

**COMMUNITY FORESTRY DEPARTMENT  
FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Whein Town, Mount Barclay  
Montserrado County, Liberia

To : Mrs. Gertrude W.K. Nyaley  
Technical Manager  
Community Forestry Department/FDA

From : G. Alvin Roberts  
Senior Extension Officer  
Head office

Subject : Report on Conduct of Elections in Tonglay Community Forest,

Date : February, 24, 2020

This report under review covers activities marking the conduct of elections in the Tonglay Community Forest in Gbarpolu County. The elections were held between December 9, 2019 to February 22, 2020 in Kumbbor Town and surrounding towns and villages in the community. Herein is an attachment of the report to be perused.



## Background/Introduction

According to the Community Rights Law Regulation of 2011 (Chapter 3 Section 1, 3, 4 and 7), powers to lead and govern an Authorized Forest Community shall be through the establishment of a Community Assembly (CA). The Community Assembly shall be the highest decision-making body of the community with respect to community forestry. The Community Assembly members shall be elected by their various constituencies through a secret ballot. The Assembly then constitutes a Management Body that will manage the day to day affairs of the community forest. The Authority which is the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) shall supervise the election of representatives to the Assembly and its leaders. Representatives of at least two civil society organizations shall be invited to witness the elections and validate that they have been undertaken in a free, fair and transparent manner.

After successfully completing step 7(30 days notices were posted for elapsed without any objection/conflict), the Tonglay applicant Community Forest informed the Authority of their readiness for step 8(setting up of their governance structures). To this, a massive awareness was conducted in the towns and villages of the community by a joint team of FDA the field staff of the Community Forestry Department assigned in Region #1 and SCNL field office staff based in the region. During the awareness process, the governance structures (Community Assembly, Executive Committee and the Community Forest Management Body along with their roles and responsibilities) were explained to the community people. The entire community was informed and educated about the significance of forest governance. The field staff visited each town and village and educated them about the need for town level representation in the Community Assembly, which would subsequently elect and appoint the CFMB. The people of Tonglay Community agreed to have three (3) persons from each settlement (town or village) in the community forest area to serve in the Assembly.

On December 16, 2020 a team of FDA technicians from the Community Forest Department's regional office in Tubmanburg, together with field staff of SCNL along with a representative of Civil Society/Community Forest Working Group (CFWG) travelled to Tonglay Clan conduct elections and set up the governance structures in the Tonglay Applicant Community Forest.

As a way of informing the county authority of the activities to take place in their county, the team from Monrovia delivered letters from the Managing Director to the County Superintendent and District Commissioner before arriving in Kumgbor Town, the central town of the community forest. The joint team included:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. G. Alvin Roberts  | Senior Extension Officer, CFD, FDA        |
| 2. Joseph S. Korboi  | Civil Society/CFWG Representative         |
| 3. Patrick Wehyie    | NRMO ( Region #1 Bopolu), FDA-CFD         |
| 4. Daniel K. Martins | Extension Officer, Region #1, Tubmanburg  |
| 5. Aaron Buahn       | Regional Extension Officer CFD, Region #1 |
| 6. Ruth Varney       | Regional Forester, FDA Region #1          |
| 7. Arthur Karngbeae  | Civil Society Rep/CFWG -LARDS,            |
| 8. Irene Vokar       | NUCFMB Representative,                    |

## 9. Emmanuel G. Smith & SCNL field office team

### Methodology/Procedure

- Outreach to all towns/village to conduct Election awareness
- Outreach to all towns/villages to conduct town level election for Community Assembly members
- Convergence at CA plenary at a central meeting point to conduct Election of Executive Committee members and set up criteria for CFMB election and subsequently conduct the CFMB election

On December 17-19, 2019, a technical team of FDA field staff, Civil Society representative and Community Mobilization Officers (CMOs) of SCNL visited the four communities in the Tonglay Applicant Community Forest and conducted election for the three delegates to represent each town/village at the community assembly. Town Chiefs, Elders, youths and women of the four towns gathered in their respective towns and elected their representatives to the Community Assembly.

*This table shows the summary of the total number of attendants at the town level elections aggregated by gender and names of CA members elected by each town/village to represent them*

		# of attendants			persons elected to CA		
		Male	Female	Total			
1	Daniel Camp	15	5	21	Saah Musa	Mustapha Dakoseh	Siah Abu
2	Camp Alpha	45	15	68	Korto Sumo	Alfred Jabateh	Sam Kpea
3	Kortee Village	14	4	18	Alphonso Mah	Musu Zorieh	Titus Gbelah
4	Kumgbor	42	4	46	Amos Z. Boima	Richard Thomas	Abu Kamara
	Total	116	28	153			

### **Election of Executive Committee Officials**

On December 20, 2019, the Community Assembly convened its first session to elect officers of its leadership. This event took place in the meeting hall in Kumgbor Town.

See below table showing the elected members of the Executive Committee and attendance records

No.	Name	sex	Town/village	Position	Attendants		
					Male	Female	Total
1	Amos Z. Boimah	M	Kumgbor	Chairman			
2	Alfred Jabateh	M	Camp Alpha	V-Chairman	51	8	57
3	Saah Musa	M	Daniel Camp	Secretary			
4	Richard Thomas	M	Kumgbor	Fin Officer			

### Setting up of Selection Criteria

After the election of officers of the Executive Committee, the CA went into plenary to decide on eligible criteria for the officials of the Community Forest Management Body. The newly elected Chairman, Mr. Amos Boimah presided over the session, taking suggestions from members of the Assembly. After all deliberations, the body agreed to the following criteria for selection of the CFMB:

1. All members of the CFMB should be citizens of Tonglay Clan
2. Members should be able to read and write
3. Members should be married and have property in the Clan
4. Members should possess proven good character in the Clan
5. Should be 18 years and above

The setting up of these criteria marked the close of the first phase of the process setting up of the governance structure in Tonglay Applicant Community forest. The Executive Committee was left with the task of recruiting candidates for the CFMB through whatever normally used media of informing the community people. The EC Chairman, Mr. Amos Z. Boima together with the Community Assembly, put out vacancy information for anyone citizen of the Tonglay Clan to apply. With the help of guidance from FDA field staff and field staff of SCNL, the Executive Committee recruited and selected five candidates. A date was set for presentation of these candidates to the rest of the community assembly members.

### Election of the CFMB

On February 20, 2020, the FDA technical team along with representatives from Civil Society and the National Union of CFMBs was in Kumgbor Town to supervise the process of selecting their CFMB leaders. Members of the team of technicians from FDA and others included:

1. Mr. Arthur Karngbeae ..... LARDS/CFWG
2. Irene Vokar ..... Rep from NUCFMB
3. Peter Boikai ..... Adm Assistant to District #3 Representative

4. Ruth varney.....Regional Forester, Region #1
5. Emmanuel G. Smith.....SCNL Golama Project Coordinator

### Agenda

- Opening Prayer
- Welcome Remarks
- Introduction
- Overview of the occasion
- Roll call of delegates
- Affirmation & Confirmation of Delegates
- Roles and Responsibilities of CA & EC
- Nomination of candidates for EC
- Election of EC
- Confirmation/Induction of EC officers
- Roles and Responsibilities of CFMB
- First Session of Assembly to Develop Criteria for CFMB Selection
- Closing Remarks
- Benediction

The ceremony took place at the Kumgbor hall again. During the program, the EC Chairman, Mr. Boima presented the five successful candidates for the CFMB. They were paraded before the CDA, cross-examined and votes cast to elect the Chief Officer, Secretary. See the table below showing the successful individual and attendant stats:

No.	Name	sex	Town/village	Position	Attendants		
					Male	Female	Total
1	Karimu Fofana	M	Kumgbor	Chef Officer			
2	J Alex Musa	M	Camp Alpha	Secretary	26	4	30
3	Famata Tamba	F	Daniel Camp	Secretary			
4	Alhaji T. Kabbah	M	Kumgbor	Member			
5	Abu Kamara	m	Kumgbor	member			

## Session for Education on By-Laws & Constitution

After the selection and appointment of officers of the CFMB, the Community Assembly and the CFMB were gathered and drilled through the process of the development of their bylaws and constitution. The FDA team facilitator, Mr. Roberts used the developed templates to educate the Assembly and CFMB on the need to develop and the importance of internal laws and rules that will govern the operations of the groups as stated in the Regulations to the CRL. They were left with instructions to develop those documents and make sure each member of the CA and CFMB makes an input and as such have a copy of the two important documents and that decisions taken tomorrow in the interest of the Assembly and CFMB will be in line with the bylaw and constitution of Tonglay Community Forest.

## OBSERVATION

- The people of Tonglay Community are very cooperative to the entire process of the 9 steps
- Community people seem very desperate to see the alleviation of the terrible road conditions that have plagued them for years.

## CONSTRAINTS

- Difficulty in reaching the very remote villages

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provision of adequate stationery and other logistics for development of ballot papers and other election paraphernalia

photo Gallery



*Members of the Community Assembly of Tonglay CF posed with FDA team in Kumgbor Town*



*Officials of the newly elected CFMB of Tonglay CF posed after the elections in Kumgbor Town*



*Team members of FDA, SCNL and Civil Society in Kumgor Town, Tonglay CF*



*Madam Ruth Varney, Regional Forester of Region #1 and representative of the office of the District #3 Representative*