite capture of benefits or resources. Instead, the null results with respect to benefits distribution could stem from many communities not yet being in a position where substantial benefits or resources are coming into the community, which turn might more strongly shape their views on this (for example, from agreements with logging groups or others who are extracting resources on their community land).

The endline found some important changes with respect to the perceived power of the CLDMC and paramount chief on land issues in the community. The evaluation does not, however, find evidence to support that CLPP led to perceived changes to the relative power on the same for youth, women, elders, town chiefs or the community as a whole. The endline also found no evidence to suggest that CLPP and related follow-on programming changed the likelihood that a household perceived poorer individuals, strangers, or women to be disadvantaged by land rules.

COMPARISON WITH 2016 MIDLINE RESULTS

⁶⁸ This proportion stayed fairly low overall from baseline to endline, however, which is not surprising given that survey and qualitative data suggests investor presence in the IE communities is not common overall. Among CLPP households the share of households that agreed with this increased from 23 to 29 percent, while the share of comparison group households was similarly low and experienced a smaller increase over the same time period, from 20 to 23 percent.

⁶⁹ The NORC endline IE team carried over most of the indicators from evaluation design to maintain consistency with previous rounds but found the list of conceptualized indicators to be overly large (for example, 43 indicators in the Land Governance outcome family alone) and focused the reporting on a smaller set of household-level theory-based outcomes. Several of the original indicators were quite similar to each other, consisted of multiple alternate constructions for a given index, or asked for respondent views across many similar items that may have been difficult for respondents to discern nuances on.

The 2023 endline results expand substantially on positive trends for land governance that were reported at 2016 midline and suggest that CLPP's achievements on land governance have grown as communities continued to receive comprehensive support to complete the customary land formalization process over time. The 2016 midline evaluation found significant positive results on seven land governance indicators related to satisfaction and transparency of leaders, satisfaction with land rules and decisions, increased household participation in rule creation, and a greater likelihood that rules were enforced. At endline, results continued to be positive and significant for many of the same indicators from midline. We also see newly significant results with respect to household participation in monitoring rules, attending meetings, reporting the presence of land related written bylaws and an elected CLDMC, and the perceived power of the CLDMC. In contrast to midline, the endline did not find evidence that CLPP and the related follow-on programming led to an increased perception that community leaders protect forests, though the proportion of households that thought this was already high at baseline.⁷⁰

The 2016 midline suggested a negative effect on the likelihood a household reported women's attendance at land meetings, although women respondents at midline were still more likely to report attending such meetings in CLPP communities (68 percent) than in comparison group communities (57 percent). These particular results were not supported at endline, but the endline findings suggest that women have continued to lag behind men with respect to other aspects of their knowledge and participation in land governance in their communities, as discussed below and in subsequent chapters.

ALIGNMENT OF 2023 ENDLINE RESULTS ACROSS ALTERNATIVE MODELS

The 2023 endline results are particularly robust across all three model specifications for three of indicators: the likelihood a household reports the existence of written land and resource-related bylaws within the community, helps monitor rule breaking within the community, and affirms an elected CLDMC. Evidence for a significant impact of CLPP and related programming on the likelihood a household helps create land-related rules in the community is supported by the core ANCOVA model and the household panel DID.

For the remaining indicators that are significant under our core model, the estimates remain similar across alternate specifications but the confidence intervals are wider (there is lower precision around the estimates) and the statistical significance of the result is not retained.

SUBGROUPS ANALYSIS

The subgroups regression analyses provide insights into how the CLPP activities may have affected important groups of people within communities differently. The results suggest that *poorest and youth-headed households saw significantly greater improvements on several indicators, while women and minority-headed households had more negative outcomes on certain important indicators of land governance participation and leader perceptions.*

The *positive impacts for poorest households* include a significantly higher increase in poorest households' agreement they could admonish leaders (17.8 percentage points, $p = 0.070$) and tell leaders what to do

⁷⁰ At baseline, 78 percent of respondents felt their leaders protect forests, but both treatment groups declined on this at endline. Results from midline are not directly comparable to endline due to the much smaller number of communities in the midline sample (comprising roughly half of the baseline and endline community sample).

(20.9 percentage points, $p = 0.062$). Poorest households were, on average, 16.8 percentage points more likely to report they helped create land-related rules. Poorest households were also 21.1 percentage points more likely to report that most or all community members are able to make decisions regarding selling or leasing land to investors ($p = 0.034$). As a whole, these results suggest even more substantial gains on poorest households' outlook and participation in land governance within their communities relative to other CLPP households.

There is also evidence that CLPP led to *more positive land governance impacts for households that were youth-headed at baseline* (household head was 35 years old or younger at the time of baseline in 2014⁷¹). The endline subgroups analyses suggest that youth-headed households' combined rating of leaders on land governance was 17.1 percentage points more likely to be above the sample mean, on average ($p = 0.088$). They were also 15.6 percentage points more likely to strongly agree that leaders are trusted ($p = 0.077$), and 36 percentage points more likely to agree they can remove leaders ($p < 0.001$), on average. However, they were also 14.4 percentage points *less* likely to be above the sample mean in the extent of their agreement that leaders consult the community on land issues ($p = 0.093$). In sum, the results for youth-headed households may suggest a more positive outlook and greater confidence in their role to affect land governance in the community relative to other households.

The subgroups results also suggest that *women and members of minority groups within the community had less positive outcomes on some indicators*, relative to effects for CLPP households overall. *Female respondents* were 25.1 percentage points less likely to report they participated in helping to resolve land conflicts ($p = 0.016$), 14.3 percentage points less likely to report that the community as a whole benefits from land investors ($p = 0.02$), and their rating of community leaders in the combined overall land governance index was, on average, 22.3 percentage points less likely to be above the mean rating ($p = 0.031$). These results suggest lower participation in aspects of land governance activities, less positive views on leaders and lower perceived benefits from land activities by women in CLPP communities. The results align with several qualitative findings from endline with respect to persisting challenges to engendering women's substantive involvement in land governance. These are discussed in more detail in discussion section for Outcome Family 1 and in subsequent findings chapters.

Minority-headed households were 24.4 percentage points less likely to report the presence of written bylaws in the community ($p = 0.016$), 16.8 percentage points less likely to report participating in helping to resolve land conflicts ($p = 0.093$), and 24.2 percentage points less likely to agree they can tell leaders what to do ($p = 0.028$). Minority-headed households also ranked the relative power and position of town chiefs on land-related issues 0.93 units higher than households overall ($p = 0.028$), on a scale of 1 to 10. Together, the results suggest that members of minority groups may still face some challenges with respect to their perceived status and relative power within communities to hold leaders accountable and their awareness of and participation in elements of land governance.

DISCUSSION

The impact estimate regression analyses provide strong evidence that the CLPP and follow-on customary land formalization interventions led to positive impacts on land governance within CLPP

⁷¹ Noting that by endline, no household in the sample remained youth-headed by this definition, as all household heads that were 35 years old or younger in 2014 had aged out of this category by endline in 2022. This categorization therefore captures households whose heads are relatively younger than others in the group.

communities, household participation in land governance activities, and their perception of leaders on the same. However, the subgroups analyses suggest that some of these gains may have been uneven across different types of households within communities. In this section, we draw on qualitative data from endline and additional descriptive data from household and community leader surveys to explore reasons for treatment effects or lack thereof, the potential pathways or mechanisms by which the CLPP intervention elicited impacts in this domain and obtain additional insights on how and why women and minority-headed households may have lagged behind on some elements.

HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION IN LAND GOVERNANCE INTERVENTIONS

The qualitative data at endline support widespread household knowledge of and participation in CLPP's land governance activities. These data also underscored the prolonged support that communities had received over time, and highlighted challenges that many communities faced in coming to agreement over their communal land boundaries. In each of the 12 communities in the qualitative sample, *GD and KII participants generally were knowledgeable and able to describe well the various customary land formalization activities that SDI implemented in their community.*⁷² Although boundary demarcation activities had started as early as 2014 in some communities, participants indicated the bulk of the work on boundary harmonization, demarcation and community mapping had taken place during 2019 – 2021, consistent with SDI's work via ILRG's follow-on support after CLPP had concluded. This work was still ongoing at the time of endline data collection in at least four of the twelve communities in the qualitative sample, where communities had not been able to resolve or were still working with a neighboring community to come to agreement on some portion of their communal land boundary.

GD and KII participants also generally affirmed that *everyone who wanted to participate in customary land formalization activities in their community was able to.*⁷³ Participants from several communities described that the process took several years, and over time most or all people in the community had heard about and had some opportunity to participate in various aspects of the customary land formalization process.

In most of the GDs held, participants related that people were selected to participate directly in each of the different activities as representatives of the community at-large, since it was not always feasible or practical to have everyone participate in certain activities. However, anyone else who wanted to join a given activity was generally allowed to (for example, walking the agreed community land boundary).

Participants from one community described that for each meeting or activity that was held, each sub-unit in the community was asked to select five or ten people to attend and take part. By rotating participation across different households, over time many people from each sub-unit of the community were directly involved in various customary land formalization activities. In another community, GD participants said their community had resolved the issue of direct participation by holding an election in each town quarter to select people who would participate directly and represent others in the quarter. In some other communities, participants mentioned that older women and people who could not walk well were not able to participate in boundary identification, and that sometimes other community members did not hear about meetings in time to participate, or were not able to participate because of

⁷² With the exception of five GDs conducted with women participants whose knowledge and participation was substantially less than for men and community leaders interviewed from the same five communities.

⁷³ While this sentiment was strongly expressed throughout the qualitative data, it is still possible that less powerful or more disadvantaged people may have chosen not to engage in the process, for example if they had low confidence their views would be considered.

their farming or other commitments. However, GD and KII participants from nearly all communities agreed that no one was excluded from participating if they wanted to, even if not directly selected.

“The training took more than three years. And each time when they come, they will ask us to select different groups who will go. And so nearly everybody in this village here is aware.” – Male KII respondent, River Gee

“Nearly everybody in this town here has knowledge [of the process] because each time they come, they will select or call for a number [of people]. Sometimes when they come they will say they want maybe 100 persons. We want 50 women, we want this [and so on]. So it means that if you have [already] participated, then the [next time] we carry different people. [As a result], nearly everybody in this place here has knowledge of this land.” – Female KII, Maryland

However, the qualitative results indicate that women in several communities did not participate as much as men. In three CLPP communities, none of the women GD participants had participated directly in defining or mapping community boundaries, although they could describe the general process.⁷⁴

CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

The qualitative data at endline makes clear that *the work to agree on and harmonize boundaries between communities was seen by communities as the most difficult part of the customary land formalization process.* GD participants from 9 of the 12 communities in the qualitative sample described substantial challenges coming to agreement with neighboring communities and harmonizing the boundary between the two communities. Results from endline suggest this process took several years in many communities, often involved protracted and heated disputes, and required communities to make what they viewed as substantial compromises in order to peaceably come to a solution. In at 2 of the 12 qualitative communities, participants described giving up land they considered theirs so they could come to an eventual resolution with a neighboring community. Continued work to resolve boundaries with a neighboring community was still ongoing by the time of endline data collection in at least four communities in the qualitative sample.⁷⁵

AWARENESS AND SATISFACTION WITH CLDMCS; PARTICIPATION IN CLDMC ELECTIONS

Awareness of the CLDMC in their community was widespread among the qualitative sample. GD participants in only three of 24 GDs held across the twelve communities in the qualitative sample said they did not know about a CLDMC in their community. In each of these cases the GD was held with women (one community per county from Lofa, Maryland and River Gee). Most of the GD participants also confirmed that CLDMC members were elected.

“The way they did it, they divided it by zone. ... They said that we should appoint our people for the committee business, this CLDMC business... So, we did it by voting.” – Female GD respondent, Lofa

⁷⁴ See Outcome Family 2 findings for additional discussion on women’s empowerment findings and related issues and concerns.

⁷⁵ This is also corroborated by implementer documentation. ILRG reporting noted that unresolved boundary disputes were still present at project close in six of the CLPP communities.

However, and in contrast to impact results on the same, *participants from GDs in some communities suggested that CLDMC members had not always been elected and were instead appointed or selected on the basis of their land knowledge and other criteria.* Women GD participants from two communities, both in Lofa, said the members were instead chosen by elders and town chiefs. In another two communities, both in River Gee, none of the women GD participants had participated in electing the CLDMC members in their community, although they knew of the committee's existence and could provide a basic explanation of their responsibilities. In one community from Lofa, male GD participants said that people were selected to be on the CLDMC, rather than a general election, based on their knowledge about land issues and ability to analyze situations quickly and reason with people:

“We did not do it by voting really. We only did it by appointment because if they put you there as a member of that committee, you have to know something about land. ... Someone that can analyze quick, and reason with people, those are the people we selected to go [onto the committee].” – Male GD participant, Lofa

Still, *GD participants across nearly every GD generally reported satisfaction with their CLDMC.* The most common reasons they cited for their satisfaction were: the CLDMC had created their community land boundary without bringing additional confusion or conflict, the committee works hard, community members knew the boundaries now, and they have brought peace in the community and fewer land disputes. Others noted that land disputes are less common now and that having clarity on land boundaries via the work of the CLDMC had helped to reduce disputes between communities as well. Some participants highlighted their satisfaction that the CLDMC consults the community and is managing land affairs well in their community.

“Way back, our people used to fight against each other over land business, but from the time this program was instituted [there is] no land conflict now. Things just going peacefully between people in the communities concerning land. So we are satisfied.” – Male GD participant, River Gee

“And from now, from the time they were selected and elected by the three towns, they are already working with us, there has been no rigmarole.” – Female KII respondent, Lofa

“Since we have put them [the CLDMC] in power, anything that happens in land matters they can solve it fine.” – Male GD participant, Lofa

“It used to be every year, ten or fifteen people will go to court because of farming or land [issues]. And this committee is helping because [without it], every day court, court, court, court. Some people used to fight in the bush and all. So they are making peace for us.” – Male KII respondent, Lofa

Where GD participants expressed dissatisfaction with the CLDMC, typically the reason was because there were still some communal land boundaries under dispute with a neighboring community. However, this was much less common.

COMMUNITY LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT RULES AND BYLAWS DEVELOPMENT

Participants from all 24 GDs that were conducted in CLPP communities at endline affirmed the presence of land-related bylaws in their community and were able to provide several examples of them. They also said that most people in the community, although not all, generally adhered to the bylaws. Where people did not

follow bylaws, typically GD participants attributed this to a sentiment that in a given community there will always be some people who do not follow the rules. However, there was little indication of preferential treatment or individuals who were considered ‘above the law’, and examples or suggestions of elite capture were very uncommon.⁷⁶ Some participants described that the bylaws had helped to reduce confusion about what is acceptable to do in the community, which in turn had led to fewer issues and more peace in the community. The main reasons they gave for community acceptance and adherence to the bylaws were that the rules had brought peace to the community, they were developed by everyone in the community, and people believed the rules will help them to protect community land into the future and for their children.

“The rules that were made, everybody agreed on [them]” – Male GD participant, River Gee

“I accepted that law because of so many reasons. Number one reason is that, the land we have today, our forefather took care of it, that’s why we have it today. So when we not take care of that, our children will become beggars in the future.” – Male GD participant, Maryland

“The laws that were made, we accept it because they were good laws we made about the land. Because one, it will develop us to think about our children for tomorrow. We are not thinking about ourselves, but about our children.” – Female GD participant, Lofa

BYLAWS CREATION AND EXAMPLES

Several GD participants described a participatory process to create land-related bylaws in the community, whereby SDI organized various sessions within sub-units of the community to discuss and make suggestions or recommendations around the bylaws. These were compiled and further discussed in town hall meetings before final agreement across the community. Other GD participants described that after putting those bylaws down on paper, anyone who breaks the rules will have to pay a fine.

“We all sat [and discussed]. Women, youth and the elders, we all sat down and made the laws” – Male GD participant, Maryland

“After making the rules, we came and read it to the public. We called the whole town, they came to the town hall and we all sat down. [Then we said:] ‘let’s change this one and let’s change that one.’” – Male GD participant, Lofa

“They put it on paper that [if] anybody goes above this law here, you have to pay this fine.” – Female GD participant, Lofa

“For any violation that is carried on this land, according to the constitution and bylaws that we [put] here, it has a fine. But, the fines varies by the gravity of the offense.” – Male GD participant, Maryland

⁷⁶ One GD participant in one community raised elite capture concerns: “When I do something, I will pay the fine. Sometimes the town chief here, his son does something but he can’t pay the fine. So, not everybody is going by the law.” – Female GD participant, Lofa

In GDs, participants provided several examples of the types of bylaws that had been created in their communities. Many of these were similar across the different communities in the qualitative sample. Examples of specific bylaws that were mentioned in the GDs are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Example Land and Natural Resource Community Bylaws

Bylaw Example	Frequency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members must ask permission from the CLDMC and town chief before clearing new land for farming or to build a house 	8 Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outsiders must ask permission from the community before exploiting resources on community land (including logging, hunting or any activity in the bush or forest) <p><i>“Anybody who come in [our] land should not use our resources without the knowledge of the community. And the high forest should not be cut down again.... these are [some of] the small laws that we put together.” – Male GD participant, Maryland</i></p>	6 Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members must only cut what they need from the forest for home construction, and not allow wood to rot in the forest because they have cut too much <p><i>“If you are a member of this community, if go into the bush and cut poles (here we are using these to build our houses), and you leave them to rot in the bush, we fine you 1,500. When you pay the money, we put it in our coffers. The poles in the bush, that timber, those are all our natural resources. ... So, we wrote that law that anybody who cuts poles in the bush and you don’t build a house with them, we’ll fine you.” – Male KII respondent, Maryland</i></p>	5 Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strangers newly entering the community must meet with the community and request land 	4 Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a reserved area of forest land where no one should do any extraction <p><i>“We also established a law that there should be a special area of reserved land, for we as a community, that nobody can reach” – Male GD participant, Maryland</i></p>	3 Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement that community members will try to resolve issues about communal land internally through the CLDMC, rather than going through the district court system <p><i>“To take somebody to magisterial court will not be too fine for us, because we as community people, or these lands we are talking about, these are community lands. It is not private land, it is not public land, it’s community lands. So we as community dwellers should be able to resolve our differences, instead of going to court. If that’s your private land, you can go to court, but if it is a community land issue, it’s better we resolve our differences than going to court. And we all consented to that.” – Male KII participant, Lofa</i></p>	2 Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members cannot clear an area for farming on their neighbors’ land without permission 	2 Communities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members must inform the town quarter chief before hunting in the forest 	1 Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community members must not plant trees on land that is not theirs 	1 Community

OVERALL BENEFITS OF CUSTOMARY LAND FORMALIZATION PROCESS

Many GD participants gave positive views of the customary land formalization process overall and highlighted several benefits they felt they or the community as a whole had received (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Most Common Benefits From CLPP’s Customary Land Formalization Activities



SDI’s trainings helped communities assert their rights to negotiate with resource extractors and obtain financial or in-kind benefits from outside exploitation of their communal resources. It also helped communities protect their land from outside exploitation where desired (7 of 12 communities)

“SDI training brought us understanding of our land. And from this land now we’re getting small, small help. For example ... [Outsiders] crossed the boundary and came into our area. But because we know the demarcation [of our land], we went there and started mapping and counting the number of logs they cut on our land. And the price of each log they were supposed to give to us, they gave it to us.. So we have benefited. That law is helping us.” – KII respondent, Maryland



Fewer internal land disputes within the community, and a general reduction in land conflicts (7 of 12 communities)

“One of the benefits is that confusion has cooled down, conflicts are no longer like before.” – Male GD participant, Lofa



SDI’s trainings improved community members’ knowledge on land issues and helped them understand their customary land management rights and responsibilities. Agreement and knowledge of community land boundaries was seen as especially helpful (6 of 12 communities)



Peace between clans as a result of harmonizing boundaries between neighboring communities (3 of 12 communities)



Ability to leave land or land-derived benefits to their children (future generations) (2 of 12 communities)

Although much less common, some GD or KII participants from 6 communities⁷⁷ mentioned experiencing unanticipated negative results from the customary land formalization process. All of these issues related to boundary resolution challenges with a neighboring community. Unresolved boundary issues with neighboring communities led to ongoing dissatisfaction (1 community) or prevented individuals from clearing farms in the disputed area because they were afraid of neighboring community reactions (1 community). Male GD participants described direct threats of physical violence during the boundary dispute resolution process in at least two communities, from members of the neighboring community. Participant descriptions gave the impression that particularly intense boundary harmonization disputes took place in three of the 12 communities in the qualitative sample.⁷⁸

“They even wanted to put up violence, to fight ... but for us on this side, as I said, we always wanted to restore peace. A guy went there, even held my shirt, and I told him that I am not here to fight because we are here to understand.” –Male KII, Maryland

“It was not easy for many people to participate because it was fearful. It was like a community war. ... Women were running away with their children.” –Male GD participant, Lofa

⁷⁷ And 7 GDs or KIIs out of a total of 36 conducted.

⁷⁸ It is difficult to fully gauge the severity of the events described without additional context. The impression from multiple GDs was that conflict during boundary discussions between neighboring communities did include threats of violence against some individuals in at least some communities, further underscoring the challenges of the boundary harmonization work.

In the remaining 29 GDs and KIIs conducted at endline, participants did not mention any negative issues.

HOUSEHOLD PERCEPTIONS ON COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND LAND-RELATED DECISION MAKING

The qualitative data at endline provides strong support for perceived improvements to community leadership on land issues that are also reflected in the impact results. In 33 of the 36 GDs and KIIs conducted at endline,⁷⁹ participants said they felt that land management and land-related decision-making in their community had improved, and that decisions were more transparent now compared to before customary land formalization took place. In two communities, participants attributed this directly to SDI.

“Before SDI came, we never knew how to take care of this land. So people were just mismanaging the land. But when they gave us this education, everybody now is free and follows the proper channels to do the right thing.” –Male KII participant, Maryland

GENDERED DIFFERENCES

The qualitative data at endline corroborates weaker land governance results for women and suggested that in some communities women still lag behind men with respect to their knowledge and participation in land governance activities in their community. In some communities, women GD participants described less opportunity to participate in key customary land formalization processes due to entrenched gender norms in the community. This was particularly salient among the GDs held in Lofa county, where women GD participants in multiple communities in the qualitative sample said they did not participate in land formalization activities, had not attended meetings and did not know very much about land issues because land issues were men’s “business” in their community. In the same GDs, women often were aware of the CLDMC and could describe some of the committees’ responsibilities around settling land conflicts, but they could provide fewer examples of land and natural resource bylaws that had been adopted in the community and said they had not been involved in creating them. These issues are discussed further in Outcome Family 2 as part of broader empowerment concerns apparent at endline with respect to the extent of progress and ongoing challenges to achieving meaningful changes in women’s land access, rights and participation in land governance in the Liberian customary land context.

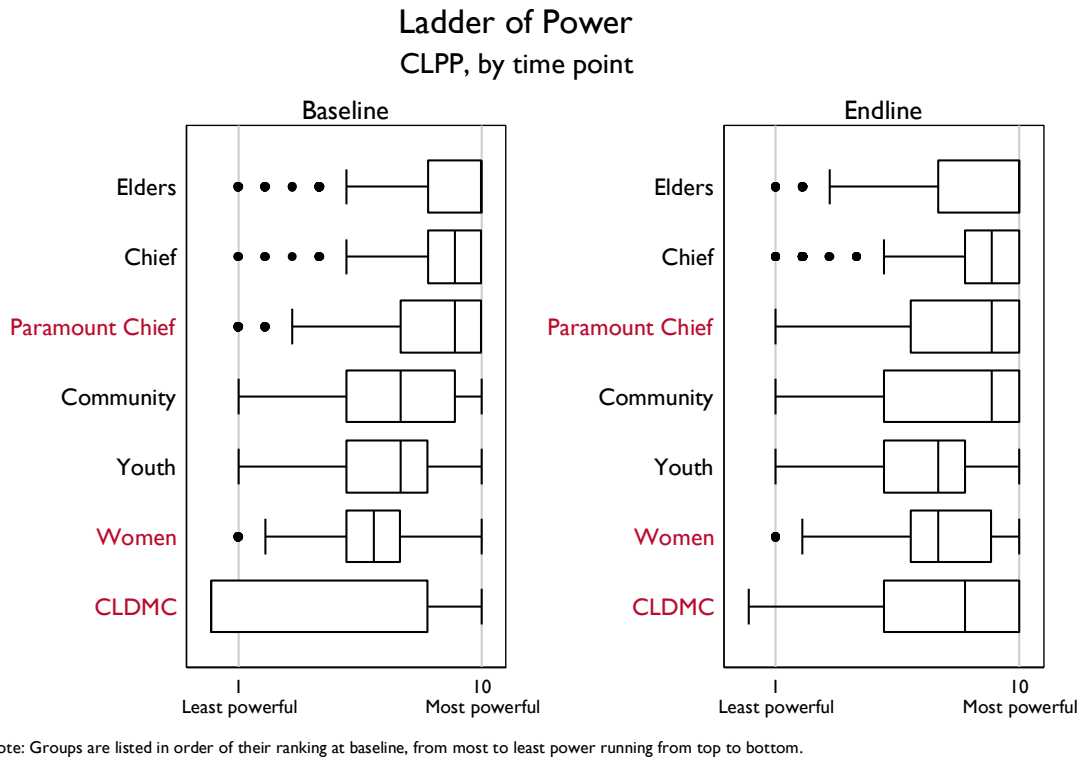
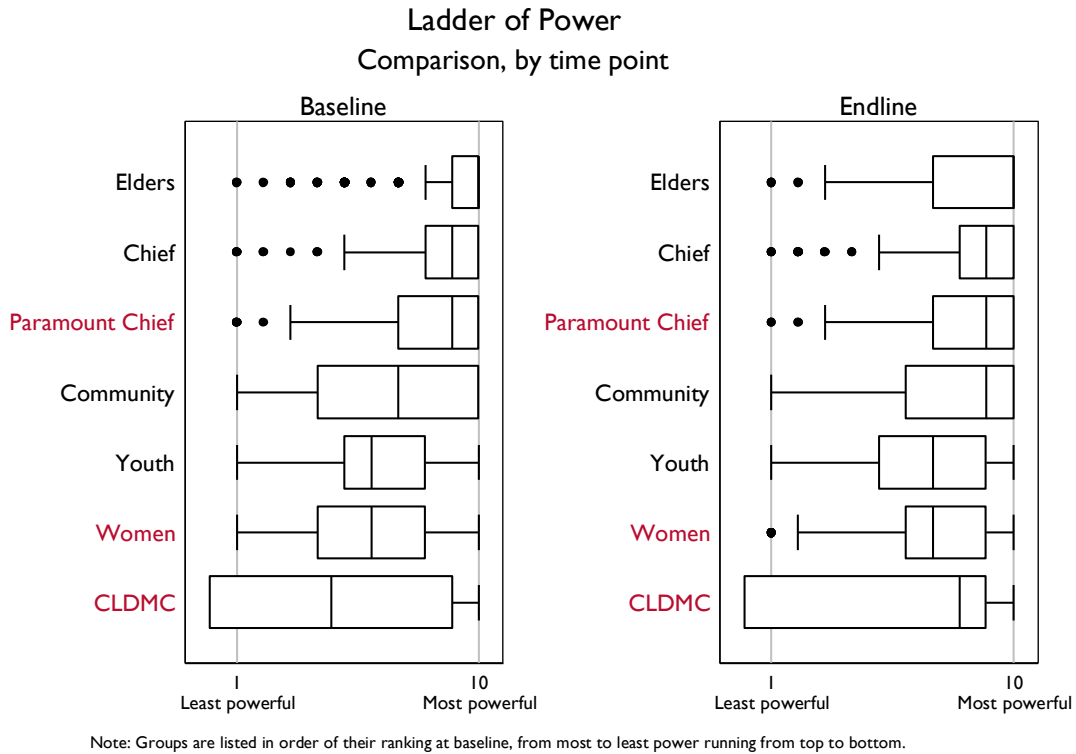
“It’s the men who make the laws” “Sometimes they given the women a chance to join in gathering”
– Female GD participant, River Gee

“When they call the general meeting, men can go there. When they be talking about land issues, men can be there, women can’t be there.” – Female GD participant, Lofa

A comparison of the distribution of results for the ladder of power across baseline endline is also informative on this issue (Figure 8). At baseline, the nascent land management committee (CLDMC) was seen as least powerful relative to other decision makers on land issues and was ranked lowest, followed by women. Although households ranked both groups higher at endline, the magnitude of change for CLDMCs in CLPP communities was much higher than for women.

⁷⁹ The remaining 3 were GDs held with women. Participants from two of them said land management and decisions had not improved. They cited examples of women’s disenfranchisement from land in 1 GD and ongoing conflicts over land between community leaders in the other GD. Participants from the third GD did not know if things had changed or not.

Figure 8: Ladder of Power Results Across Baseline and Endline



OUTCOME FAMILY II: COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

CLPP's theory of change conceptualized strengthening community empowerment as a key element in providing communities with the awareness and knowledge foundations to proceed with customary land formalization and exercise their communal land rights under the LRA. To achieve aspects of community empowerment, CLPP activities focused on providing communities with legal education and awareness of their communal land rights and responsibilities under the LRA and in the context of land and natural resource use and management. Program activities in this domain particularly focused on strengthening awareness of women's land rights, helping to address traditional norms within communities that had contributed to historical disenfranchisement of women and other vulnerable groups from land and land-related decisions, and strengthening systems within communities to ensure knowledge of communal land boundaries and inclusivity with respect to land decision-making and engagement with community outsiders and land investors regarding land or resource use within the community.

This outcome family focuses on measures of community empowerment including community members' knowledge and awareness of their communal land boundaries, understanding of their land rights under the LRA (with a particular focus on issues pertaining to communal lands, natural resources, and women's land rights), their perceived capacity to negotiate with outside investors regarding communal lands, and the empowerment of vulnerable groups within communities.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- Impact analyses suggest CLPP increased the likelihood a household knows some or all of their communal land boundaries, by 6.5 and 8.2 percentage points, respectively. CLPP also increased the likelihood a household knows that women have a right to inherit land under the LRA, by 9.3 percentage points.
- Results at endline do not find evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on household's knowledge of other legal aspects of the LRA, as households in the comparison group had gained a similar level of awareness on several aspects of the LRA by endline.
- Poorest households had a significantly greater improvement on knowledge of women's land rights, while women and youth-headed households had less positive results regarding knowledge of some specific or more nuanced elements of customary land rights under the LRA.
- Qualitative findings suggest that CLPP was effective at increasing household knowledge of communal land rights per the LRA and more broadly empowering communities to understand their customary land rights and conduct communal land management responsibilities. Qualitative participants highlighted that trainings, boundary harmonization and other program support had led to greater peace between communities, fewer land disputes, and a greater understanding of and ability to assert their right to exclude, negotiate with and require financial or in-kind benefits from outsiders engaged in resource extraction on their land.

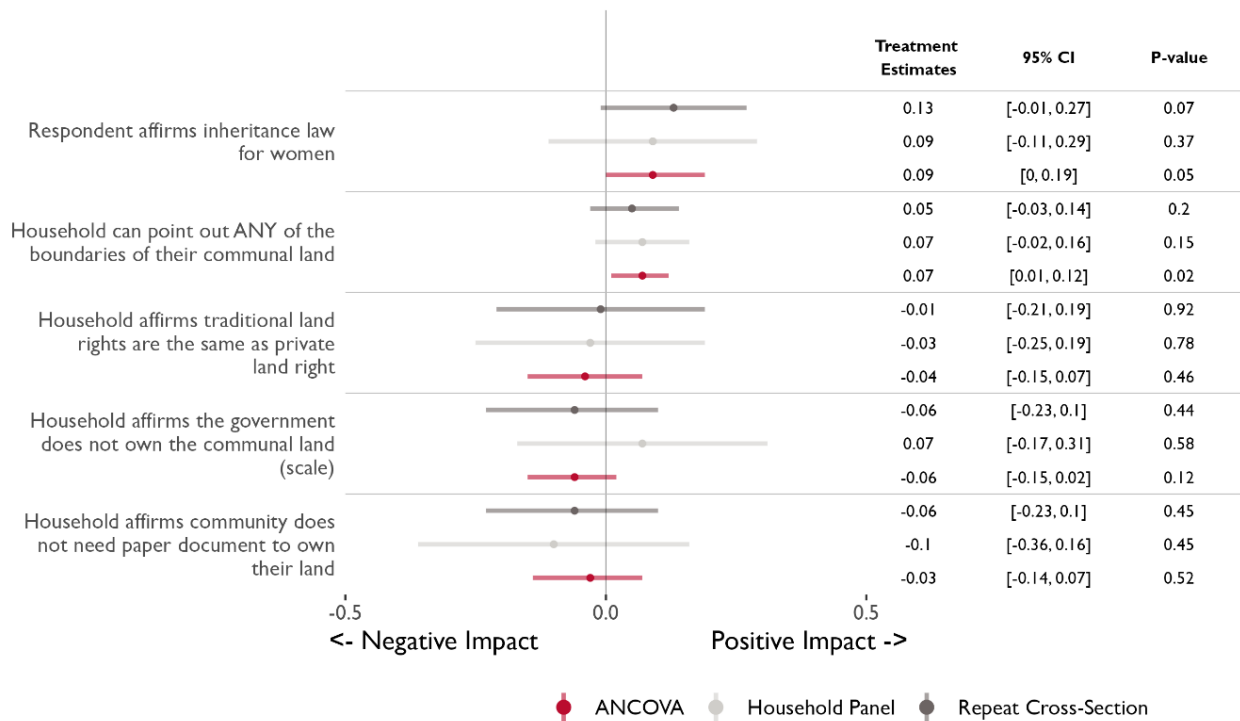
IMPACT ANALYSIS RESULTS

Figure 9 below present the overall impacts of the CLPP interventions on community empowerment indicators at the time of endline data collection in Dec 2022 - Jan 2023. The results for Outcome Family 2 suggest the CLPP activities led to significant improvements in key aspects of community empowerment, including household understanding of women's rights to inherit land under the LRA, and their knowledge of some or all of their community's communal land boundaries. These results provide additional support for CLPP's achievements in strengthening knowledge and awareness of land rights across households within CLPP communities, which in turn was envisioned to lay the foundation for

aspects of land governance, resource use and management and related elements of the overarching theory of change to be achieved. At the same time, the results for this Outcome Family also suggest that certain aspects of household knowledge of communal land rights under the LRA need to be further reinforced to ensure their widespread understanding within communities. Moreover, qualitative findings at endline provide additional context on the extent to which household awareness and knowledge on various land rights issues and responsibilities is also translating to changes in practice, and point to persisting barriers particularly with respect to women’s empowerment and changing norms regarding their land access and meaningful participation in land use and management issues.

IMPACT ESTIMATES CHARTS

Figure 9: Impact Estimates for Community Empowerment



The ANCOVA regression results at endline indicate a positive and statistically significant impact of the program on household knowledge of community land boundaries and recognition of women’s right to inherit land. Specifically, the results show that CLPP led to a 6.5 percentage point increase, on average, in the likelihood a household could identify *some* of the boundaries of their community land ($p=0.019$), an 8.2 percentage point increase in the likelihood a household could identify *all* of their community land boundaries ($p = 0.047$), and a 9.3 percentage point increase in the likelihood a household affirms women’s right to inherit land under prevailing laws. At endline, 81 percent of CLPP households affirmed women’s right to inherit land, compared to 73 percent of comparison households. These results suggest important improvements in household awareness of key land issues and are in the expected direction under the CLPP theory of change.

However, we do not find evidence for a significant effect of the program on households’ knowledge and awareness of other legal indicators, such as on whether communities need a paper document to be

considered the owners of communal land in the community (they do not), whether traditional land rights are seen as the same as private land rights under the law (they are), and household understanding that they, rather than government, are considered the owners of communal land in their community. For most of these indicators, the share of households affirming their knowledge of these aspects of the law was similar across CLPP and comparison group communities at baseline and increased by a similar magnitude at endline. For example, the share of households that affirmed that traditional land rights are the same as private land rights increased by 9 percentage points in the CLPP group (from 43 to 52 percent) and by 14 percentage points among the comparison group (from 41 to 55 percent). Although CLPP sought to strengthen households' understanding of these elements of the law, they also pertain to some fairly complex aspects of the LRA that are not always clearly upheld by regulations under the policy. As a result, households' responses here may also understandably reflect some degree of confusion.

COMPARISON WITH 2016 MIDLINE RESULTS

Despite the mixed impact results above, the endline results provide new evidence for significant impacts of the CLPP activities on aspects of community empowerment that were not seen at 2016 midline. Although the midline did find some anecdotal support for positive changes on these indicators through qualitative data and descriptive statistics, it did not find evidence for a statistically significant impact on community empowerment indicators at that early stage of programming. At endline, this has strengthened to robustly detected impacts on some of these key empowerment elements among CLPP communities, suggesting that the additional years of programming since midline have been important for achieving these gains.

ALIGNMENT OF 2023 ENDLINE RESULTS ACROSS ALTERNATIVE MODELS

Our findings at endline remain consistent across alternate model specifications. For indicators that do not show significant program effects in the core ANCOVA model, the results were comparable. As for the remaining indicators that are significant under our core model approach, the point estimates are similar in magnitude. However, the confidence intervals are generally wider, resulting in the loss of significance for these estimates.

SUPPLEMENTAL EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

The household survey at endline included two survey experiment related to community empowerment issues as designed by the previous evaluation team: an experiment aimed to explore whether support for the 2018 LRA is increased or decreased by focusing on the law's equal rights for women, and whether a discussion of tenure security on communal land modifies perceptions about the LRA. The results at endline on the first experiment suggest that women have a more positive opinion about the LRA when primed on the equal rights implications of the law, relative to men. However, the overall result across the sample is negative and driven by male respondents (in other words, priming respondents on the equal rights aspects of the LRA resulted in a more negative perception of the LRA, but this was driven by male respondents who responded more negatively on this than women). For the

second experiment, results suggested that respondents were more likely to respond positively about the LRA when they were not primed with a discussion about tenure security beforehand.⁸⁰

SUBGROUPS ANALYSIS

The subgroups regression analyses provide additional insights into whether and how CLPP's activities had varying impacts on important subgroups within CLPP communities. The results suggest that *poorest households had greater gains regarding knowledge of women's land inheritance rights* under prevailing laws, an increase of 14.6 percentage points ($p = 0.068$).

In contrast, the subgroups analysis for Outcome Family 2 also suggest that *women and youth-headed households had less positive results regarding two different elements of communal land rights knowledge: their understanding of the equality of traditional and private land rights under the LRA, and that communities do not need a paper document to be considered owners of communal land*. Female respondents had substantially lower awareness on the latter element, a 22.1 percentage point decrease ($p = 0.021$). Households headed by younger individuals exhibited lower levels of knowledge regarding the equality of traditional land rights with private land rights: a 21.9 percentage point decrease ($p = 0.062$).

The results at endline do not find evidence for heterogeneous impacts of the CLPP activities on other subgroups of interest with respect to the set of community empowerment indicators considered.

DISCUSSION

In this section, we draw on qualitative data from endline and additional descriptive data from household and community leader surveys to explore reasons for treatment effects or lack thereof, and the potential pathways or mechanisms by which the CLPP intervention elicited community empowerment impacts.

LEGAL KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF COMMUNAL LAND RIGHTS

The impact results suggest that CLPP did improve household knowledge of some aspects of their communal land rights, though knowledge on several legal aspects appears to have not taken hold by endline. However, it is also possible that several of these somewhat nuanced indicators of legal knowledge, targeted to understanding of certain elements of the LRA, may be less salient for community members or perceived as less relevant with respect to helping empower them to exercise their responsibilities under the LRA. Arguably, the most salient of these indicators is with respect to women's right to land, and here the impact results show positive change as a result of the program.

The qualitative data at endline suggests that many households in CLPP communities felt their knowledge and awareness of their land rights had increased substantially as a result of CLPP activities, even if this is not comprehensively reflected in the impact indicators. The most commonly noted benefits of CLPP's customary land formalization activities by GD participants across the 12 communities in the qualitative sample are listed in rank order in the table below. Obtaining increased knowledge on land issues and an understanding of their land rights was highlighted by GD participants in half of the communities in the

⁸⁰ This result is counter-intuitive. It is possible the intended experiment logic as designed in 2014, while the LRA was in draft form, no longer holds several years after the LRA has been passed and households already have some level of familiarity with it.

qualitative sample, while all of the benefits noted below can be thought of as broadly empowering to communities in the context of CLPP's objectives.

KNOWLEDGE ON COMMUNITY LAND BOUNDARIES

The 2016 midline evaluation noted that a high proportion of households in both CLPP and comparison group communities felt they already had knowledge of some of their community's land boundaries at baseline (86 percent for both groups). However, it is important to note that the customary land formalization process resulted in new or modified boundaries for many CLPP communities due to at least two sets of issues. First, as communities went through the community self-identification process, this resulted in communities or sub-units choosing to consolidate into larger town clusters, with concomitant updates to boundaries. Second, as communities came to agreement with neighboring clans or communities on their mutually agreed on boundaries, regardless of whether they had chosen to consolidate or not, in many cases the harmonization process necessitated substantial compromise over the final boundary, including cases where communities relinquished their claim to areas of land they had considered to be theirs. The qualitative data at endline suggests that the work to harmonize boundaries across communities was often a difficult and protracted process. Thus, the gains at endline on household knowledge of their communal land boundaries is that much more important, given that the program also led to changes in these boundaries over the course of supporting communities to complete the customary land formalization process.

The qualitative data at endline provide strong support for some of the key mechanisms by which the boundary knowledge improvements were achieved. First, GD participants pointed to the participatory and inclusive nature of CLPP's boundary harmonization activities, which helped to ensure that many different members of the community could take part directly or be aware of the process.⁸¹ Second, the role of the CLDMC was also seen as particularly important, as members serve as a resource for community members to share knowledge on newly harmonized boundaries and community members also consider this to be one of the CLDMC's key roles.⁸²

“Even the boundary harmonization or the selection of the boundary, women and all went there to identify the boundary. ... Only old folks were not able to go there, but youths were included, women were included. We all went for the self identification of the boundary area and it was fine for us.” – Male KII respondent, Lofa

“We set up a boundary team that was doing the work. That was comprised with men and women to balance the process. So, the women could not say only the men are talking about land business.” – Male KII, Maryland

Further, in each of the 12 communities, GD and KII participants affirmed that *most community members are generally aware of the harmonized community boundaries even if they had not directly participated in the process*. This further supports household survey data from endline on the same. However, women GD participants from two of the communities said that many women did not know the boundaries.

⁸¹ Discussion in OFI provided strong support for CLPP's achievements in obtaining widespread participation of community members in all aspects of the customary land formalization process, including those pertaining to boundary harmonization. Where related issues were already discussed in OFI, they are not repeated here.

⁸² CLDMC establishment, responsibilities and community perceptions are discussed in OFI and not repeated here.

Although a gendered difference was not detected via the subgroups analysis, the summary statistics at endline indicate a gap in boundary knowledge between female and male respondents. Among female respondents, only 8 percent could identify all of the community boundaries, and 81 percent could identify some. In contrast, male respondents reported a higher level of community boundary knowledge with 32 percent identifying all and 97 percent identifying some.

The gains on boundary knowledge are also important given the challenges associated with boundary harmonization in the Liberian customary land context. The qualitative data at endline makes clear that the work to agree on and harmonize boundaries between communities was seen as the most difficult part of the customary land formalization process. GD participants from 9 of the 12 communities of qualitative data collection described substantial challenges coming to agreement with neighboring communities and harmonizing the boundary between the two communities. Results from endline suggest this process took several years in many communities, often involved protracted and heated disputes, and required communities to make what they viewed as substantial compromises in order to peaceably come to a solution. In at least two communities, participants described giving up land they considered theirs so they could come to an eventual resolution with a neighboring community.

Continued work to resolve boundaries with a neighboring community was still ongoing by the time of endline data collection in at least four communities in the qualitative sample. This could also help to explain the much lower proportion of households that knew all of their community boundary at endline, as well as the decline on this since baseline (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Household Identification of Communal Land Boundaries

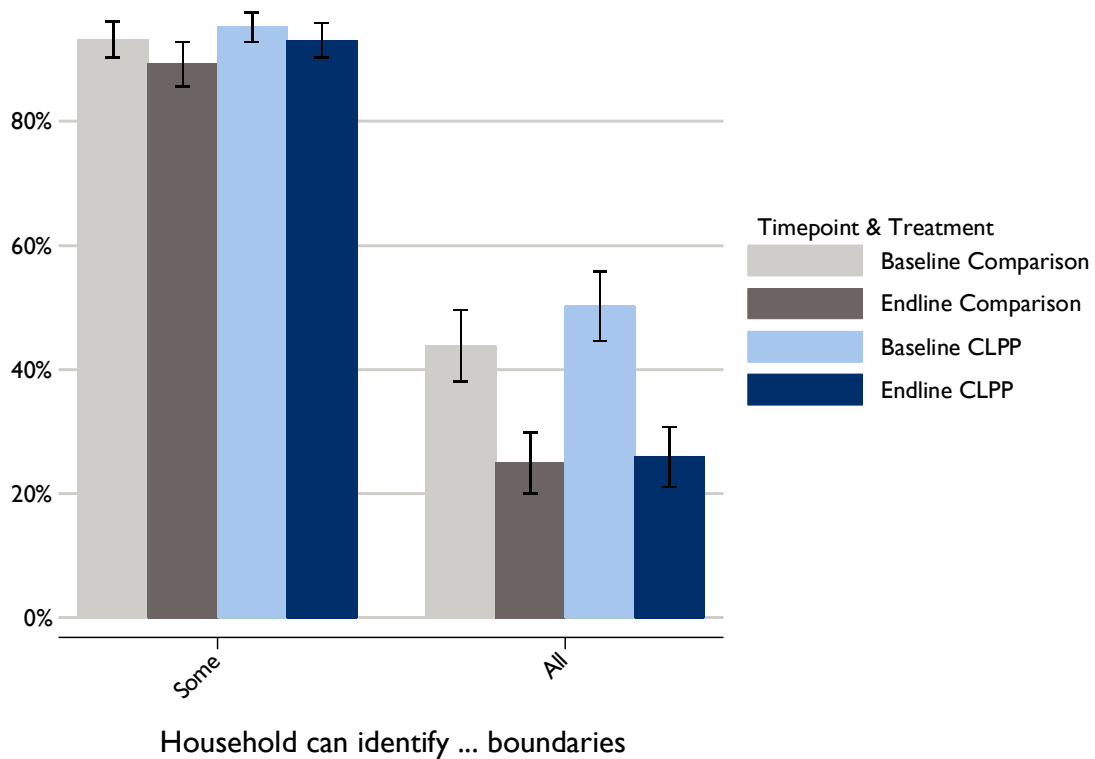


Figure includes the 95% confidence interval of group means.

WOMEN'S LAND CHALLENGES

Following prior reporting for the CLPP evaluation, the endline team maintains a focus on CLPP's effects on the empowerment of vulnerable groups within communities under the community empowerment outcome family. Here, we focus particularly on issues related to women's empowerment, together with than of stranger households within communities.

Despite the positive improvement on household knowledge of women's right to inherit land under the LRA, the qualitative results at endline make clear that *women still face substantial land-related challenges in their communities*, including around obtaining, inheriting, and/or using land. In 10 of 36 GDs or KIIs (2 of 12 men's GDs, 4 of 12 women's GDs, 4 of 12 KIIs; more common in Lofa county, where 7 GDs and KIIs reported challenges), participants said that women in their community continue to face challenges on land-related issues. The nature of challenges described typically stemmed from actions of other family members—particularly male family members including fathers, uncles, brothers, and (less commonly) husbands—towards women seeking to own or inherit land. In GDs, women and men described situations where women still need a male relative's permission to use or inherit land, where a women's own family preferences her brothers to inherit family land under the assumption that her (existing or eventual) husband's family will provide her with land, and where brothers or uncles actively prevent a woman from obtaining a portion of her parents land upon their death. This was particularly evident in communities across Lofa county, although GD participants from communities in Lofa and River Gee described situations where men still often assume a custodial role over women's land affairs.

In some KIIs with community leaders and GDs held with men, participants highlighted that women had been traditionally disenfranchised but no longer face challenges related to land, because communities have changed their mindset on women's land rights after receiving CLPP's trainings and awareness.

“After we went through a series of workshops and training, women are legitimately now getting land [in our community]”. – Male KII participant, River Gee

“In the ancient days, we only used to value the boy child. [Nowadays], women and men have the same rights so whenever your parent owns land and they pass [die], all of you has the right to that land.” – Male GD participant, River Gee

However, participants in several KIIs and GDs plainly stated the nature of challenges that women continue to face, and the disparities were fairly clear by participant gender. While men often perceived that women do not face any land-related challenges, women communicated that men in their families still controlled their access to land. The quotes below summarize contrasting viewpoints by men and women GD participants at endline.

“The challenges [women face] are not much because as per tradition, women know that if they want to use land they must consult men. ... When it comes to farming, as long as [the women] are family, there are no challenges. Women [just] need to get the permission from the man who is in that environment.” – Male GD participant, Lofa

“When your mother dies and your father dies, you can face a problem [from your brother] before you get that land.” – Female GD participant, Lofa

“In this community they say women can't get land, even if it is your father's land. ... [Let's say] your father has a big garden, but once your father has a brother, that land will

“They [women] can catch a hard time, I don’t want lie. The family land now [is the issue]. ... Before the women can go to make a farm [on that land], they have to ask the brothers. When they do not agree, the women will not be able to make a farm there. That’s what we can do here.” – Male KII participant, Lofa

be for your father’s brother [if he dies]. It will not be for you.” – Female GD participant, Lofa

“Sometimes if you have your brother ... [the brother] will say ‘go and look for your [husband] and work on your [husband’s] land, you don’t have a right to work here because you’re a woman’. So these are some of the problems we can face.” – Female GD participant, Lofa

Despite ongoing evidence of women’s disenfranchisement from land at endline, there was also widespread agreement in the qualitative data that customary land formalization activities in CLPP communities had helped to reduce some of the land challenges that women face. Participants felt that communities are more knowledgeable and conscious of women’s land rights (mentioned in 25 of 36 GDs or KIIs conducted at endline; 11 KIIs, 9 men’s GDs, 5 women’s GDs), including their inheritance rights, even if it seems clear that communities still do not always uphold those rights. Male participants were much less likely to report challenges for women in qualitative KIIs and GDs. Women reported their overall awareness of their land rights had improved, but this had not always translated to substantial changes to their land access or lives in practice. Still some respondents indicated that entrenched norms are changing at least to some extent.

“It’s not all the quarters, and it is not everybody [who is denying women rights to land]. [Some] people do it, but other people do not do it. By right if you have a sister, and she is not yet married, she is entitled to some of their father’s properties.” – Male KII participant, Lofa

Community leaders surveyed at endline also reported positive changes with respect to women’s land rights and empowerment in the three years prior to survey. Seventy percent (N=35) of leaders surveyed said that women in their community had received new rights to obtain and use land in the past three years. The majority of leaders surveyed also reported that women speak up more at meetings and taken part in community discussions compared to three years ago (72 percent and N=36 for each, with no significant differences between CLPP and comparison group leaders). There is some indication from the leader survey that it is becoming more common for women to hold leadership positions within their community. At endline, 92 percent of the community leaders surveyed (N=46) said this had been the case in their community, with the majority (72 percent) indicating at least 1-3 women in such positions.

GENDERED DECISION-MAKING ABOUT LAND

Slow progress on changing gender norms regarding women’s land rights appeared to be particularly salient in Lofa, where women reported enduring challenges in each of the communities of qualitative data collection and did not mention any substantial changes to their capacity to exercise their land rights as a result of CLPP’s activities. In communities in River Gee and Maryland, women’s participation in household and land-related decisions was more evident among GD participants. Women and men GD participants perceived this to have improved over the past five years during customary land formalization programming in their communities and directly as a result of CLPP awareness raising and trainings. The impression is that women have greater knowledge of their right to inherit land and be consulted on land issues, are now somewhat more involved in land-related decisions in their

communities, and may face fewer challenges exercising their right to inherit land from their families or seeking permission from male relatives to establish a farm on family land.

“We used to have the notion that women have no right to land, but SDI came and educated us, and so we now know that women have rights over land”. – Male GD participant, River Gee

“Since this program [CLPP] came, it has changed things. [Now], some women can get their own farm, like palm, get an area [of land] to make their own garden. And it never used to be that way before this program came.” – Male KII participant, Lofa

“It [CLPP] helped, because some men [used to say] ‘no, [only] that boy child will do this thing here. ... But now, women too are also involved.” – Female GD participant, Maryland

“About the land business, SDI brought plenty of things that changed our lives.” – Female GD participant, Maryland

Qualitative participants overwhelmingly expressed that *decision-making about using land* (typically farmland) is primarily shared by husband and wife, although men still typically take the lead in making decisions about the household’s land activities in general. Women from communities in River Gee and Maryland more commonly reported that these decisions are shared responsibilities within their households. Though CLPP brought an increased awareness to women’s land rights and reduced some challenges that they face, women reported they are often consulted and included in the decision process, but generally do not the lead on household land decisions unless they own the own land.

IMPROVEMENTS AS A RESULT OF CUSTOMARY LAND FORMALIZATION

Women from eight of the 12 communities of qualitative data collection felt that customary land formalization activities had led to some positive improvements to their situation. Across the 12 women’s GDs conducted at endline, participants reported that the most significant positive outcome of the customary land formalization activities for them was an increased awareness of their land rights through SDI trainings, and subsequent feelings of empowerment due to their greater ability to make their own farms and obtain some income from their farming. In two of the GDs (1 in River Gee and 1 in Maryland), women reported feeling more secure in their land rights as a result of CLPP’s boundary mapping activities.

“When SDI came, they made us to understand that we girl children, we have [rights] over the land.” – Female GD participant, River Gee

“It [CLPP] made us to be advanced, we women. Because [before], we didn’t have ideas about [those land issues]. [Now] at this present moment, men can’t just use us like tools.” – Female GD participant, Lofa

“In the past, women never had rights to own land here. But now, even if you want a piece of land like a house spot, they will give it to you. You want land for farming, they will give it to you.” – Female KII respondent, Lofa

In 1 GD in Lofa, respondents noted that within their community, they perceived a small change in overall awareness of land rights, but they had yet to experience tangible benefits of this shift in community attitudes in ways that made them feel more secure about their land situation. No participants from any of the GDs or KIIs conducted at endline stated that CLPP's activities and the customary land formalization process had led to negative effects on women.

LAND CHALLENGES FOR OUTSIDERS AND IMPROVEMENTS FROM CUSTOMARY LAND FORMALIZATION

The qualitative data collection at endline also sought to understand the types of land challenges that strangers (people not originally from the community) may face in CLPP communities, and whether CLPP's activities and the customary land formalization process helped to resolve these challenges. The issue of strangers facing land challenges was mentioned in 10 of the 36 GDs or KIIs held. In nearly all of these discussions respondents mentioned that strangers will only experience difficulties if they do not follow the town's protocols or do not have the townspeople vouching for them. These protocols varied somewhat within each town and there also appeared to be some differences across counties in how strangers become integrated into communities. In general, the *qualitative data at endline suggest that CLPP's customary land formalization activities helped to reduce barriers that strangers may face to enter a community, clarified the process they should go through to obtain permissions within a community to conduct various activities, and led to greater inclusivity of strangers or their integration into communities.*

In River Gee, only 2 groups (1 KII, 1 men's GD) mentioned challenges for strangers in their communities. Strangers need elders' permission to engage in any land activities, must have met with the town people as a whole, and the community will fine people who are conducting activities in the community without the proper approval. Strangers coming into the community to live must ask permission of the community first. The customary land formalization process facilitated opportunities for strangers to have their own land and stronger land rights within communities.

“Strangers used to face challenges ... but now because of this SDI boundary business, now nobody can face challenges. If you enter [our community] and you want to build a house, you will link with the family you want to lodge with, and the family can give you the go ahead.” – Male GD participant, River Gee

In Maryland, 3 groups (2 KIIs, 1 men's GD) mentioned that strangers face complications if they have not been part of the community for an extended period (usually at least 1 year). Until they are considered citizens of the community and have host families and townspeople to facilitate their integration into the community, strangers previously were not able to own land or conduct independent land activities in these communities. The customary land formalization activities eased this process, as long as strangers follow the town's protocols and demonstrate respect towards the community.

“In the past, strangers didn't have rights here. We used to deprive them from owning rights over our land. ... But SDI made us say 'no, once the person is a Liberian, once you love the place and decide to live here, you make him or her the same way you treat the citizens born here. ... so for now we are doing total inclusion. If the person wants to come live with us here, we give you the right, the same as we get [ourselves].” – Male KII participant, Maryland

In Lofa, participants from 5 GDs (2 F, 3 M) mentioned that at least some community members still have reservations about integrating strangers into their communities. Strangers are not allowed to own land

in these communities, and they need to have approvals through the proper channels (typically the town chief), similar to Maryland and River Gee. One GD mentioned that there are men who will come to the community to work on land, typically owned by women, but they are not considered citizens nor do they have the capacity to own land in the community. Another group highlighted that respect is a strong prerequisite to becoming part of the community.

INVESTOR PRESENCE, COMMUNITY CAPACITY TO NEGOTIATE, AND BENEFITS FROM INVESTOR ACTIVITY

Prior reporting at midline included a focus on households' perceived capacity to negotiate with outside investors regarding communal land use as part of the community empowerment outcome family. However, the 2016 midline evaluation noted that the presence of outside investors was uncommon in CLPP communities at that time, with only around 9 percent of communities (4 clans, all in Lofa county) reporting an investor at baseline or midline and all of these were comparison group communities.⁸³ By endline, this had increased to 23 percent of communities (6 treatment clusters and 10 comparison clusters). Investor presence was also mentioned in 6 of the 12 CLPP communities in the qualitative sample at endline.⁸⁴

The endline IE team discusses these issues as part of Outcome Family 5, which focuses on communal land development and natural resource conditions. We also downgrade the emphasis on individual households' capacity to negotiate, focusing instead on community capacity to engage with investors and obtain benefits from investor activity. This is because, although the customary land formalization process emphasizes transparency and inclusive decision-making across community members with respect to their knowledge of and inputs into investor decisions, the CLDMC is typically charged with carrying out these negotiation discussions on behalf of the community (also corroborated through qualitative data at endline).

⁸³ Keeping in mind the midline sample was a subset of communities sampled at baseline and endline.

⁸⁴ It is possible many of these were smaller scale 'investors' or groups of artisanal resource extractors who negotiate to operate on community lands without the activity necessarily being captured by national reporting related to natural resource concessions operating in Liberia.

OUTCOME FAMILY III: TENURE SECURITY

CLPP's activities were strongly focused on strengthening community knowledge, empowerment and governance systems to support communal land and resource management in communities in accordance with the LLA. The activity's overarching theory of change anticipates that achievements in those domains will also lead to improvements in tenure security over land households use in CLPP communities, and for communal land in the community in general.

This outcome family focuses on results related to changes in household perceptions of their land tenure security as a result of the CLPP activities for different types of communal land, including town land, farmland, and forestland, as well as perceived changes to household rights over individually managed farmland. It also examines households' perceived risk of encroachment onto communal land in their community by various internal and external actors within the community (neighboring households, neighboring clans, elites, investors, and government officials).

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- Results at endline do not find evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on the indicators of tenure security that were assessed. This includes measures of households' perceived risk of losing land to different internal and external actors, and their perceived rights to household farmland. Cross-sectional analyses at endline also find no evidence for a change in households' perceived tenure security over communal farmland, forestland or townland.
- Subgroups analysis suggests that CLPP led to improvements for minority-headed households with respect to tenure security and their perceived rights to farmland, including the right to decide who inherits farmland, plant rubber trees and an overall bundle of rights index.
- Contrary to the impact results, qualitative findings provide strong support for CLPP's role in helping community members feel more secure about their communal land. Participants especially cited knowledge they gained from trainings about their legal land rights, and the role of boundary harmonization in reducing their concerns over future land disputes as key mechanisms for their improved tenure security. There is also descriptive and qualitative evidence that household concerns at midline about land expropriation by investors or elites have dissipated at endline.
- Reasons for the lack of tenure security impacts could include that households remain concerned about unresolved boundary disputes with a neighboring community or obtaining the community deed from LLA, or that comparison group households similar improved on this due to widespread communication of community rights under the LRA. It is also possible that CLPP's focus on communal rights and management of farmland, forestland and townland may have left community members less sure of their security over farmland they use individually, absent mapping and documentation efforts specifically for that land.

IMPACT ANALYSIS RESULTS

Figures 11-12 below present the overall impacts of the CLPP interventions on tenure security at endline. The results suggest that CLPP did not have statistically significant impacts on household tenure security via the indicators measured, including households' perceived likelihood of land expropriation from various sources or for different types of land (household farmland, communal farmland, townland, or forestland). The results also suggest that CLPP has not significantly impacted households' understanding of their rights to farmland the household has customarily used in their community. For many indicators in this outcome family, endline summary statistics suggest a similar magnitude and direction of change for households in CLPP and comparison communities since baseline.

IMPACT ESTIMATES CHARTS

Figure I I: Impact Results for Measures of Expropriation Risk

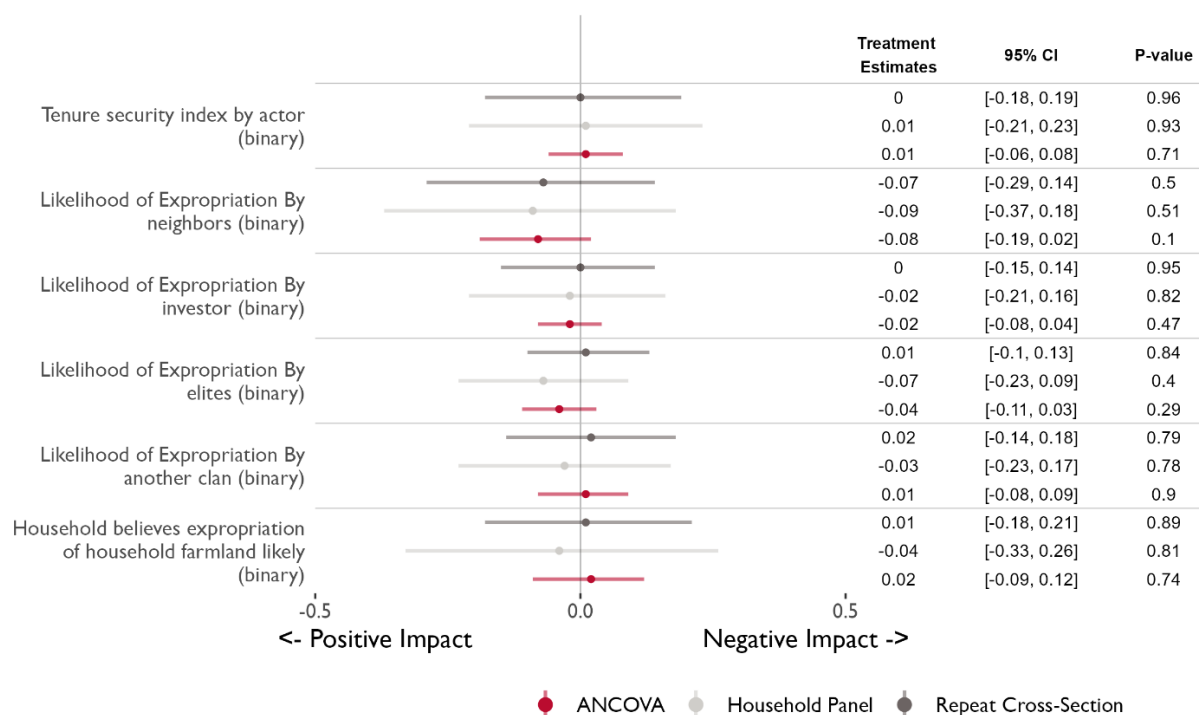
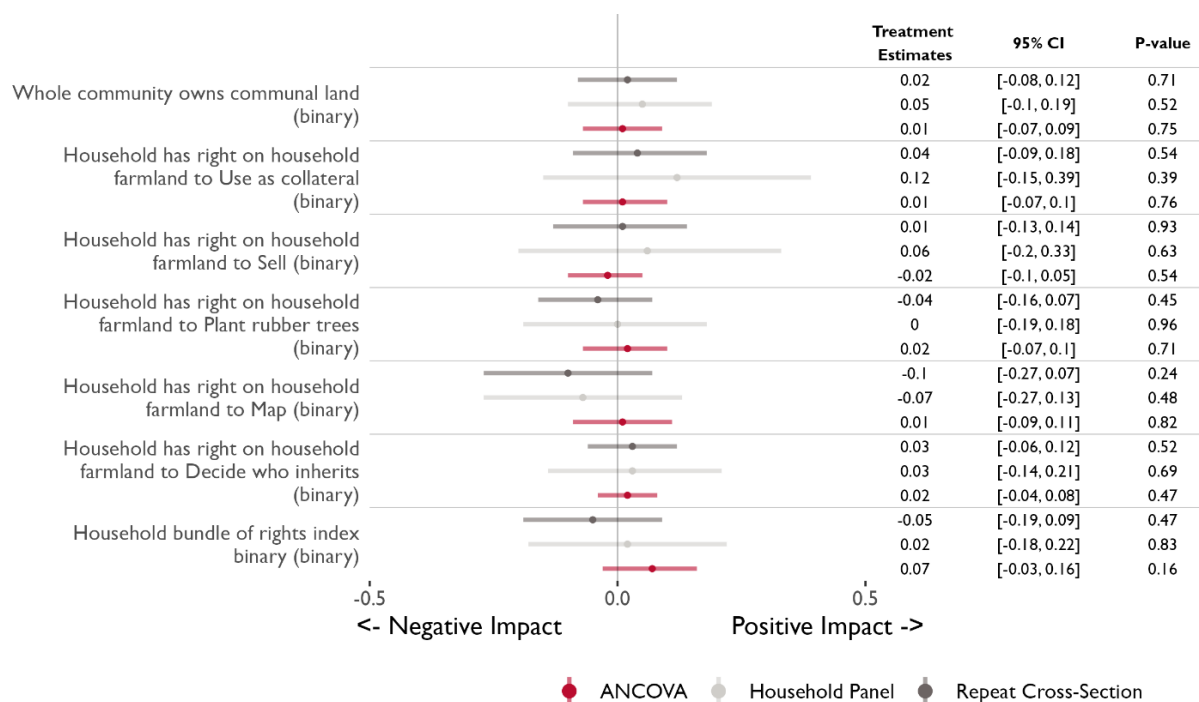


Figure I2: Impact Results for Measures of Perceived Land Rights



The ANCOVA regression results at endline suggest no statistically significant impacts for CLPP on indicators of tenure security that measure households' perceived risk of losing land to various actors, or perceptions of their rights to household farmland.⁸⁵

NONSIGNIFICANT INDICATORS

The endline results suggest the CLPP had no effect on the perceived likelihood of expropriation of household farmland by elites, investors, neighbors, or other clans, nor on the overall tenure insecurity index measuring perceptions of the likelihood of expropriation by any of these actors. Between baseline and endline, households' perceptions of the likelihood of expropriation of household land by all actors declined,⁸⁶ but the magnitude of these declines was similar across both CLPP and comparison communities. For example, at baseline 36 percent of households in CLPP communities and 43 percent of households in comparison communities were below the overall sample mean on the tenure security index measuring the likelihood of expropriation of household farmland by any actor, while at endline just 16 percent of households in CLPP and 17 percent of those in comparison communities were below the index mean. The impact estimates from the ANCOVA model for the effect on the perceived likelihood of expropriation by different groups is inconsistent in direction, and consistently close to zero and statistically insignificant. Therefore, we do not find any statistically significant differences between CLPP and comparison group in terms of the perceived likelihood of expropriation of household farmland by different actors.

Similarly, the results suggest CLPP did not have an impact on an index of a bundle of land rights, nor on any of the index components. The bundle of land rights index includes whether the household perceives they have the right to map the farmland their household customarily uses in the community, plant rubber trees on it, use the farmland as collateral, decide who inherits the farmland, or sell the farmland. As seen for households' perceptions of different expropriation scenarios, the impact estimates for the ANCOVA model for the effect of CLPP on the components of the bundle of land rights index are inconsistent in direction, consistently close to zero, and statistically insignificant.⁸⁷

The results also show no effect for CLPP with respect to household views on whether the community owns communal land. At endline, 81.9 percent of households in comparison and 78.4 percent of those in CLPP communities agreed the whole community owns communal land, a difference that was not statistically significant.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ This includes whether the household perceives they have the right to map the farmland their household customarily uses in the community, plant rubber trees on it, use the farmland as collateral, decide who inherits the farmland, or sell the farmland.

⁸⁶ A decline on these indicators indicates a reduction in tenure *insecurity*, hence is a positive result in the intended direction.

⁸⁷ The impact analysis for the bundle of rights indicators is run on a smaller set of observations than the full sample, because the survey questions on which they are based are only asked if respondents answered yes to a previous question about whether people have farmland in their community that is not for communal use. Although 99 percent of respondents answered yes to this filter question at midline, only 67 percent did so at endline (which itself might suggest that households at endline are less sure about distinctions between communal land and household land in the community, and the extent of their rights to land they have used traditionally for their own farming as communities formalize their communal customary land rights. The midline indicator construction automatically recoded such observations to 'No' for the bundle of rights questions. The endline IE team chose instead to drop these observations to avoid artificially inflating the negative responses and ensure the impact analysis is only run on observations where households were asked the questions on which the measures are derived.

⁸⁸ This indicator was affected by an apparent change to survey logic at midline which expanded the number of response choices that respondents could select from two at baseline (so that respondents focus on the most important or certain choices) to any at midline. This programming change results in a large increase in the number of respondents in subsequent survey rounds who select several of the response options provided and confounds efforts to measure change from baseline.

COMPARISON WITH 2016 MIDLINE RESULTS

The 2016 midline results on tenure security were mixed and generally inconclusive. Overall, the endline impact results align with findings from the midline on the lack of evidence to support a hypothesis that CLPP led to improved tenure security for households regarding their household farmland. The midline analysis also found that CLPP led to an increase in household's perceived risk of land expropriation by neighbors or another clan, however these results are not supported at endline.

At endline, there is no evidence that CLPP led to a change in household's perceived likelihood of land expropriation by any actor. Similarly, there was no evidence at endline for impacts of CLPP on households' perception of government or a landlord as the owner of communal land in their community.⁸⁹ The endline results also align with the quantitative findings from the midline impact analysis, suggesting CLPP did not significantly impact households' perceptions of their rights to farmland they use in their community.

ALIGNMENT OF 2023 ENDLINE RESULTS ACROSS ALTERNATIVE MODELS

The findings at endline are consistent across alternate model specifications. The household panel and repeat cross-section models align in showing a null effect for CLPP on all tenure security indicators. The estimates obtained from these alternate models, like the ANCOVA model, are consistently small in magnitude, inconsistent in direction, and lack statistical significance.

SUBGROUPS ANALYSIS

The subgroups regression analyses provide additional insights into how CLPP's activities may have affected the tenure security of important subgroups within communities differently. The results provide suggestive evidence that *minority households experienced improvements in their perceived rights to farmland and a reduction in tenure insecurity over the same*.

The positive impacts seen for minority households are seen for households' right to decide who inherits farmland and right to plant rubber trees, and the likelihood that a household is above the sample mean on the bundle of rights index. For the right to decide who inherits farmland, the impact for minority households is a 19.9 percentage point increase ($p = 0.007$). In other words, minority households in CLPP communities saw a 19.9 percentage point increase in the likelihood they perceive the right to decide who inherits their farmland, relative to the trend for minority households in comparison communities. A similar situation is seen for the right to plant rubber trees (19.3 percentage point increase, $p = 0.023$), and for the likelihood the household is above the sample mean on the bundle of rights index (23.9 percentage point increase, $p = 0.013$). Minority households also experienced a decline in their perception that expropriation by any actor is likely (-21.7 percentage points, $p = 0.096$), which is a positive impact indicating increased tenure security.

⁸⁹ The midline findings suggested that households in CLPP communities were more likely to report either of these entities as the owners of communal land in their community.

There is little evidence for heterogenous treatment effects of CLPP on other subgroups of interest with respect to indicators of tenure security. Subgroup estimates for women, poor households, and youth-headed households are small, inconsistent in direction, and generally lack statistical significance.

DISCUSSION

We draw on summary descriptive statistics and qualitative data from endline to expand on the tenure security findings, and particularly focus on potential reasons for the lack of tenure security impacts and impacts on households' perceived rights to farmland they have customarily used within their communities.

CLPP'S ROLE IN STRENGTHENING PERCEIVED TENURE SECURITY

Contrary to the impact results, the qualitative data at endline strongly suggest that many households in CLPP communities feel more secure about their communal land as a result of CLPP's customary land formalization activities. In nearly all qualitative GDs and KIIs conducted, participants spoke of the knowledge they had gained about their legally recognized customary land rights and role as owners and managers of their community's communal land through trainings that SDI provided. Participants further linked the knowledge they obtained from SDI trainings to having stronger tenure security around their land, together with the role that boundary harmonization had played in reducing their concerns over inter-community land disputes.

"I am satisfied. And the knowledge I got about land issues now, first of all there was no boundary [before], but since SDI came they gave boundaries for each town to each town. So now, we're satisfied."
Male GD participant, River Gee

"SDI came and they brush up everybody's brain that the land we are sitting on is for ourselves. Anybody who come here to do anything [on our land] needs to ask permission. Not like before. Before, somebody will come in the forest to do any other thing..." – Male KII participant, River Gee

"The reason why we get a good feeling [feel more secure about our land] is because now we know the law." – Male KII participant, River Gee

"We never knew our rights, and because of this program, [now] we know some of our rights." – Male KII respondent, Lofa

Qualitative participants expressed that CLPP's customary land formalization activities had helped them feel more confident about their land, primarily by reducing the likelihood of potential future conflicts with neighboring communities, but also by reducing the threat of land expropriation by elites or those who are more powerful. Participants described situations where powerful outsiders and wealthier individuals could obtain land through payoffs or bribes, and felt this could not happen now.

"I get a good feeling, because right now ... nobody can come now just because you have good government position, then you want to take my land. No. [Now] I know my land and I know the right to my land." – Male KII respondent, River Gee

“Nobody can just come [illegally] to take the land by having money or using money influence.” – Male KII respondent, River Gee

“The good feeling I have now is because before, the money people used to sit down there and just settle with government [about land in the community, without you knowing]. Before you look, you the poor man, the place your father has been living, they will come and say ‘my man we have bought that one’ [and you must leave that land].” – Male KII respondent, Maryland

REASONS FOR TENURE INSECURITY

Although most GD and KII participants across the 12 CLPP communities in the qualitative sample expressed stronger tenure security as a result of CLPP’s activities, some participants expressed ongoing elements of tenure insecurity. The most common reasons cited were unresolved boundary disputes with a neighboring community, and that communities still have not obtained the deed to their communal land from LLA. Some GD and KII participants said that until they have the deed, they worried that powerful elites from Monrovia or elsewhere could still unlawfully take land in their community. Other participants expressed similar fears, which they attributed to their lack of a document for land they use individually within the community.

“We are asking SDI along with government to come in because the process started, but we are still waiting. The [people from neighboring community] continue to come in, they are encroaching...” – Male GD respondent, Maryland

“We only know our boundary, [but] we don’t have the paper [deed]...That’s the problem.” – male GD respondent, River Gee

“The biggest challenges we are facing now is we want to get our deed for our land.” – Male GD respondent, Maryland

“The land [still] has to be surveyed. Then we will be protected.” – Male KII respondent, Maryland

“Sometimes men can come from Monrovia, with heavy money. I’m here, I don’t have money. The man can look at my [land] [bribe someone] and ... take all my [land]. My land is not surveyed, and they said the man who has power will be able to do this.” – Male KII respondent, Lofa

SECURITY OF HOUSEHOLD FARMLAND VS COMMUNAL FARMLAND, FORESTLAND AND TOWNLAND

The CLPP activities focused on communal land governance and did not map and register households’ individual farmland or residential “house spots” within communities. Thus, it might be expected that households would be less likely to express a substantial increase in their tenure security over those lands as a result of the customary land formalization activities. However, the tenure security impact indicators focus primarily on households’ perceived risk of losing rights to household farmland, which may contribute to the lack of significant impacts on those measures.

The household survey at endline also asked households about their perceived expropriation risk for different types of communal land within their communities, including communal forestland, communal farmland, and townland. No baseline data are available for these, so the results are analyzed using a

cross-sectional approach. Similar to midline, the cross-sectional results at endline suggest that CLPP's activities also had little effect on households' perceived tenure security over these different types of communal land.⁹⁰

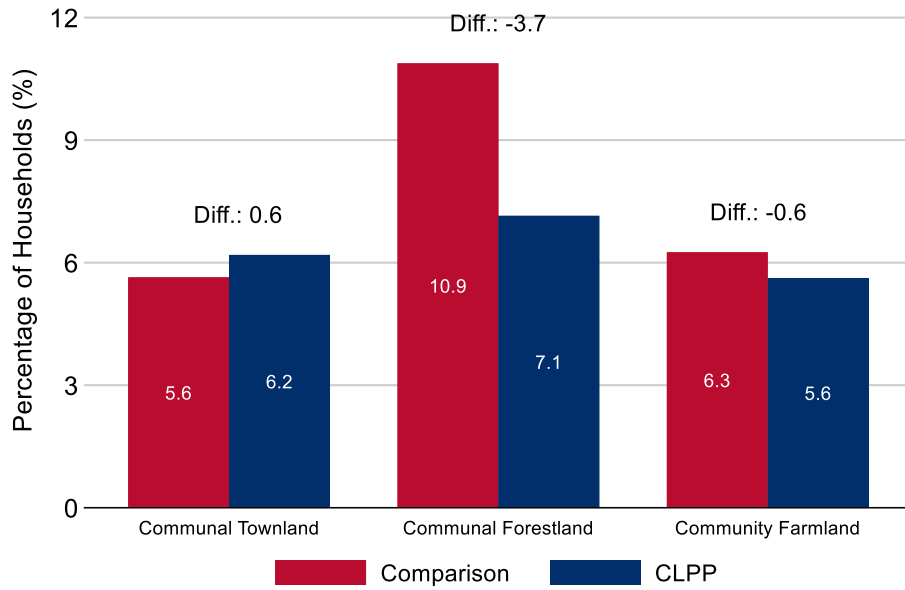
Figure 13 shows the proportion of households at endline across CLPP and comparison communities that perceived expropriation to be likely, for communal farmland, forestland and townland. Similar to midline, at endline there are no statistically significant differences between CLPP and comparison communities. The proportion of households that perceived expropriation to be likely was also lower at endline than at midline for all three types of communal land, although the two samples are not directly comparable.⁹¹

Although there was no evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on household perception of expropriation risk by various actors, Figure 14 shows there were large declines from baseline to endline in the proportion of households that believed they could lose their land to neighboring households or clans. The figure shows large statistically significant declines between baseline and endline in the share of both CLPP and comparison households who believe that expropriation by either neighboring households or clans was likely. There was also a small decline in the share of CLPP and comparison households who believe they could lose land to investors, but the difference was not statistically significant. In contrast, there was a small increase in the share of CLPP and comparison households who believed they could lose land to elites, but the difference also was not significant. On net, Figure 14 shows that CLPP and comparison households had similar patterns of mostly positive change over time on perceived expropriation risk by key actors within and outside the community. The trends suggest a general improvement in households' perceived tenure security over time that cannot be attributed with confidence to CLPP.

⁹⁰ The 2016 midline found some evidence for an increase to households' perceived risk of encroachment on communal land by neighboring households and neighboring clans. However, it did not find evidence for a difference in the perceived risk of expropriation across CLPP and comparison communities at midline for any of these three different types of communal land (based on midline cross-sectional data only, as the baseline survey did not include coverage on this).

⁹¹ The midline sample is a subset of communities surveyed at baseline and endline, hence not directly comparable.

Figure 13: Household Believes Expropriation is Likely, by Type of Communal Land



Note: * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01
Statistical significance test of the difference accounts for clustered standard errors.

Figure 14: Household Believes Expropriation is Likely, by Actor

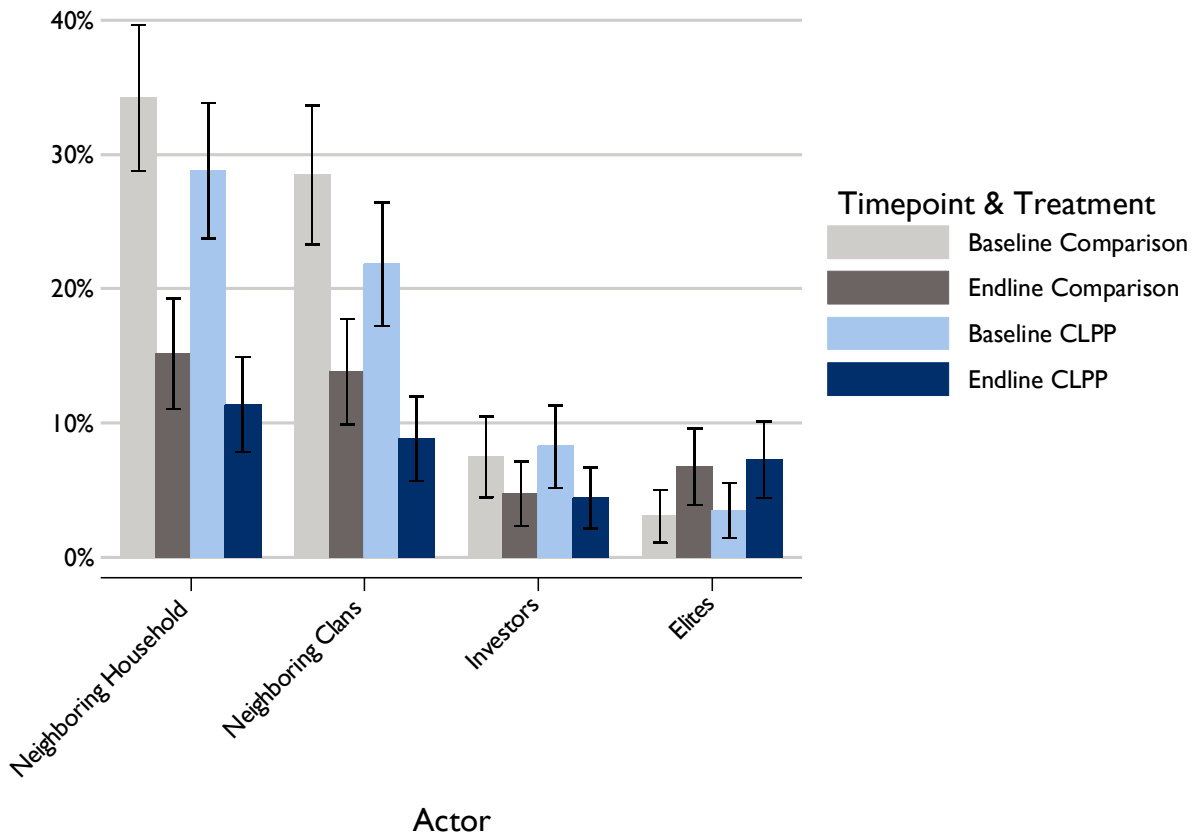


Figure includes the 95% confidence interval generated from by group means.

Two additional contributors to the null tenure security results at endline could stem from the fact that several CLPP communities still had an unresolved boundary dispute with a neighboring community at the time of endline, despite a yearslong effort by implementing partners to support communities to come to agreement on this, and that no community had yet received their confirmatory survey and community deed from LLA (although they had received a land certificate from LLA through the program⁹²). Participants in 20 of the 36 GDs and KIIs highlighted one of these two issues as the most important land-related issue in their community that still needs to be addressed and linked this to obtaining stronger security over their land.

In Maryland, participants from 7 of the 12 GDs and KIIs conducted (2 KIIs, 4 men's GD, 1 women's GD) highlighted ongoing boundary disputes with neighboring communities, including specific cases of land encroachment by communities from a neighboring county (River Gee). In Lofa, 3 groups mentioned concerns over ongoing land conflicts due to unresolved boundary issues (2 men's GD's and 1 KII), and 4 groups (2 men's GDs and 2 KIIs) mentioned they would like to have the community deed from LLA to feel more secure over their communal land rights. In River Gee, 3 groups (1 women's GD, 1 men's GD and 1 KII) mentioned unresolved boundaries or related land conflicts and 3 other groups (2 men's GDs, 1 women's GD) mentioned their desire to have the community deed from LLA to feel more secure over their land.

The quotes below illustrate participant views that the land certificate they received from LLA through the program is not perceived to be as secure as the deed they still hope to eventually receive from LLA:

“Even though LLA gave us a land certificate, that is not a deed. And so, we would like to possess the deed for [our community land], so that we have a stronger guarantee.” – KII respondent, River Gee

“We want help in this process to make sure that we get our deed from LLA. ... Because if the deed is in our hand, we feel that nobody will play on our rights.” – KII respondent, Maryland

⁹² ILRG worked to obtain these certificates while communities await the deed from LLA. Since LLA had not issued a deed to any community in Liberia that has completed customary land formalization, communities' concerns on this may be well-placed.

OUTCOME FAMILY IV: LAND CONFLICT

This outcome family focuses on the effects of CLPP and related customary land formalization activities on indicators of the incidence and severity of land conflicts and household satisfaction with dispute resolution processes for land and natural resource conflicts within communities. Over the shorter term, the theory of change for customary land formalization programs may anticipate an increase in land conflicts as a result of boundary harmonization and related activities. Over the longer term, the formalization process is expected to lead to fewer land conflicts within communities and with neighboring communities as a result of participatory agreement on boundaries and confirmation of land rights within communities. It is also expected to lead to reduced severity of conflicts and greater satisfaction with the dispute resolution process as households and communities are able to work through locally established land governance institutions set up in their communities to mediate and resolve disputes and consisting of elected and trained members of their community (the CLDMC).

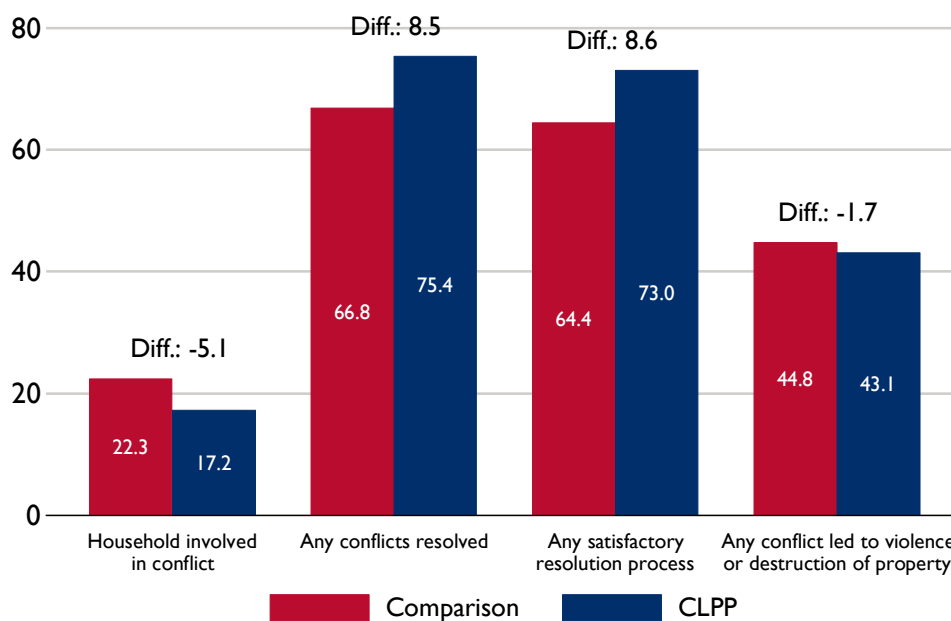
SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- Similar to midline, results at endline do not find evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on the prevalence or severity of land conflict, or households' perceived satisfaction with land conflict resolution. At endline, 19 percent of households (N=221) reported experiencing a land conflict in the previous year, and the share was similar across CLPP and comparison communities. There is lower power to detect effects on conflict severity and household satisfaction with conflict resolution due to the low prevalence of conflicts in the sample.
- Contrary to the impact results, qualitative findings at endline strongly suggest that households perceive CLPP led to fewer land disputes and a reduced likelihood of future land conflicts. CLPP's boundary harmonization process and the establishment and functioning of the CLDMC were seen as the key mechanisms for this. However, unresolved boundary disputes between neighboring communities along some portion of their boundary was an ongoing source of conflict in several CLPP communities.

IMPACT ANALYSIS RESULTS

Figure 15 below presents impacts of the CLPP interventions on measures of land conflict, based on cross-sectional data from endline only. The results suggest that CLPP did not have a significant effect on the prevalence, severity or perceived satisfaction with land conflict resolution. However, the impact analysis is constrained by the lack of baseline data on these indicators. The descriptive summary statistics suggest a substantial decline in the prevalence of land disputes since midline among households in CLPP treatment and comparison group communities alike. Moreover, the qualitative data at endline strongly suggest that many households in CLPP communities perceive the program's activities to have reduced the likelihood of future land disputes, particularly with neighboring communities, while it is also clear that ongoing inability to come to agreement with a neighboring community over a portion of the community's land boundary is a continued source of conflict in several CLPP communities (see discussion section at chapter end).

Figure 15: Land Conflict Impact Results



Note: * p < 0.1, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01
 Statistical significance test of the difference accounts for clustered standard errors.
 The sample for any conflicts resolved, any satisfactory resolution process, and any conflict led to violence includes only households who reported conflict in the past 12 months.

Consistent with prior reporting rounds for the CLPP IE, we assess CLPP’s effect on indicators of land conflict using the cross-sectional data from endline only, since data for these indicators were not collected at baseline. The results are therefore based on a model that compares the mean values for households in treatment and comparison communities at endline, controlling for basic household and community-level traits. Given the quasi-experimental IE design, in which the treatment status of communities in the CLPP IE sample was not assigned via a truly randomized process, results can provide evidence suggestive of impacts for CLPP but the findings cannot be attributed solely to CLPP’s activities.⁹³

The results at endline show no statistically significant differences between households in CLPP and comparison communities at endline. Figure 15 shows the sample means for Land Conflict outcome indicators across the CLPP and comparison groups at endline. This includes the share of respondents that reported their household was involved in a land conflict over the 12 months prior to survey, and among those who did report a conflict (N=221 households), the share who reported that any conflict had been resolved, satisfaction with the resolution process, and whether the conflict led to any violence or destruction of property.

Estimates for the difference between the CLPP and comparison group were consistently close to zero and statistically insignificant. For example, the estimates suggest households in treatment communities

⁹³ This is because the analytic approach for this set of indicators cannot fully account for the effects of potential confounders, if present, and so the results cannot be interpreted as measures of a causal effect of CLPP.

were 5.1 percentage points less likely to have been involved in a land conflict ($p=0.247$). Among the 221 households who reported experiencing any conflict, those in CLPP communities were 8.5 percentage points more likely to report that any conflict had been resolved ($p=0.357$), 8.6 percentage points more likely to report being satisfied with the resolution process ($p=0.373$), and 1.7 percentage points less likely to report that any conflict had led to violence or property destruction ($p=0.835$). On the other hand, conflict-involved households in CLPP communities rated the severity of those conflicts slightly higher on a scale of 1 to 10 (3.4 in CLPP versus 2.8 in comparison communities, $p=0.257$). The lack of consistency in the direction of these results, combined with the small size of the differences and statistical insignificance, suggests that CLPP and comparison communities had no meaningful differences in these outcome indicators at endline. However, the small proportion of households that reported any land conflict at endline also contributes to lower power to detect effects.

Overall, these results align with findings from the 2016 midline, which also suggested no differences between treatment and comparison groups on land conflict outcome indicators at that stage. At midline, approximately 40 percent of households in the sample had experienced a land conflict in the previous year, and that share did not differ significantly by treatment status. At endline, just 19 percent of households ($N=221$) reported experiencing a land conflict in the previous year, and the share was again similar across CLPP and comparison communities.⁹⁴ The midline analysis also found no differences between CLPP and comparison group in terms of satisfaction with the dispute resolution process or severity of disputes, while lower power to detect effects for these indicators was similarly noted.

SUBGROUPS ANALYSIS

The subgroup analyses for the Land Conflict outcome family does not find evidence for any statistically significant differential effects for different population subgroups of interest.⁹⁵ Given that three of the four indicators in this outcome family are only observed for the subsample of households that experienced conflict, the lack of statistically significant findings for the subgroup analysis is not surprising. The number of observations available for these indicators is substantially lower, as is the statistical power to detect differences. For example, just 39 youth-headed households and 43 female-headed households reported being involved in any conflict over the past 12 months, which greatly reduces the statistical power to detect differences across those population subgroups.

DISCUSSION

This section draws on qualitative data from endline and additional descriptive summary statistics to complement the land conflict statistical results and provide insights on the role that CLPP has played in changing the incidence, severity and means by which resolutions processes are available within communities. At endline, and in contrast to the statistical results, the qualitative findings strongly suggest that many households in CLPP communities perceive the program's activities to have reduced the likelihood of future land disputes, particularly with neighboring communities, while it is also clear that

⁹⁴ Because the midline data collection was conducted in a subset of the baseline and endline communities and town clusters (roughly half), the samples are not directly comparable. The figures here suggest that conflict prevalence may have decreased similarly in both treatment and comparison communities between midline and endline, but these results are suggestive at best.

⁹⁵ We do not conduct a subgroup analysis for poorest households for this outcome family because we do not have a baseline poverty indicator for a large proportion of households in the cross-sectional endline sample that are not in the baseline sample, given household replacements at endline. This is not an issue for the other subgroups because the observable characteristics of households or respondents on which they are based are unaffected by treatment.

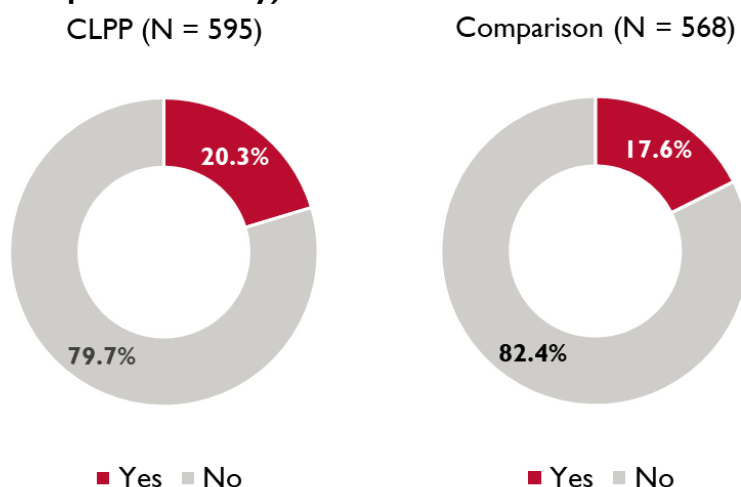
ongoing inability to come to agreement with a neighboring community over a portion of the community's land boundary is a continued source of conflict in several CLPP communities. Despite this, the qualitative findings from endline provide particularly strong support for CLPP's boundary harmonization process and the establishment and functioning of the CLDMC's as key mechanisms by which perceived improvements to the incidence and severity of land conflicts have been obtained.

It is also clear, however, that ongoing and unresolved boundary disputes between communities continues to be a source of land conflict in several CLPP communities. A key takeaway from the qualitative data at endline is that the boundary harmonization work was a very challenging process in many communities and resulted in increased conflict between communities while working to come to agreement on boundaries. As several communities were still working to resolve a boundary with at least one neighboring clan at the time of endline data collection, the quantitative results and lack of statistical difference with comparison communities may reflect at least to some extent those ongoing disputes. It is also possible that households under-report land disputes they are directly involved in on the household survey, for example those related to familial disputes. The overall reduction in reported disputes over time, however, and the qualitative data from endline suggest that CLPP's programming has helped to put CLPP communities on track for reduced frequencies of land disputes in future and more readily accessible mediation and effective dispute resolution processes within communities for the types of disputes that are most common in their communities.

COMMON TYPES OF LAND DISPUTES AND WHO RESOLVES THEM

At endline, the majority of CLPP and comparison households reported they had not been involved in any land conflict in the 12 months prior to survey (Figure 16). Among the 221 households that did report a conflict, common type of dispute households reported experiencing was boundary disputes, followed by disputes around land use, inheritance, and other types of disputes (no differences by treatment group). The parties to these disputes were most commonly two neighboring communities, followed by intra-community disputes between two households. Disputes between a community and an individual from another community were also present, but much less common. There was some variation with respect to the type of community land involved in the disputes that households reported.

Figure 16. Household Involvement in Any Land Dispute (in 12 months prior to survey)

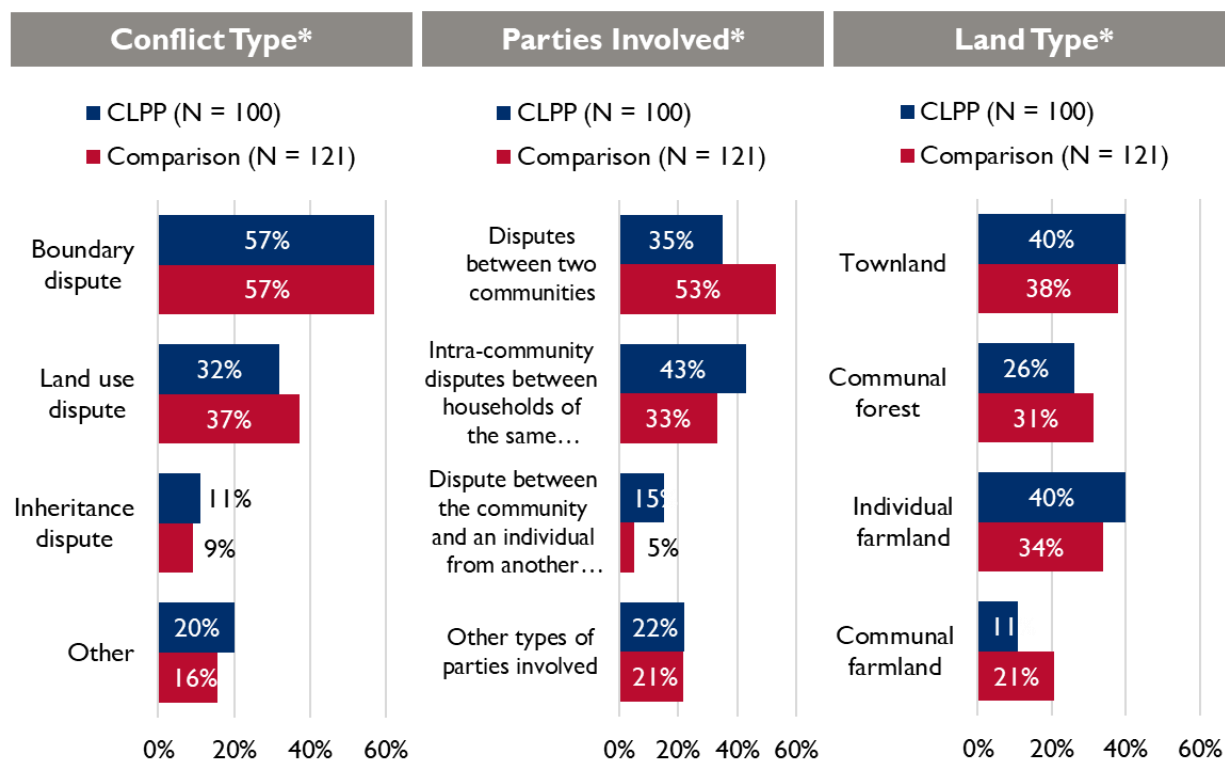


About one-third (35 percent) of the disputes involved townland, followed by individual farmland (27 percent), and communal forest (24 percent). Disputes on communal farmland were less common, accounting for 14 percent of the reported disputes (Figure 17).

There were also no significant differences at endline between CLPP and

comparison communities in terms of who resolved land disputes. Among the 221 disputes that households reported, these were most commonly resolved by community elders, followed by town chiefs and CLDMC members.

Figure 17: Characteristics of Reported Land Disputes



*Among households that reported experiencing a land dispute.

Note: The total percentage of land conflicts reported may not add up to 100% as households may report multiple types of land conflicts.

CLPP'S GENERAL CONTRIBUTION TO REDUCED INCIDENCE AND SEVERITY OF LAND CONFLICTS

The discussion sections for the Land Governance and Tenure Security outcome families presented substantial data from the qualitative sample at endline which suggests (1) that many households in CLPP communities feel that CLPP's activities have led to less confusion over boundaries and reduced conflicts with neighboring communities once communities were able to come to agreement on boundaries through the boundary harmonization process, but also that (2) many of the CLPP communities continue to experience land disputes with their neighbors where a protracted boundary dispute with a neighboring community is still ongoing and the communities have not been able to come to agreement. We do not repeat those discussions here but reemphasize the roles these particular elements have played in helping to reduce the incidence of severity of disputes within communities and between communities and outsiders.

It is also apparent in the qualitative data at endline that familial disputes around land are still common, especially for women family members. Some GD and KII participants also mentioned land disputes with

others *within* their communities (such as among neighboring households in the same communities), but these were not mentioned as commonly as inter-community or familial disputes over land.

“One of the benefits [that we got from the program] is that confusion has cooled down. Conflicts are no longer like before. So, that’s a benefit to us.” – Male GD participant, Lofa

“[Before], our people used to fight against each other about land. But from the time this program was instituted, [now] there is no land conflict. Things are just going peacefully in the community concerning land. So, we are satisfied.” – Male GD participant, River Gee

ROLE OF THE CLDMC IN PROVIDING LAND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

The qualitative findings from endline also suggest that the establishment of the CLDMCs in communities has been important for helping to resolve land disputes when they do arise.

“Any land issue we used to go to the town chief but since we started this one [the CLDMC], any land conflict we send it to them, they are the one that can look into it.” – Male GD participant, Lofa

“Since we have put them [the CLDMC] in power, anything that happens in land matters they can solve it fine.” – Male KII participant, Lofa

One CLDMC member explained that disputes between individuals regarding farmland are not uncommon during the start of the farming season, when farmers start to clear (brush) their land. He explained his role in resolving these types of disputes:

“My responsibility is to bring peace among the people from disputes about land, [often related to] farming land. You see at this time now in December, brushing time have reached, so you will see people will be coming with problems. For example, ‘this person went and jumped into my farming spot’ and you know those are [the types of] challenges that we face. So any time it comes, we have to go there to the site and we try to put peace between them [the parties to the dispute] that they will be able to make their farm. Because this is on customary land.” – KII respondent, Lofa

A female GD participant similarly described the CLDMC’s role in resolving disputes in her community:

“The work they [the CLDMC] can do, for example when two persons make palaver [have a conflict] on land business, they ... can go look at the area [and resolve the issue]. For example, if I built my house over there and somebody is fighting to make palaver between us, when they come they can look at the distance, they can take measurement on it. When they look at that measurement, you who is wrong they can say: ‘You wronged this particular person here. That’s the boundary here.’ ... That’s the work they [the CLDMC] can do. Any conflict that comes, they can go there to harmonize it.” – Female GD respondent, Lofa

Finally, in some GDs or KIIs participants described that CLDMCs provided a way for communities to resolve their disputes internally instead of going to district court as they had previously:

“When there’s a problem in the community, we [decided] we should first resolve it [through the CLDMC]. So that we can put our differences together instead of going to the law. To take somebody to magisterial court will not be too fine for us, because these lands we are talking about are community

lands. It is not private land, it is not public land, it's a community land. We as community dwellers should be able to resolve our differences, instead of going to court. If it's your private land, you can go to court, but since this is a community land issue, it better we resolve our differences [through the CLDMC] than going to court. And we all consented to that.” – Male KII respondent, Lofa

“It used to be every year ten, fifteen people will go to court because of farming issues, because of land disputes. And this committee [the CLDMC] is helping because we don't do that [now]. Some people used to fight in the bush and all. So, they [the CLDMC] are making peace among us.” – Male KII participant, Lofa

OUTCOME FAMILY V: COMMUNITY LAND DEVELOPMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCE CONDITION

One of CLPP's main overarching aims was to support communities to protect their community lands and natural resources⁹⁶ and improve local land and resource governance for the overall benefit of communities. CLPP's community empowerment work, boundary harmonization, establishment of CLDMC's, support to communities on the development of community land use and resource management bylaws, and other support into strengthening land and resource governance in communities and negotiating with outside resource extractors were all conceptualized to play a role in helping communities to manage their land and natural resources in ways that would lead to improved resource conditions and protections over the longer term.

This outcome family focuses on the effects of CLPP's customary land formalization activities on indicators of household participation in land-based community development activities, perceptions of forest resource conditions, and their valuation of communal land in the community.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- Impact analyses suggest that CLPP led to a 15 percentage point increase, on average, in the likelihood a household perceived water quality was increasing in their community. Endline results do not find evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on other indicators communal land development or forest conditions. Where changes from baseline were present, there were similar in magnitude and direction across CLPP and comparison households.
- Subgroups analysis suggests that CLPP improved youth-headed households' outlook on forest conditions, including the perception that forest animals, density, size and water quality in the community are increasing.
- Qualitative data at endline suggests that many CLPP communities have taken important steps to lay the foundations for improved natural resource use and governance in their communities into the future, and at least some communities have begun to exercise stronger forest use and management practices and forest protections. Several potential mechanisms appear to contribute to this, as discussed in previous chapters.
- Qualitative findings also indicate that many CLPP communities have small-scale (typically logging or mining) investors or large companies operating on their communal lands, although this appears to be under-reported in the survey data. There is anecdotal evidence at endline that CLPP's support has helped at least some communities to successfully negotiate with and obtain financial and in-kind benefits from these outside resource extractors, although not all of these communities have had a positive experience.

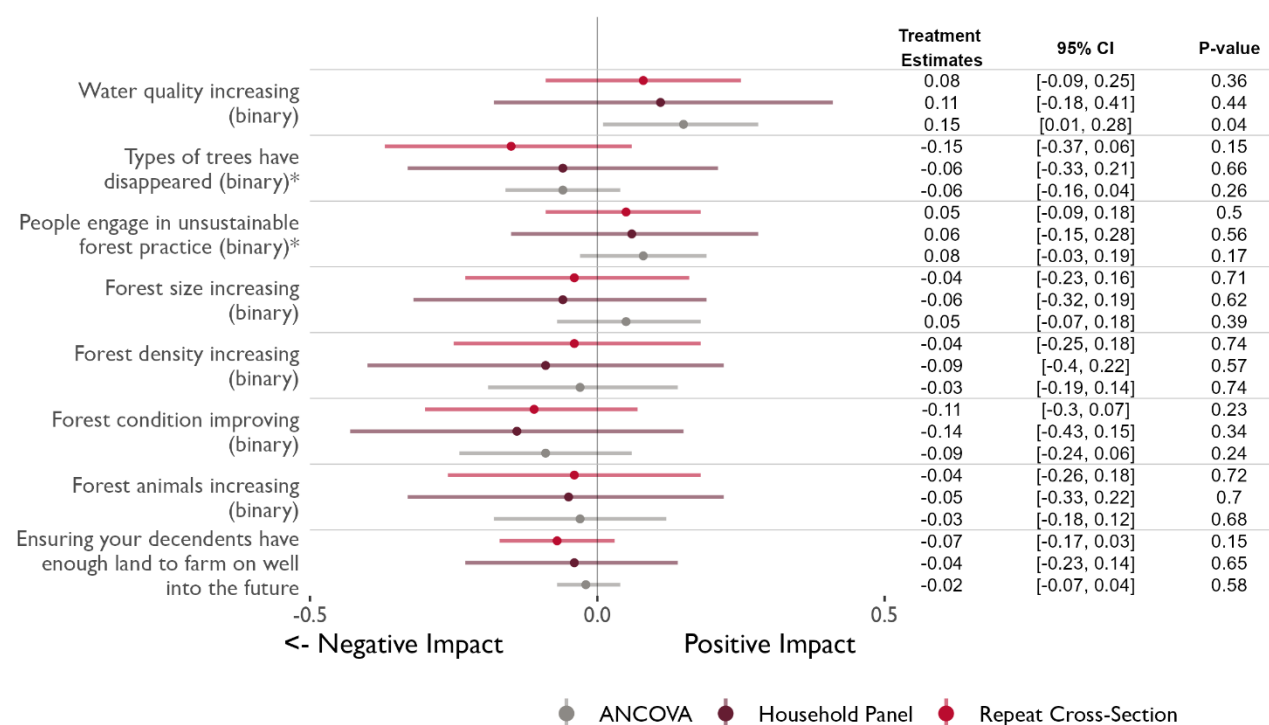
⁹⁶ Includes, among others: water resources, bush, animals, farmlands, townland, swamplands, and forest lands.

IMPACT ANALYSIS RESULTS

Figure 18 presents the impacts of the CLPP interventions on household perceptions of community land development and resource conditions at the time of endline data collection in Dec 2022 - Jan 2023. The results for Outcome Family 5 suggest that CLPP led to perceived improvements in water quality in communities, while impacts are not significant for the other outcome indicators assessed for this outcome family. However, results also suggest that CLPP led to a more positive outlook on perceived forest conditions among youth-headed households, while qualitative findings suggest that some CLPP communities have begun to take steps to protect communal forestland, and have benefited from CLPP support to help them engage with outside extractors and assert their management rights to communal lands.

IMPACT ESTIMATES CHARTS

Figure 18: Impact Results on Perceptions of Natural Resource Conditions



Note: For indicators with *, negative results indicate positive impacts

The ANCOVA regression results at endline suggest that CLPP did not have statistically significant impacts on most of the indicators for households' perceived changes to natural resource conditions in the community, other than a positive impact on households' perception of water quality. Specifically, the impact results suggest a 15 percentage point increase, on average, in the likelihood a household reported that water quality was increasing in their community. The perception on this was very low at baseline, at 18 percent of households, and did not differ by treatment group. At endline, the proportion of households that felt water quality was improving increased across both groups, but by a larger amount in CLPP communities (from 18 percent at baseline to 36 percent of households at endline).

The impact results do not find evidence for statistically significant impacts of CLPP on other measures in this outcome family, including household perceptions on forest size, density, wildlife and tree diversity, and the extent to which there has been a change in unsustainable forest practices. For most of these indicators, the general trend was either little to no change from baseline for both CLPP and comparison communities and no difference by treatment group,⁹⁷ or no difference at baseline and a substantial increase of similar magnitude across both groups.⁹⁸ In either of these situations, the analysis does not detect any statistically significant differences as a result of CLPP's activities.

With respect to forest conditions specifically, a similar share of CLPP and comparison households perceived a small positive trend on forest density over time (from 41 percent at baseline to 57 percent at endline), while both groups showed a small decline in the proportion of households that perceived forest size to be increasing (from 41 percent of households at baseline to 34 percent at endline, with no significant differences by treatment group). The proportion of households that felt people engage in unsustainable forest practices was similar at baseline and declined by a similar amount across CLPP and comparison groups (the baseline mean was 66 percent, declining to 35 percent at endline).

COMPARISON WITH 2016 MIDLINE RESULTS

These results at endline find evidence for positive impacts of CLPP on this outcome family that were not present at midline. At midline, there was no evidence for a significant impact of CLPP on the outcomes assessed, including the same set of measures of forest conditions reported above.⁹⁹

ALIGNMENT OF 2023 ENDLINE RESULTS ACROSS ALTERNATIVE MODELS

The endline results are consistent across alternate model specifications. All three of the models we run show a null effect for CLPP on Outcome Family 5 indicators, except for the positive impact on water quality detected by the ANCOVA model. For this outcome, the point estimates obtained via the household panel and repeat cross-sections approaches are also positive and fairly similar in magnitude to that of the ANCOVA model, but the confidence intervals are wider (there is lower precision around the estimates under these alternative models), resulting in a loss of statistical significance.

SUPPLEMENTAL EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

The household survey at endline included two survey experiments related to community land development and natural resource conditions, as designed by the previous evaluation team: an experiment intended to explore whether priming respondents to consider the sacred value of communal forestland changes their valuation of the land, and an endorsement experiment that explores respondents' perceptions of the capacity of different authorities (local authorities including town chiefs

⁹⁷ For example, the perception that forest animals were increasing, which was 22 percent of households at baseline and 27 percent of households at endline.

⁹⁸ For example, the proportion of households that agreed with ensuring their children have enough land in future for farming, which was 53 % at baseline and rose to 91 % at endline with no significant difference across treatment groups at either round.

⁹⁹ Cross-sectional analysis at midline also focused on some additional indicators to those reported at endline, including household participation in communal farmland activities such as planting trees, rice, or otherwise working on communal farmland. The relevance of these indicators to CLPP's core theory of change appears to be lower. The midline analysis, for example, was not able to interpret whether different trends on these indicators across CLPP and comparison households represented positive or negative effects, nor were direct linkages to CLPP's interventions clear. For this reason, and because the measures were not collected at baseline, the endline IE team chose to drop a reporting focus on these.

and elders, and national authorities including the LLA) to monitor investors who break laws meant to protect natural resources.¹⁰⁰ The results at endline for the first of these experiments suggest the priming had no impact on respondents' valuation of communal land. Results for the second similarly suggested that priming respondents with respect to national or local authorities' involvement in the monitoring initiatives had no effect on respondents' view of whether the initiative will be successful (in other words, results did not reveal a difference in the perceived capacity of national or local authorities with respect to monitoring investors on this issue).

SUBGROUPS ANALYSIS

The subgroups regression analysis for Outcome Family 5 provide some evidence to suggest that *youth-headed households at the time of baseline may have a more positive outlook on forest conditions* relative to other households in the sample. Youth-headed households were 20.6 percentage points more likely to perceived forest animals to be increasing ($p=0.085$), 23.2 percentage points more likely to perceive forest density to be increasing ($p=0.094$), 28.4 percentage points more likely to perceive forest size to be increasing ($p=0.012$), and 25.2 percentage points more likely to perceive water quality to be increasing ($p=0.031$). However, they were also 31.7 percentage points more likely to report some types of trees had disappeared ($p=0.018$), which is incongruous with the other results and could suggest respondent misinterpretation of the question or related issues.

The subgroups results do not provide evidence for heterogenous treatment effects on other subgroups of interest with respect to indicators of community land development and natural resource conditions.

DISCUSSION

While the impact results for this outcome family are not significant, the qualitative data at endline suggests that many CLPP communities have taken important steps to lay the foundations for improved natural resource use and governance in their communities into the future. Specifically, the impact and qualitative results across previous outcome families provide strong evidence that CLPP and ILRG's related follow-on customary land formalization activities have strengthened land and natural resource governance¹⁰¹ in communities and household knowledge of and participation in those processes, while also providing households and communities with greater knowledge of their communal land rights, ownership of customary land by all members of the community, and clarity over their communal land boundaries.

¹⁰⁰ Endorsement experiments typically are used as an approach to obtain more reliable responses on sensitive issues or topics, where respondents may avoid answering the question honestly. In this experiment, the survey respondents are divided into three equally sized groups. Group A (the control) was asked whether new initiatives to monitor investors would be successful against companies that do not follow laws about working in Liberia and investing in its natural resources. Group B was asked the same question, with an explanation (endorsement) that some of these initiatives included an initiative led by local authorities (including the town chief and elders). Group C was also asked the same question, with an explanation (endorsement) that some of these initiatives included an initiative led by the central government (including LLA). The experiment tests whether priming respondents with either the local or national authority endorsement results in a higher likelihood of saying the monitoring initiative will be successful.

¹⁰¹ In qualitative group discussions, nearly every community in the qualitative sample mentioned the same four natural resources they considered most important for their community: timber, gold, diamonds, and iron ore. In several communities, active extraction on communal lands did not appear to be underway and it was not always clear if some of the minerals were confirmed present, although artisanal and small-scale mining of all of the minerals listed is widespread in Liberia and often done by unlicensed miners. Some communities also mentioned bauxite, cocoa or rubber trees. Women more commonly mentioned cash crops such as palm, peanuts, and rice as the natural resources in their community that were most important to them.

In turn, these processes appear to have contributed to at least some of the CLPP communities exercising stronger forest use and management practices as a result of their land rights. This included protecting forest resources through bylaws that curtail overuse and/or establish reserved areas within community forestland, and monitoring and enforcing those rules, while also exercising their right as communal landowners to require outside resource extractors to obtain their permission and share benefits with them before such entities can operate on their lands. In some cases, those improvements also appear to have led to some households and communities perceiving improvements to their forest conditions as well, although the results for this are anecdotal and do not appear to be at scale.

Potential contributing mechanisms for this that have some support in the qualitative findings at endline include those listed below, all of which have been discussed in previous findings chapters and align with CLPP's intended theory of change¹⁰²:

- Stronger community *knowledge and affirmation of their ownership of communal land*, including forestlands, which in turn empowers them to participate in land and natural resource governance and take steps to protect communal resources;
- The *establishment of land and forest-related bylaws* by communities that aim to regulate use and curtail overexploitation of resources, punishable by a fine;
- Increased household *participation in creating land and forest-related bylaws*, leading to wider knowledge and acceptance of the rules across the community;
- Establishment of *elected local governance institutions (CLDMCs)* that are tasked with the responsibility to monitor and enforce bylaws, and mete out fines for rule breakers;
- Increased *monitoring and enforcement of community land and forest-related bylaws by households and local institutions* established for this purpose (the CLDMC);
- *Participatory agreement and delineation of community land boundaries*, which not only reduced land disputes but also provided clarity on the geography over which communal rules apply;
- Greater *transparency and community inclusion in decisions* to allow outside resource extractors (primarily loggers and miners) to operate on communal lands;
- Knowledge and *support to help communities engage with outsider resource extractors and assert their rights* to negotiate with extractors, control and exclude extractors from accessing communal resources, and obtain benefits in exchange for operating on communal lands;
- *Formalized customary land rights incentivizing greater community valuation* of their forest and other communal resources and a stronger *desire to conserve* them for future generation

FOREST AND OTHER COMMUNAL LAND RESOURCE CONDITIONS AND VALUATION

Although the impact analysis suggests CLPP has not led to widespread improvements in forest conditions by endline, the qualitative data at endline does suggest that many households in CLPP communities feel that their community lands are better protected as a result of CLPP's customary land

¹⁰² As well as a substantive and voluminous body of theory and evidence related to common-pool resource theory and social-ecological systems that seeks to better understand the intersection of formalized customary and communal land and resource governance rights, the conditions under which community-based natural resource management is more likely to succeed, and the roles that the implementation of decentralized natural resource policies and formal recognition of customary land rights can play in facilitating stronger collective action and other building blocks within communities and the systems they are embedded in to achieve positive outcomes for communities and natural resource systems.

formalization, including their forestlands, residential lands, farmlands and fallow or swamplands.¹⁰³ GD and KII participants highlighted several reasons for this, including the knowledge they gained from SDI, that communities know their boundaries now, and that are better able to assert their rights to their land and ensure people follow the by-laws they set for that land. With respect to forestland in particular, they also described how CLPP's support had motivated them to take steps to more sustainably manage the forest, including in some communities setting aside forest areas on their land that no one should use.

“What made us get the knowledge, it’s because of the program [CLPP]. It helped us to know about our land, to know the importance about our land, that we cannot sit down while someone just comes and takes over our land.” – Male KII respondent, Lofa

“What helped me is the training we had and series of workshops where SDI opened our eyes about the land value. How we should manage the land. They told us we should have reserved land, we should not just go around clearing [forest], damaging the forest. We should leave [some areas] so that our children can benefit more than us, and as we are benefiting our children will benefit too.” – Male KII respondent, Maryland

“We protect our forest. For our people not to go in the forest, or go in the swamplands, so as to protect the land for our children.” – Male GD respondent, Maryland

“The way companies used to do ... [now] they will not be able to go and exploit anything from there.” – Male GD respondent, River Gee

“We are getting benefits from our forest, so we protect it well.” – Male GD participant, Maryland

“This knowledge [from SDI] made us understand that forest is very important. We have forest guides now in [community name] that could maintain the forest. We don’t cut down the forest, because we have been told that the forest is helping the international community. Animals as well are now protected.” – Male KII respondent, Lofa

Nearly all community leaders surveyed at endline (98 percent, N=49) reported having forestland in their community, but community leader perceptions of forest conditions were somewhat inconsistent with that reported by households via the impact analysis. Ten percent of community leaders (N=5) said the size of their forestland in their community had decreased in the last 3 years (four of these leaders were from CLPP communities and 1 was from a comparison community), while 16 percent of leaders surveyed (N=8) said that forestland in their community had either increased or really increased (5 of these were CLPP communities and 3 were comparison communities). Most of the leaders (74 percent, N=36) reported no change in the area of communal forestland (22 CLPP communities and 14 comparison communities).

COMMUNAL LAND IMPROVEMENTS

This outcome family also has a focus on whether CLPP's activities incentivized communities to undertake dedicated improvements to communal land. Because CLPP did not reach a point where it implemented community action or land management plans as initially intended, the endline IE team

¹⁰³ This was not always the case, however, where there was an ongoing and unresolved boundary dispute with a neighboring community. In some cases GD or KII participants said they would like to have the community deed from LLA to truly feel their land was secure and protected.

considered the logical links between program activities and this hypothesized outcome to be weaker. However, the qualitative data collection at endline did include some coverage on this issue.

Among the 12 communities in the qualitative sample, few at endline could describe major steps they had taken in recent years to improve their communal land. However, many described planting communal farmlands with a diverse range of crops, while some described income and other benefits they had obtained through successful rice planting and harvesting on communal farmland. Participants did not tie this to customary land formalization, however. No communities mentioned any negative changes over the past five years that had worsened the condition or quality of any natural resources in the community, with the exception of one community that noted their water quality had worsened for a time due to gold mining by a group of artisanal miners on their lands.

“We made a farm town land, and on this farm we cleared three acres where we planted rice and got 3,000 out of the rice. And today if you see our town, there are 23 houses built, zinc houses. If you go around [you will see] new, new houses, that’s our self-help” – Male KII respondent, River Gee

“The only improvement [we have made] is to protect them [our forest and resources]. That’s what we are doing.” – Male KII respondent, Maryland

INVESTOR PRESENCE AND NEGOTIATIONS IN CLPP COMMUNITIES

Given the IE focus on the role of customary land formalization in improving community benefits from natural resources, the qualitative data collection at endline had substantial coverage on this issue despite that outside extractor presence in the IE communities appeared to be very uncommon in previous data collection rounds. This was still the case in the household survey and community leader survey at endline (only 4 community leaders reported an investor or company), while qualitative data collection at endline strongly suggests that investor presence is under-reported on the survey instruments.¹⁰⁴

Participants from 12 of the 36 GDs and KIIs conducted at endline said an investor had come to do business in their community within the past five years. This related to six different communities (2 in River Gee, 2 in Maryland and 2 in Lofa), or half of the communities in the qualitative sample. In two of the six communities qualitative participants described interactions with a logging company, while in the other four communities the outside resource extractor was a small group of businessmen who did smaller-scale pitsawing (three communities) or gold mining (1 community) on community land. In one additional community, in River Gee, community leaders in the leader group KII mentioned a mining company that prospected on their land but had not returned after that.

Among the six CLPP communities in the endline qualitative sample that described the presence of an outside investor operating on their land, GD or KII respondents from three of these communities highlighted positive benefits they had received from the resource extractor as a result of successful negotiations and agreement with the extractor about the use of their land. In one community in Maryland, community members described receiving some fees from the small-scale gold miners operating on their land, which the community had used to build a community meeting place and to support volunteer teachers in their community. In another community located in Maryland, male GD

¹⁰⁴ Due to question wording, survey respondents may have excluded reporting small-scale or artisanal resource extractors.

participants described an arrangement with a logging company in which the company had provided 21 scholarships to children in their community. The GD participants felt this had helped to improve their lives. In the third community, located in Lofa, community leaders said the small-scale loggers operating on their community land had paid some fees to the town.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS FROM OUTSIDE RESOURCE EXTRACTION / INVESTOR ACTIVITY

Qualitative data at endline also suggested that CLPP's strengthening of community knowledge of their land rights, establishment of CLDMCs and support to communities to develop land-related bylaws had helped at least some communities to change the dynamic by which outside resource extractors operated in their community and resulted in financial or in-kind benefits to the community. For example, GD and KII participants from two communities noted their process with respect to logging groups that come into the community and the role the CLDMC plays:

“When they come here, [first] they can go to the town people [community meeting]. From there, they and the committee then can do the work [to make an agreement].” – Male GD participant, Maryland

“We have a committee set up. If you want to do pit sawing you will sit down and discuss it [with our committee]. Another group came here, and they wanted to do camp wood sawing. We sat down here and we discussed it and we all agreed on the amount of money they will pay by piece. We all agreed they will pay 3.00 US for one piece, and we signed a document to it.” – Male KII respondent, Lofa

A small number of communities mentioned specific benefits they had received as a result of these agreements with outside resource extractors operations on their communal lands. Others were optimistic about anticipated future benefits now that they have an understanding of their communal land rights, although it remains to be seen whether their expectations will be met.

“For example yesterday, we have reported about \$ 8,000 dollars to the town [paid by the outside extractor]” – Male KII respondent, River Gee

“If that deed is given the community, we will benefit a lot. Reason being that any investors that come or anyone who want to come and invest here, the person will be paying a percentage to the community and the community will turn around and use it to build maybe a guest house and what have you. It will give us a great help.” – Male GD respondent, River Gee

“We get a good feeling [about this]. The reason is, today we owned our land – we are talking about customary land. It's for us. So if anybody come from out there, and you want to bring a company to do anything, or a mining company or any other company. When the citizens agree and say yes, we agree per the discussion that was between the two parties, this piece of land you can use it to do your mining. And then before we give this land, you will give us [this and that], and [this] percentage, because we own this land. When it comes to that agreement, there's no problem something good will happen. So we get a good feeling because we own our own land, which is customary land.” – Male GD respondent, River Gee

Qualitative discussions in with members from one community from Lofa provided a more cautionary note, and illustrated the types of challenges that communities can face to manage and hold typically more powerful and better resourced companies accountable if they do not adhere to the negotiated

agreement. Participants from all three GDs and KIs conducted in this community described a situation with a logging company operating on their land, with which they signed a 15 year MOU and social agreement describing benefits the company would provide to the community. Per GDs and KIs, the company apparently agreed to pay a land rental fee and an additional fee per cubic meter of wood extracted, and also agreed to build a clinic and schools. However, community members have been struggling to hold the company accountable, according to discussions at endline. The first five years of the company MOU had passed, but the promised clinic and schools were never built and the community felt they had not received all of the fees they were due. They community members mentioned they had demonstrated against the company and had received support from an NGO to help them navigate the conflict with this more powerful entity, but they said no government authority had helped them. Some participants implicated government authorities in cheating them out of the benefits they felt they were due, or receiving bribes from the company to turn a blind eye or otherwise not act.¹⁰⁵

“We have a company here doing logging. ... We signed a 15 years contract, and we agreed that every five years we should review the social agreement. The first five years have gone [now], and for the second five years, they have not signed the social agreement. So we told them no, you will not operate until we review the social agreement and sign it. Up to now we have not reviewed and signed it, so they are not operating [in our forest].” – Male KI respondent, Lofa

“Out of the five years, nothing we can boast out of the company. In that five years they were supposed to build a high school for us here, [but there is] nothing. Clinic? Nothing. Foundation? They did not lay it. We're suffering.” – Male and Female KI respondents, Lofa

Although only four community leaders surveyed at endline reported the presence of an investor or company currently operating in their community (3 comparison group and 1 CLPP community)¹⁰⁶, we gain some additional insights from the investor situations described via the survey as well. Of the four investors reported via the community leader survey, two were engaged in logging, one in mining and one in tree plantations. Leaders from three of the four communities said they had a written agreement with the investor, and all four of the community leaders reported that their community had received some benefits from the investor or company. The most common benefits cited were: salaried jobs, a new secondary school, road repairs, and land rental fees or other community income (respondents could select multiple benefits and each of these was mentioned the same number of times). However, two of the leaders also reported that their community had experienced some harm or damage as a result of the operations (one of which was a mining operation and another was logging). Two of the leaders reported that things in their community had gotten ‘a little better’ since the investor or company began operating in their community, one reported no change, and one (a CLPP community) reported things had gotten ‘a little worse’.

¹⁰⁵ Others explained: “We are not getting anything from them, because our own people [Liberian authorities] are not fair to us. Our own people are robbing us. Mainly that [government authority] is suffering us”. And “Our own big, big people, when we were crying about this land business or this company how they were treating us. When we cried on them, they [government officials] came, [but] when [the company] gave them brown envelope [bribes], it finished. They don't care about us.”

¹⁰⁶ This is clearly an undercount, since six of the 12 CLPP communities in the qualitative sample alone reported active investor presence during the qualitative data collection at endline. Leaders and household survey respondents may have interpreted this survey question to refer only to large companies or concessionaires.

OUTCOME FAMILY VI: LIVELIHOODS

This outcome family focuses on the effects of CLPP and related customary land formalization activities on indicators of household livelihoods. Although CLPP's activities were not directly focused on strengthening household livelihoods,¹⁰⁷ the program's customary land formalization activities, support to land and resource use and management, community empowerment and governance strengthening was conceptualized to provide the foundations to help communities eventually obtain improved livelihoods from their more sustainably managed land and natural resources.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

- Similar to midline, results at endline do not find evidence for a statistically significant impact of CLPP on the indicators of livelihoods that were assessed. There is also no evidence for heterogeneous effects by population subgroups. The household survey contains few livelihoods indicators, but results are corroborated across household, leader survey and qualitative data at endline.
- Qualitative data at endline does provide anecdotal evidence that small-scale improvements to communities' economic situation via CLPP's envisioned pathway is underway in at least some CLPP communities, although this is not happening at scale.
- Participants from 7 of 12 communities in the qualitative sample at endline felt their community was prospering more relative to five years ago, and they directly attributed this to CLPP's customary land formalization support. In these cases, communities appear to have successfully negotiated permissions and fees with companies or artisanal groups logging or mining on their communal land, received payments as agreed to, collected and managed those funds transparently and used the funds for small-scale community improvements.
- The positive examples of CLPP's effect on community prosperity involved small-scale investors or individual businessmen, which may have been more manageable for communities than engaging with large companies or concessionaires where the knowledge and power disparities are likely much greater.

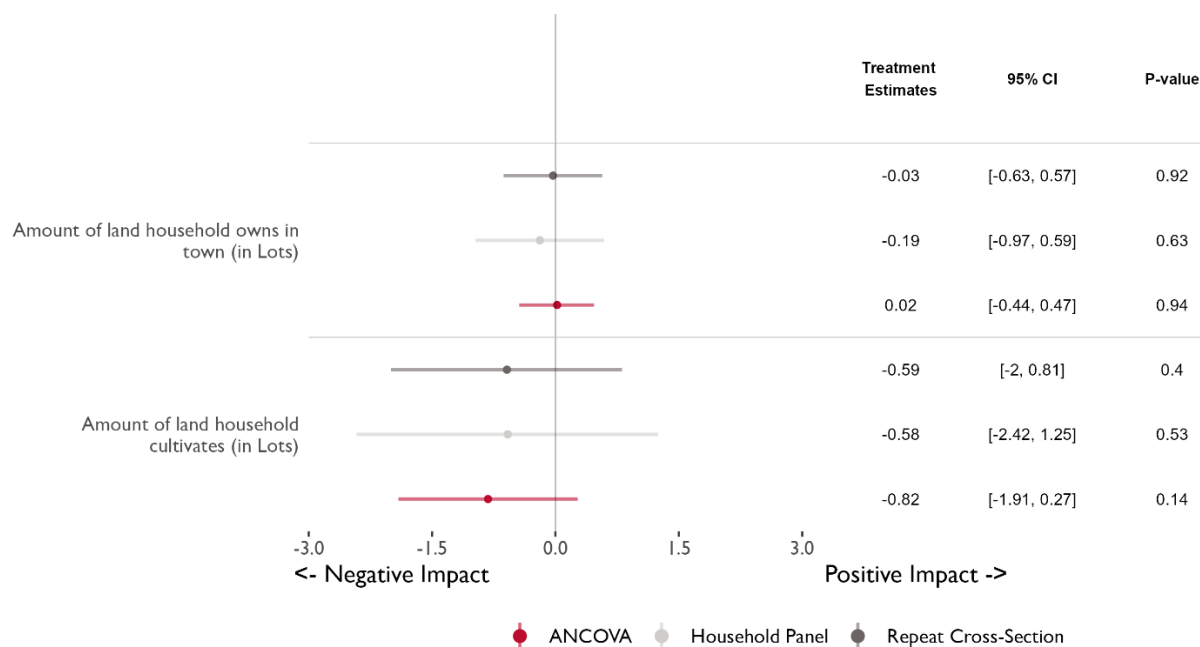
IMPACT ANALYSIS RESULTS

Figure 19 below presents the overall and subgroup impacts of the CLPP interventions at the time of endline data collection in Dec 2022 - Jan 2023. The results for Outcome Family 6 do not find evidence at this stage for a significant impact of CLPP and follow-on support for customary land formalization on household livelihoods. This is corroborated by qualitative findings at endline, which suggested that while households in many CLPP communities generally perceive their community and their own household economic situation to have improved compared to five years ago, this is driven primarily by broader changes to socio-economic conditions in their communities and districts and not directly as a result of customary land formalization.

¹⁰⁷Intended programming related to 'preparing communities to prosper', including providing integrated livelihoods support, helping communities to create action plans, and supporting work to regenerate local ecosystems, did not take place before CLPP end. However, CLPP and follow-on ILRG programming did provide awareness on community rights to negotiate with outside investors, which also may contribute to improved livelihoods within communities, for example if communities are able to more successfully obtain financial or in-kind resources from outsiders extracting resources from community lands.

IMPACT ESTIMATES CHARTS

Figure 19: Impact Results for Household Livelihoods



The ANCOVA regression results at endline suggest no statistically significant difference between CLPP and comparison groups on the livelihood indicators, in terms of the amount of land owned or cultivated by households. At baseline, the mean amount of land owned by a household was 1.6 lots, and there was no statistically significant difference across CLPP and comparison group households. At endline, the mean was 1.5 and also was not statistically different by treatment group. The trend for the amount of land cultivated by households followed a similar pattern across groups by round, and there was a similarly small decline across both treatment groups from baseline to endline.¹⁰⁸

COMPARISON WITH 2016 MIDLINE RESULTS

The endline results suggesting no livelihoods impacts are consistent with the findings from 2016 midline, which also found no evidence for an impact of the program on livelihoods at that time.

ALIGNMENT OF 2023 ENDLINE RESULTS ACROSS ALTERNATIVE MODELS

The endline impact findings are consistent across alternative model specifications. All suggest a lack of statistically significant impacts on the indicators considered.

SUBGROUPS ANALYSIS

¹⁰⁸ The baseline average was 3.4 lots, declining to 2.8 lots at endline. Survey updates at midline resulted in a change in the data collection for the two livelihoods indicators after baseline, which appears to contribute to the apparent declines over time. The regression model accounts for these differences across rounds and it does not drive the impact results.

The results at endline do not find evidence for heterogeneous impacts of the CLPP activities on any of the subgroups of interest with respect to the livelihoods indicators focused on for the impact analysis.

DISCUSSION

The lack of evidence for livelihoods impacts at endline may not be surprising given that CLPP and follow-on programming ultimately did not conduct interventions explicitly aimed to improve household economic situations. The survey instruments also contain few indicators directly related to this or which can serve as reasonable proxies. The available indicators also focus primarily on household livelihoods, whereas CLPP's overarching focus was more so on collective prosperity within communities, which might include proxies for community-level infrastructure or related investments. Still, the impact results are strongly corroborated by the qualitative data at endline, which suggested that while households in many CLPP communities perceive their community and their own household economic situation to have improved over the past five years, this is driven primarily by broader changes in socio-economic conditions in their communities and districts and not directly a result of customary land formalization.

Community leader survey data at endline highlights the rural context in which the CLPP and comparison communities are located and provides additional indication of the persisting state of underdevelopment that communities remain in since baseline, including lack of basic services. For example, and similar to baseline nine years ago, at endline no community leader reported the presence of electricity¹⁰⁹ or a post office in their community. Only 38 percent (N=19) of leaders reported cell phone service in the community (and this was more common in comparison communities relative to CLPP communities). The majority of community leaders (64 percent, N=32) rated road conditions in their community as poor or below average and only three leaders (6 percent) reported a paved road passing through their community. Health clinics and secondary schools were also still uncommon in the communities by endline, reported by 28 percent (N=14) and 32 percent (N=16) of leaders, respectively. There were no significant differences across CLPP and comparison group communities on these services.

Under CLPP's theory of change, a key envisioned pathway to improved livelihoods and community prosperity was through improved community knowledge of their land rights, use and management of their communal land resources via improved land governance, and strengthened negotiation capacity, leading to communities asserting their communal land rights in the presence of outsiders who had historically exploited communal lands for natural resources.¹¹⁰ This was expected to result in more sustainable land use over time and communities obtaining financial benefits from such outsider extraction, leading to improved livelihoods and community prosperity overall.

While it is clear this has not happened at scale in CLPP communities, *the qualitative data at endline provides anecdotal evidence that small-scale improvements to their community economic situation via CLPP's envisioned pathway is underway to some extent in at least some of the CLPP communities*, and community members attribute this directly to a combination of support they received from CLPP: knowledge of communal land rights, boundary harmonization, by-laws establishment, establishment of functional CLDMCs, stronger community understanding of their right to and ability to obtain permissions and tangible benefits from outsiders interested in logging or mining on their communal lands, and improved

¹⁰⁹ Connection to national grid; at endline, some households have solar panels or other alternative energy sources.

¹¹⁰ Historically this has most commonly been logging and mining, but also potentially through other forest-based enterprises, reforestation, carbon harvesting or related schemes.

land governance resulting in transparent receipt and use of these financial or in-kind benefits for community improvements.

CLPP'S ROLE IN GREATER COMMUNITY PROSPERITY

At endline, GD and KII participants were asked open-ended questions on whether their community is prospering more now compared to before customary land formalization, and the reasons why or why not. Moderators then probed for additional details on how these respondents saw customary land formalization contributing to community prosperity or improving their own livelihoods.

Participants from nearly all of the qualitative discussions (33 of 36 GDs or KIIs held, representing each of the 12 communities in the qualitative sample) said they felt their community was prospering better now than before customary land formalization. However, the reasons they gave were generally not related to land formalization. For example, some participants mentioned having obtained solar lights, latrines, or an improved road, while participants from 2 GDs highlighted that the profits they obtained from rice farming had allowed them to send their children to school. However, probing made clear that these improvements were not the result of customary land formalization activities, and instead reflected general development and access to new knowledge, good and services or markets over the years.

However, *participants from 7 of the 12 communities in the qualitative sample felt their community was prospering more relative to five years ago, and they directly attributed this to CLPP's customary land formalization support* (8 of the 33 GDs or KIIs, representing 7 of the 12 CLPP communities in the qualitative sample: 2 in River Gee, 3 in Maryland, 2 in Lofa). Participants from 5 GDs said they felt the peace that boundary harmonization had brought them would result in greater prosperity in future, as people could focus on their farming and not be derailed by land disputes. In another 3 GDs (2 M, 1 W), participants associated the knowledge and capacity they had obtained from CLPP to negotiate fees and other financial or in-kind benefits from resource extractors with improved financial benefits, hence prosperity, for their community:¹¹¹

“[Before], people would come here and take our resources without giving the community anything. [Now], before you come, you will meet with our community, you will drop something in the hand of the community and the committee will bring it to the community.” – Male GD participant, Maryland

While this qualitative evidence is anecdotal only, it does align with CLPP's anticipated theory of change and suggests that at least some CLPP communities have been able to obtain greater financial benefits from outside resource extractors operating on their community land. In these cases, it appears communities had been able to successfully negotiate permissions and fees with the companies or artisanal groups, receive payments as agreed to, collect and manage those funds appropriately and use the funds for small-scale community improvements. In turn, participants felt those benefits had contributed to greater prosperity in their community, and they attributed this directly to the support they had received via CLPP's activities.

¹¹¹ Qualitative evidence and examples of this are also discussed in OF5, and not repeated in full here, including additional anecdotes of financial benefits some CLPP communities have obtained from small-scale resource extractors operating in their community, which they had used to fund community infrastructure improvements.

It should be noted, however, that these positive examples generally involved small-scale investors, such as small groups of loggers or individual businessmen, which may have been more manageable for communities than engaging with large companies or concessionaires where the knowledge and power disparities are likely much greater.¹¹² In GDs and KIs, participants typically described the funds or level of benefits they had received as ‘small, small’, and implied that the funds were useful and helped to accomplish small improvements such as building a new community meeting hall, but were not substantial enough to make major improvements or distribute benefits across the community, for example. In other communities, the qualitative findings highlight community members’ positive outlook that such benefits will materialize in future, if and as outside groups express interest in operating on their land.

Participants from only three GDs or KIs felt their community was not prospering more now related to five years ago. However, in both of these communities participants tied this to a lack of completion of the customary land formalization process or the inability to realize promised benefits from it.¹¹³ In one community, participants said an ongoing and unresolved boundary conflict with a neighboring clan had prevented the community from engaging with outsiders interested in logging in their forest, which was located in the area under dispute. In the second community, participants highlighted that although customary land formalization was supposed to help their community obtain payment from outsiders who wanted to mine or log on their community lands, no outside investors had materialized and so this had not happened yet. The implication was that communities are positioned to respond to investors who may happen to engage with them but they are less equipped to proactively liaise or connect with potential investors. Where this connection has happened in some CLPP communities, it may be more so due to chance, happenstance or existing community connections or networks.

¹¹² See the example described in OF5, which describes challenges one CLPP community faced enforcing agreed conditions in an MOU they entered into with a large logging company.

¹¹³ Two of the three were from the same community.

CONCLUSIONS

Nine months after the conclusion of implementation support in CLPP communities, **the endline analysis finds strong evidence for CLPP's positive impacts across multiple indicators of land governance and community empowerment**, where the magnitude of effects are also fairly large, and some evidence for impacts on household perceptions of water quality in the community land development and natural resource conditions outcome family. There is also some evidence for positive gains for minority-headed and poorest households that suggest some important equity gains for these vulnerable groups. The qualitative findings at endline strongly align with these results and provide additional insights into the mechanisms by which land governance and empowerment impacts were obtained. The qualitative findings also provide several anecdotal examples that plausibly demonstrate how achievements in the governance and empowerment domains appear to have laid the foundations on which stronger tenure security, land conflict and natural resource management outcomes can be obtained in communities, in keeping with the intended theory of change.

The impacts observed for land governance and community empowerment are particularly important because they relate to key aspects of CLPP's intended causal pathway and broader theories and evidence regarding conditions under which communities are more likely to achieve sustainable land and resource use and improved socio-economic conditions. Some of these which are apparent in CLPP communities include: the creation of land and resource-related bylaws in the community, household participation in creating and monitoring those bylaws, household satisfaction with and perceived legitimacy of land rules in the community and with leaders on governance issues, and household awareness of elected CLDMCs and perception of the relative power of the CLDMC over land issues in the community relative to traditional authorities. The qualitative findings suggest that many community members are largely satisfied with the work of the CLDMCs in several CLPP communities, where the committees appear to be playing an effective role serving as a knowledge resource for community members, arbitrating disputes as needed, and interfacing with outsider businesspeople and small-scale artisanal groups who have sought to exploit resources on community lands.

The evaluation does not find evidence for impacts on the measures of tenure security, land conflict or livelihoods that were assessed. For many indicators in these outcome families, the magnitude and direction of change was similar across CLPP and comparison group households over time. Despite this, the qualitative data at endline suggested that CLPP had led to positive changes for each of these sets of outcomes on some level in many communities, which participants tied directly to CLPP's customary land formalization support, even if not this had not resulted in significant impacts at scale. In this sense, the results are encouraging at this stage.

The qualitative data provide some explanation for the more uneven results in these domains. For tenure security, there is strong qualitative support for general gains in households' security over communal land, but households are also concerned about unresolved boundary disputes (which also may affect the land conflict results), and whether their land will remain protected over time without receipt of the communal deed from LLA. For livelihoods, the qualitative findings make clear that most communities have not reached a point where changes in their land governance and land management practices would be expected to lead to major livelihoods improvements, but also suggest that some communities have begun to assert their rights over their land with respect to outside

resource extraction and have started to benefit from the negotiations and fees paid to them by typically small-scale outside resource extractors. However, this is not widespread and communities appear to need continued support to help them navigate these dynamics with larger and more powerful companies.

More broadly in the community land development and natural resource conditions domain, while the somewhat general perception-based impact indicators suggest that forest conditions are not substantially improving as a result of CLPP's activities, the qualitative findings point to some positive changes in households' valuation of their forestlands and collective desire to sustainably use and protect those resources into the future. As above, this may be a nascent indication that early processes along the intended pathway from formalized customary land rights and recognition to improved resource use and conservation may be starting to take hold in at least some communities.

Last, the endline findings highlight two key concerns:

First, there is no evidence through the impact analyses of positive effects on women-headed or women respondents within households, despite CLPP's sensitization on women's land rights and work to increase the number and voice of women in leadership positions within CLPP communities. In some cases the subgroups analysis suggests worse outcomes for women, for example on some land governance participation indicators and knowledge of certain elements of the LRA, or knowledge of land boundaries relative to men. These trends are strongly reinforced by the qualitative findings at endline, which indicate that many women in CLPP communities do perceive some improvement to their situations as a result of CLPP's knowledge and awareness-raising, and efforts to engender women's participation in the customary land formalization process and land governance structures in communities. However, the qualitative data also provided several examples of women's continued disenfranchisement from land and land decisions through their families and suggest that CLPP has not been able to fully address longstanding concerns related to women's ability to access land, exercise their legal land rights and meaningfully participate in land governance.

CLPP's establishment of gender quotas for the CLDMCs, and ensuring they are upheld, is one approach that could eventually contribute to progressive weakening of harmful gender norms and more positive change on this over time, although the existing evidence for this intervention suggests that impacts may take to be achieved at scale. In other contexts, studies have found links between the establishment of women's self-help groups and enhanced engagement in community decision making, while adopting a graduation approach¹¹⁴ has also been found to increase women's participation in community decision making in some contexts. However, the evidence base for interventions that effectively reduce gender biases and lead to gender-equitable outcomes acknowledges that additional research is needed to better understand feasible options that may be likely to work in a given context.¹¹⁵

Second, while not an explicit focus of the IE, it may be useful to consider the multi-year support that appeared necessary to complete boundary harmonization work and related aspects of customary land formalization in accordance with the LRA, relative to the impacts and reported gains observed along the early stages of the intended theory of change. It seems clear this effort was necessary for obtaining widespread participation and working through the various elements of the formalization process, and it

¹¹⁴ This refers to multi-component programs that target low-income individuals and aim to reduce their marginalization within communities.

¹¹⁵ Chang, W. et al. 2020. *What works to enhance women's agency: Cross-cutting lessons from experimental and quasi-experimental studies*. J-PAL Working Paper.

also underscores the substantial challenges and efforts that communities undertake to complete these steps. Taking into account the multi-year time frame required for communities to complete these processes, it is also notable that they still await a confirmatory survey and issuance of their communal deed by LLA. The uncertainty around if and when this will happen appears to be dampening their confidence in the extent to which their communal lands are protected and their tenure security overall. **The endline results are clearly positive steps and important gains in the right direction, but there is a concern that the delays in receiving these final steps in the customary land formalization process could erode community confidence and contribute to a reversal of their hard-won governance gains and other positive effects of customary land formalization realized to date.** This also raises questions regarding scalability of the process, next steps for communities in the absence of continued NGO or CSO support and the extent to which current trajectories will be maintained over time.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the evaluation team proposes the following recommendations for USAID and implementers regarding future programming:

- Given the multi-year time frame and dedicated NGO/CSO support that appears necessary to complete elements of the customary land formalization process in communities, including the often challenging work of boundary harmonization, it may be important to manage expectations regarding the time and continued engagement required to ensure strong and participatory implementation and begin to achieve important impacts within communities.
- It is clear that future programs will need to continue to prioritize addressing gendered dimensions of customary land formalization, given the challenges in realizing meaningful change. As part of this, programs should consider testing multiple strategies and messaging to encourage changes to patriarchal norms regarding women's land rights, as well as to obtain women's meaningful and widespread participation in community land governance. The current focus on women's legal land rights and increasing the number of women in leadership positions are important steps, but on their own do not appear to be sufficient. Ensuring gender quotas on CLDMCs and exploring linkages between trainings provided to women's self-help groups and stronger governance participation could be two examples of strategies to explore, but future programs should aim to conduct or draw from a more comprehensive exploration of options based on the existing evidence, and consider their potential fit with the program context.
- Because LLA's work to conduct confirmatory surveys and issue community deeds lags behind the earlier elements of the formalization process, and the timeframe over which these will take place is unclear, it is essential to ensure that systems are in place for communities to liaise with LLA as needed after the conclusion of program implementation, to help facilitate follow-ups and community access to services as needed. There is also concern this lag could erode community confidence and contribute to a reversal of communities' hard-won governance gains in the interim.
- To help strengthen linkages between communal land governance, enhancing livelihoods and achieving more sustainable forest use and conservation in ways that are mutually reinforcing,

customary land formalization programming in the Liberian context should consider including explicit or integrated implementation support that helps communities to plan and manage their forest resources for longer-term sustainability in the context of extractive forest enterprises and outsider investor presence. This can include taking into account various short and longer-term trade-offs around different communal forest and other resource use needs, outsider extraction costs and benefits and conservation goals. Obtaining improvements on land governance and empowerment can lay the foundation for these longer-term outcomes to be achieved but will likely require substantial time to be realized in communal land settings. The large body of evidence on this suggests that ‘win-win’ conservation and livelihoods solutions are indeed possible, but it may be misguided to anticipate that communities will necessarily and organically arrive at them on their own. Communities often undergo substantial trial and error under such scenarios of passive evolution. Land rights and governance support is important for catalyzing changes in natural resource use and management, while additional conservation and livelihoods interventions may also be needed to obtain intended objectives in those domains.

ANNEX A: QUALITATIVE INSTRUMENTS AT FOLLOW-ON

Village ID _____

INTRODUCTION AND CONSENT: GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The Moderator should read the following consent script prior to the start of the group discussion:

Introduction

Hello, my name is _____ I am a researcher working with The Khana Group, a local data collection firm. We are conducting a study about land tenure in Liberia. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and is being conducted by an NGO in the US called NORC. I would like to ask you some questions to better understand your experience with land tenure. Your participation is entirely voluntary. This conversation will be recorded by a digital voice recorder so we can be sure to capture all the information accurately.

This village was previously visited for this study, and we wanted to follow up with you now.

What will I do if I choose to be in this study?

Participants in these group discussions are invited to participate because you live in one of the randomly selected villages in the study, and because you are a member of a group of interest for better understanding how land tenure issues might affect different groups of people in different ways.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to participate in a focus group discussion about land tenure activities in your village. The discussion will last about 90 minutes. At any time, you can decide to stop being part of this discussion. If you choose to stop being part of the study, we will not ask you any more questions, but we will keep the answers you've given us unless you tell us otherwise.

What are the possible risks or discomforts?

Being part of this study does not involve any risks to you that are different than what you would experience day to day. Participation in this study will involve no cost to you.

What are the possible benefits for me or others?

You will receive refreshments during the group discussion. You will not get any other direct benefit from being in this research study beyond this. However, we hope that this study will help provide researchers and political leaders with a better understanding of the resources used and needed in Liberia.

What are my rights as a research participant?

We will respect any decision you make about answering any questions. You are free to stop being in the study at any time. You can also refuse to answer any questions at any time. Choosing not to be in this study or to stop being in this study will not have any bad consequences for you.

What about my confidentiality and privacy rights?

The responses from this focus group will be combined with those from other focus group discussions, which will include around 250 other people in total. Only general results will be reported, and no information will be reported which could be used to identify an individual or village.

We tell all participants that comments made during the focus group session should be kept confidential. However, it is possible that participants may repeat comments outside of the group at some time in the future. Therefore, we encourage you to be as honest and open as you can, but remain aware of our limits in protecting confidentiality. To protect your responses, we ask that you do not share the details of the discussion outside of the focus group session.

All personal information will be encrypted and stored electronically to keep it safe.

Information from this discussion may be used for research articles; however, we will not discuss your individual results. Your responses will be combined with those from approximately 12 villages. Only general results will be reported, and no information will be reported which could be used to identify you or your village.

Who should I call if I have questions or concerns about this research study?

If you have questions about this survey, you may contact [TKG contact information] at The Khana Group. You may also contact the [Liberian IRB name and contact information].

Do you have any questions for me?

[START THE RECORDER TO GET VERBAL CONSENT]

Do you agree to participate in this research and to have this session recorded?

_____ Yes _____ No

[IF YES, CONTINUE DISCUSSION]

[Facilitator: Remember to fill out the FG participant form and note-taking form for each GD conducted].

Village ID _____

Introduction and Consent: Key Informant Interviews

The Moderator should read the following consent script prior to the start of the group discussion:

Introduction

Hello, my name is _____ I am a researcher working with The Khana Group, a local data collection firm. We are conducting a study about land tenure in Liberia. This work is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and is being conducted by an NGO in the US called NORC. I would like to ask you some questions to better understand your experience with land tenure. Your participation is entirely voluntary. This conversation will be recorded by a digital voice recorder so we can be sure to capture all the information accurately.

This village was previously visited for this study, and we wanted to follow up with you now.

What will I do if I choose to be in this study?

Participants in these interviews are invited to participate because you live in one of the randomly selected villages in the study, and because you are a member of a group of interest for better understanding how land tenure issues might affect different groups of people in different ways.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to participate in a group interview of up to three other people about land tenure activities in your village. The discussion will last about 60 minutes. At any time, you can decide to stop being part of this interview. If you choose to stop being part of the study, we will not ask you any more questions, but we will keep the answers you've given us unless you tell us otherwise.

What are the possible risks or discomforts?

Being part of this study does not involve any risks to you that are different than what you would experience day to day. Participation in this study will involve no cost to you.

What are the possible benefits for me or others?

You will receive refreshments during the group discussion. You will not get any other direct benefit from being in this research study beyond this. However, we hope that this study will help provide researchers and political leaders with a better understanding of the resources used and needed in Liberia.

What are my rights as a research participant?

We will respect any decision you make about answering any questions. You are free to stop being in the study at any time. You can also refuse to answer any questions at any time. Choosing not to be in this study or to stop being in this study will not have any bad consequences for you.

What about my confidentiality and privacy rights?

The responses from this interview will be combined with those from other interviews, which will include around 50 other people in total. Only general results will be reported, and no information will be reported which could be used to identify an individual or village.

We tell all participants that comments made during the interviews should be kept confidential.

However, it is possible that other participants in your group interview may repeat comments at some time in the future. Therefore, we encourage you to be as honest and open as you can, but remain aware of our limits in protecting confidentiality. To protect your responses, we ask that you do not share the details of the discussion outside of the interview session.

All personal information will be encrypted and stored electronically to keep it safe.

Information from this interview may be used for research articles; however, we will not discuss your individual results. Your responses will be combined with those from approximately 12 villages. Only

general results will be reported, and no information will be reported which could be used to identify you or your village.

Who should I call if I have questions or concerns about this research study?

If you have questions about this survey, you may contact [TKG contact information] at The Khana Group. You may also contact the [Liberian IRB name and contact information].

Do you have any questions for me?

[START THE RECORDER TO GET VERBAL CONSENT]

Do you agree to participate in this research and to have this session recorded?

_____ Yes _____ No

[IF YES, CONTINUE DISCUSSION]

[Facilitator: Remember to fill out the KII participant form and note-taking form for each KII conducted].

GD and KII Participant Registration Form:

<p>Respondent Category:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Men community members</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Women community members</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Group KII</p>	<p>Moderator: _____ Note-taker: _____</p> <p>Start time: ____ : ____ AM/PM (circle one) End time: ____ : ____ AM/PM (circle one)</p>
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Community Name: _____ **County:** Lofa/Maryland/River Gee Treatment or Comparison Community?

Alternative Name(s): Month: Day: Year: 2022

Participant	Main Occupation <small>(farmer, shopkeeper, teacher, etc)</small>	Gender <small>(M/F)</small>	Age	Marital Status (Married, Single, Widowed, Divorced)	Education level completed			
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
7.								

8.								
9.								
10.								
11.								
12.								
13.								
14.								
15.								

Facilitator: Has the community completed community self-identification, boundary mapping and established a Community Land Development and Management Committee?

Facilitator: Has the community developed community by-laws for land use and management?

Facilitator: Has the community received a community identification certificate from the Liberian Land Authority (a document from LLA which recognizes the community's land)?

Facilitator: Has the community received a title deed for the community from the LLA?

Comments on any aspect of the GD:

GD and KII Protocol: CLPP Endline Evaluation

This guide should be used for all GD and KII respondent categories.

We would like to talk with you about your experiences with land and customary land formalization in this community, including experiences you may have had with a USAID project known as the Community Land Protection Program (CLPP). This project was implemented by SDI and some other local partners, and aimed to help communities go through the customary land formalization process.

1. Do you remember this [USAID CLPP] project? By what name do you know this project?
2. Can you briefly describe what it did?

A. PROJECT PARTICIPATION AND OUTPUTS ACHIEVEMENT

Community self-identification and boundary mapping

3. How many people here in the group participated in activities to self-identify your community? (May I see a show of hands?)
 - a. *Probe:* Can you tell us about how this process worked in your community?
 - b. *Probe:* Did you encounter any challenges? What are some examples?
 - i. How were these challenges resolved?
 - c. *Probe:* What year did these activities take place?
 - d. *Probe:* Was everyone who wanted to participate able to, or were there some people in the community who were not able to participate in this process? Why?
4. How many people here in the group participated in activities to define and map your community land boundaries? (May I see a show of hands?)
 - a. *Probe:* Can you tell us about how this process worked in your community?
 - b. *Probe:* Did you encounter any challenges? What are some examples? How were these resolved?
 - c. *Probe:* What year did these activities take place?
 - d. *Probe:* Was everyone who wanted to participate able to, or were there some people in the community who were not able to participate in this process? Why?
 - e. *Probe:* Even if you did not participate, do you feel that you know the boundaries of your community lands, including your townland, forestlands, farmlands and swamplands?

CLDMCs

5. Does your community have a Community Land Development and Management Committee (CLDMC)?
 - a. What year was this committee established?
 - b. What types of activities does the committee do?
 - c. Did you help to choose members of this committee? What was the process by which people got a seat on this committee?
 - d. How satisfied are you with the way the CLDMC is supporting customary land and land decisions in this community? Please explain.
 - e. Does anyone here play a role on this committee? What are your responsibilities? What key challenges do you face?

Developing Community by-laws

6. Did your community develop by-laws (community rules) about using different types of land in your community?
 - a. What are the main by-laws that were developed?
 - b. Did you help to make these community rules about land? What was the process by which the rules were developed and agree on?
 - c. Do you agree with the rules that were developed? Why or why not?
 - d. Do people adhere to the rules that were developed? Are there any groups of people in the community who do not agree with some rules, or are disadvantaged by them? Who are they, and what are the reasons?

Main Benefits, Participation Challenges and Unanticipated Effects

7. What is your overall view of the customary land formalization process? What are the main ways your community has benefited from this, if at all?
 - a. *Probe:* Have you received any benefits to you personally?
8. What were the main challenges your community experienced in going through this process? How did your community overcome those challenges? Are you satisfied with the result?
 - a. If yes, what made you satisfied with the result?
 - b. If not, why were you not satisfied with the results?
9. Did you experience any negative results to you personally, that you did not expect? What are some examples?
10. In your view, did most people in your community participate in the land formalization activities, like community self-identification, boundary mapping, and electing people to sit on the CLDMC?
 - a. *Probe:* How common was it for people not to participate in these activities? What do you think were the main reasons why?
 - b. *Probe:* Is there anyone here in this group who chose not to participate in the process? Can you share with us some of the reasons why?
11. Do you think your community lands are better protected now, compared to before you did this process / 5 years ago? Why or why not?
 - a. *Probe:* Are your forestlands better protected? Why or why not?
 - b. *Probe:* Are your residential lands (housespots / townland) better protected? Why or why not?
 - c. *Probe:* Are your farmlands better protected? Why or why not?
 - d. *Probe:* Are your fallowlands/swamplands better protected? Why or why not?
12. Do you think your community is prospering more now compared to before you did this process / 5 years ago? By prospering, we mean people's livelihoods have improved. Why or why not?
 - a. *Probe:* Did the land formalization process contribute to this in any way?
13. Do you think land in your community is better managed by the community and community leaders, compared to before you did this process / 5 years ago? Are decisions about land more transparent now?

B. LAND RIGHTS KNOWLEDGE, TENURE SECURITY, AND LAND DISPUTES

Earlier, we learned about some of the different challenges that communities face about land, and challenges that may be different for men and women. Now we would like to discuss more with you on issues of tenure security over land in your community, and land that you use here.

14. Compared to 5 years ago, do you think you have more knowledge today about your community's rights to land? What about your own rights to land in the community?
 - a. *Probe:* If yes, what has helped you to have more knowledge?
 - b. *Probe:* If no, what has prevented you from having more knowledge on this?
15. What are the biggest challenges that your community faces today about your community land rights and using community land?
 - a. *Probe:* What do you think are the reasons for this, and how can they be solved?
16. What are the biggest challenges that you personally face today about using land in this community? What do you think are the reasons for this, and how can they be solved?
 - a. *Probe:* Is the situation different for women and men in this community? How?
17. How do you think that registering your community land with the Liberian Land Authority (LLA) will help to protect your community's land rights? What types of disputes or threats will this help with?
 - a. *Probe:* Are there any types of disputes or situations you think this could not help with? Why?
18. In this community, what good feeling do you get about the boundary areas of your community farmland, the forest, the townland and the swampland? "Good feeling" means you are sure that inside people (big people in your area) and/or outside people (communities/clans near your area, big government people, companies/business people, big people from Monrovia) will not cross the boundary areas of your community farmland, your forest, your townland, and your swampland by force.
 - a. *Probe:* If you get good feeling that everything alright, then what make you to feel that way?
 - b. *Probe:* If you not feeling good, you think that something can happen, then what make it like that? What make it hard for the community and the community leaders to control the community boundary areas?
 - i. Who are the main people that you think they get the heart to just cross the land boundary areas?
 - ii. From outside the community, you scare of companies/business people, big people from Monrovia, big government people?
 - iii. Or, from inside the community, you scare of people in the community who want to take land or other rich rich things that God give us (natural resources) for their own benefit?
19. From this time to go in front, what type of land and the rich, rich things that God give us, are very important?
 - a. *Probe:* What reason make it like that?
 - b. *Probe:* What resources are very important to help the community grow in business and money making?
20. Can you explain the last time there was a land palava (land dispute) in your community, between people in the community themselves? (internal dispute within the community)
 - a. What was the nature of the dispute?
 - b. How was this dispute resolved and who took part in resolving it?
 - c. Did this solve the problem or is the dispute still an issue? Why?
 - d. Is this type of dispute common in your community?
 - iv. If not, what are the most common types of internal disputes about land in your community?

21. Can you explain the last time there was a land palava (land dispute) in your community, with people from outside the community (let's say, another community, a big person from Monrovia, a company, or some office of government? Dispute between the community and someone from outside)
 - a. What was the nature of the dispute?
 - b. How was this dispute resolved and who took part in resolving it?
 - c. Did this solve the problem or is the dispute still an issue? Why?
 - d. Is this type of dispute common in your community?
 - i. If not, what are the most common types of disputes with outsiders about land in your community?

D. COMMUNITY LAND NATURAL RESOURCE INVESTMENT AND INVESTOR AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Next in our discussion, we will ask about some of the ways your community has managed or improved natural resources in your community, like water resources, bush, animals, farmlands, townland, swamplands, and forest lands.

22. In the last 5 years, has your community taken any steps / done any activities to improve any of those resources?
 - a. *Probe:* What types of improvements did you make, and how did you do it?
23. In the last 5 years, did anything happen to make the condition or quality of any of those resources get worse?
 - a. *Probe:* What change happened, and what was the reason for this?
24. In the last 5 years, has any company or business people come to do business on land in your community, like cutting trees, dig diamond or gold or iron ore?
 - a. *Probe:* If yes, how did your community decide on or negotiate with them about their activities?
 - b. If yes, has the company or business people already started their activities? What kind of activities are they doing ? (example, digging gold or diamond or iron ore, cutting trees, doing farming business, etc?)
 - c. If yes, has any benefit or money come yet to you or others in your community?
 - d. If yes, did anyone from your community get help from any government or NGO/CSO during talks or negotiations with the company or business people?
25. In the last 5 years, have government big people and the District Commissioner and the county big people been involved in your community land business?
 - a. If yes, how have they been taking part?
 - b. If yes, you see anything different in the way that the big people in your area and the big people for the county / country work together on land business?
 - c. If yes, has this led to any changes for you yourself? Please explain how things have changed.

E. Empowerment

26. What are the main challenges that women currently face in this community about obtaining, inheriting and using land?
27. In your households, who makes decisions about land that your household farms or uses for other purposes – you, your partner or spouse, or a combination?
 - (I) *Probe:* What types of decisions do you make about your household farmland?

28. Who makes decisions about transferring or inheriting land in your households – you, your partner or spouse, or a combination?
29. Have the customary land formalization activities in this community changed any of these challenges for women’s land rights here in this village? If yes, how? If no, why not?
30. What are the main challenges that someone who is not originally from the community currently faces in this community about obtaining, inheriting and using land?
 - (I) *Probe:* Have the customary land formalization activities in this community helped resolve any of these challenges over the past 5 years? Please explain.
31. Are there any other groups of people in this community who you think face a challenge with their land rights and access to land? If yes, who are they and what are the reasons?
 - (I) *Probe:* Have the customary land formalization activities in this community helped resolve any of the challenges over the past 5 years? Please explain.

ADD-ON SECTION FOR WOMEN’S GDs ONLY:

32. Are there any ways that customary land formalization activities have led to negative situations for you or other women you know in this community?
 - a. *Probe:* What kinds of negative situations from other household members or extended family have women experienced? What do you think is the reason for this?
 - b. *Probe:* What about negative situations from others in the community, such as from elders, neighbors, or local leaders?
33. Are there any ways that customary land formalization activities have led to a more positive situation for you or other women you know in this community?
 - a. *Probe:* What kinds of positive situations have occurred, and what do you think the reason is for this?

F. TARGETING AND INCLUSIVENESS (ALL GDs AND KIIS)

34. Do you think all households in this community benefited equally from the project to formalize customary land in this community, including women, youth, hunters, strangers, and poorest households? Why or why not?
35. Are there any other issues related to land in this community that you think are important to address?

G. CONCLUSION

We’ve learned a lot from you and thank you for discussing these issues with us today. Before we leave, is there anything else you would like to add about the project that we didn’t already discuss, or would like to ask us?

ANNEX B: POWER AND TREATMENT FIDELITY SUPPLEMENT

Table BI summarizes illustrative power calculations at endline for key household-level indicators across outcome families. These calculations are conducted for the baseline to endline panel household sample and take into account community clustering at endline.

Table BI: Power Calculations for ANCOVA Model

Outcome	Baseline Values		Panel Size (N)	MDES	MDI (in units of outcome)	MDI (% change from mean)
	Mean	SD				
Empowerment						
Affirms government does not own communal land	0.402	0.491	609	0.114	0.056	0.140
Affirms inheritance law for women	0.755	0.430	604	0.133	0.057	0.076
Affirms traditional land rights are same as private land rights	0.421	0.494	608	0.151	0.075	0.178
Affirms community does not need paper document to own their land	0.515	0.500	610	0.147	0.073	0.143
Household can point out any boundaries of their communal land	0.942	0.234	603	0.076	0.018	0.019
Tenure Security						
Likelihood of Expropriation by another clan	0.319	0.467	611	0.124	0.058	0.181
Likelihood of Expropriation by investor	0.295	0.456	611	0.081	0.037	0.126
Likelihood of Expropriation by elites	0.222	0.416	612	0.098	0.041	0.184
Likelihood of Expropriation by neighbors	0.360	0.480	611	0.142	0.068	0.190
Tenure security index by actor	0.396	0.489	614	0.095	0.046	0.117
Household has right to decide who inherits household farmland	0.267	0.443	607	0.124	0.055	0.205
Household has right to household farmland	0.832	0.374	606	0.087	0.033	0.039
Household has right to map hh farmland	0.667	0.472	606	0.138	0.065	0.098
Household has right to plant rubber trees on household farmland	0.896	0.306	605	0.113	0.034	0.038
Household has right to sell hh farmland	0.198	0.399	606	0.108	0.043	0.218
Household bundle of rights index (binary)	0.610	0.488	607	0.132	0.064	0.105
Community Development and Natural Resources						
People engage in unsustainable forest practices	0.661	0.474	611	0.156	0.074	0.112
Forest animals increasing	0.215	0.411	512	0.213	0.088	0.408
Forest size increasing	0.482	0.500	512	0.233	0.117	0.242
Forest density increasing	0.408	0.492	512	0.207	0.102	0.250
Types of trees have disappeared	0.498	0.500	512	0.143	0.072	0.144
Water quality increasing	0.188	0.391	512	0.193	0.075	0.402
Land Governance						
Can remove leader	0.576	0.495	571	0.145	0.072	0.125
Leaders protect forest rep by HHs	0.781	0.414	571	0.231	0.095	0.122

Outcome	Baseline Values		Panel Size (N)	MDES	MDI (in units of outcome)	MDI (% change from mean)
	Mean	SD				
Satisfaction with leaders	0.793	0.405	571	0.116	0.047	0.059
Leaders equally distribute benefits	0.576	0.495	571	0.152	0.075	0.131
Leaders don't take bribes	0.694	0.461	571	0.132	0.061	0.088
Leaders consult community binary	0.722	0.449	571	0.113	0.051	0.070
Leaders punish rule breakers	0.818	0.386	571	0.110	0.042	0.052
Leader don't act in secret	0.694	0.461	571	0.126	0.058	0.084
Leaders are trusted	0.774	0.419	571	0.107	0.045	0.058
Helps enforce rules	0.395	0.489	608	0.126	0.061	0.156
Helps create rules	0.484	0.500	609	0.156	0.078	0.161
Participates in meetings	0.578	0.494	609	0.155	0.076	0.132
Helps monitor for rule breaking	0.443	0.497	609	0.114	0.057	0.128
Attends meetings	0.516	0.500	609	0.134	0.067	0.130
Helps resolve conflicts	0.435	0.496	549	0.193	0.096	0.220
Land governance index (binary)	0.580	0.494	614	0.137	0.067	0.116

TREATMENT FIDELITY

Treatment fidelity refers to the degree to which a planned intervention is implemented as intended, including whether the intervention components were received by the intended beneficiaries. Greater treatment fidelity is associated with a higher likelihood of detecting impacts, stronger confidence in the impact results, and greater learning potential from the evaluation. Evaluation teams assess treatment fidelity and its implications for the impact results because it provides insights into the internal and external validity of the evaluation, improves interpretation of results (for example, why impacts may be weaker than expected) and highlights where evaluation teams may need to consider additional analytic approaches to obtain less biased estimates of impacts. It can also help to identify and better understand implementation challenges that may need to be addressed in future programming or scale-up.

Although there were multiple pauses to CLPP and related follow-on programming since 2014, all of the communities in the CLPP evaluation sample that were assigned prior to baseline to receive the CLPP intervention had done so by endline. Moreover, nearly all of these communities followed a similar trajectory of initial support under CLPP during 2014-2017 followed by a renewal and completion of activities under ILRG follow-on programming during 2020-2022, and the local implementing partner, SDI, remained consistent throughout. In this sense, the intervention components received by the different CLPP communities in the sample were generally consistent, with a similar level of support (i.e., exposure) over time.

The treatment that CLPP communities received diverged from the planned set of interventions in two key ways that potentially affect the impact analysis and results interpretation. First, no treated communities received the intended confirmatory survey or statutory deed from LLA that would provide communities with the ultimate legal documentation of their communal land rights and were initially expected under the program. At endline, the LLA had conducted very few confirmatory surveys across

any of the communities in Liberia that had been supported through the customary land formalization process in accordance with the LRA, and had not yet issued any community deeds.

Second, CLPP and ILRG's work with communities to self-identify as one of the initial steps in the customary land formalization process unexpectedly resulted in several communities choosing to group together and self-identify as a larger clan unit, or zones within clans, rather than at the level of their smaller community sub-unit. This resulted in some communities consolidating into larger "town clusters" that included multiple communities from the baseline sample, hence a reduction in the number of treatment clusters for the purpose of the impact analysis. In other words, the endline IE sample revisited the same communities that were surveyed at baseline, but these communities are now grouped into a smaller number of town clusters that received the CLPP and ILRG land formalization activities as larger consolidated units. This situation was also present at the 2016 midline and contributes to minor reduction in power, although at endline the sample remains powered to detect relatively fine-scale impacts if they are present across most of the indicators assessed.

ANNEX C: HOUSEHOLD AND COMMUNITY LEADER SURVEYS

Excel versions of the household and community leader survey instruments are included in a final report package submitted separately to USAID.

ANNEX D: SUMMARY DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS TABLES

Supplemental descriptive statistics tables are included in a final report package submitted separately to USAID.

ANNEX E: EVALUATION TEAM SUMMARY

The endline evaluation team consisted of the following NORC staff and local data collection partners:

- Lauren Persha, Team Lead and Evaluation Specialist (NORC)
- Ron Wendt, Mid-level Evaluation Specialist (NORC)
- Greg Haugan, Mid-level Data Scientist (NORC)
- Xiran Liu, Senior Research Associate (NORC)
- Ninar Taha, Research Associate (NORC)
- Data collection firm: The Khana Group

The **Team Lead** has overall responsibility for all aspects of the evaluation, including providing technical leadership, overseeing and coordinating the execution of the evaluation design and data collection, ensuring updated qualitative and quantitative instruments, co-leading qualitative and quantitative data analyses and results interpretation, lead report writing, liaising with USAID and ensuring timely submission of deliverables. **Dr. Lauren Persha** has 20 years of research experience in land tenure, natural resource governance, forest and biodiversity conservation, and linked livelihoods and related international development sectors. At NORC, she leads multidisciplinary teams in the design and implementation of mixed-methods studies, impact evaluations, and performance evaluations of development programs within the same sectors, as well as targeted research to support evidence-based program design, implementation and learning. Dr. Persha holds a PhD in Environmental Science from Indiana University and is a Principal Research Scientist at NORC at the University of Chicago. She is fluent in English and Swahili and has working proficiency in French.

The **Mid-Level Evaluation Specialist** co-leads survey sample development, survey updating, qualitative and survey firm team training, providing remote oversight and quality monitoring of data collection activities and day-to-day oversight of the local data collection partner activities, supporting data cleaning, coding and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. **Mr. Ron Wendt** has a decade of research and management experience for cross-cutting evaluations and studies on topics spanning democracy and governance, agriculture, WASH, land tenure and related development sectors. He is also an experienced survey director and data collection methodologist for in-person and telephone surveys, and leads aspects of data collection partner procurement, contracting and management, training and day to day oversight. Mr. Wendt holds a M.A. in International Affairs from Columbia University and is a Senior Research Director at NORC at the University of Chicago.

The **Mid-Level Data Scientist** has oversight for final data cleaning, indicator construction and construction of analytic datasets, and co-leads survey data analysis and reporting. **Mr. Greg Haugan** is an economist with 10 years of experience conducting impact and performance evaluations in the areas of conflict, land tenure, and governance. He supports evaluation and sampling design, leads statistical and geospatial analysis, and oversees primary data collection activities for quantitative surveys. Mr. Haugan holds a M.A. in Economics from Universidad de Los Andes in Colombia and is a Research Scientist at NORC at the University of Chicago. He is fluent in English and Spanish.

NORC **junior research staff** provide cross-cutting support during the evaluation preparatory phase, in-country data collection, survey data cleaning and analysis, qualitative coding and analysis, report writing and the production of reporting and dissemination products. **Ms. Xiran Liu** has six years of experience conducting policy and program evaluation research and analysis in the international development space. Ms. Liu is an experienced quantitative analyst with additional expertise in survey

design and programming and supporting end-to-end household survey and qualitative data collection and analysis for impact and mixed methods performance evaluations. Ms. Liu holds an M.P.P. from Georgetown University and is a Senior Research Associate at NORC at the University of Chicago. She is a native Mandarin speaker, fluent in English and Spanish, and has working proficiency in Portuguese.

Ms. Ninar Taha has four years of experience managing or supporting multiple international qualitative and quantitative studies on topics in global health, education, agriculture, security and public opinion, and has cross-cutting qualitative and quantitative data collection, coding and analysis skills. She holds a B.A. in Global Development Studies from the University of Virginia and is a Research Associate at NORC at the University of Chicago. She is a native Arabic speaker, fluent in English and has working proficiency in Portuguese and Spanish.

The **Local Data Collection Partner** is responsible for translation and final testing of the household survey, community leader survey and backcheck surveys and qualitative instruments, support to sample construction, liaising with local implementing partners, supporting in-country data collection approvals, co-leading training of survey enumerators and qualitative data collection teams, conducting instruments pre-testing and piloting, implementing the survey and qualitative data collection and providing associated raw and clean datasets in close collaboration with the NORC team and accordance with NORC's protocols and oversight, and translating and transcribing qualitative interviews and discussions. **The Khana Group (TKG)** is an African-owned social impact research, evaluation and data collection firm with offices in Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea and the United States. TKG has more than a decade of experience conducting survey data collection and qualitative data collection in Liberia.