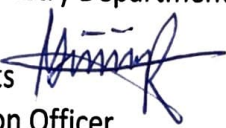


**COMMUNITY FORESTRY DEPARTMENT  
FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
Whein Town, Mount Barclay  
Montserrado County, Liberia

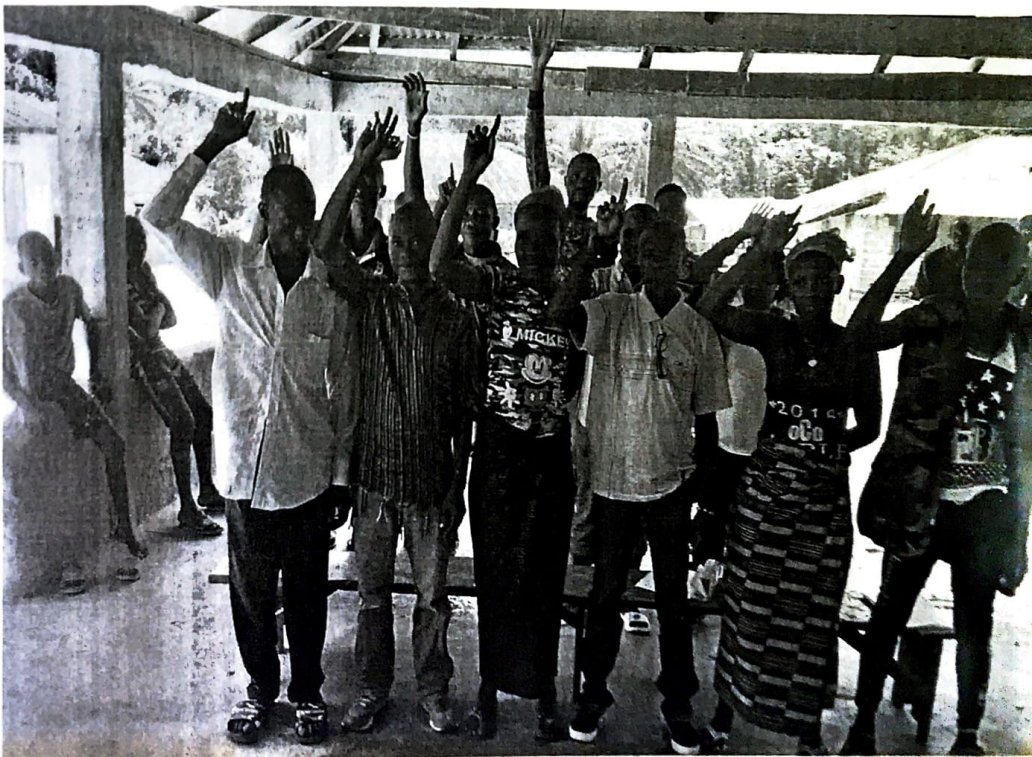
To : Mrs. Gertrude W.K. Nyaley  
Technical Manager  
Community Forestry Department/FDA

From : G. Alvin Roberts   
Senior Extension Officer  
Head office

Subject : Report on Conduct of Elections in ~~Barclay~~ <sup>NORMON</sup> Community Forest

Date : February, 24, 2020

This report under review covers activities marking the conduct of elections in the Normon Community Forest in Gbarpolu County. The elections were held between December 9 and February 22, 2020 in Normon 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 Normon 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 Normon Community agreed to have two (2) 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 Normon Clan conduct elections and set up the governance structures in the Normon 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 Normon 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

By December 17-20, 2019, a technical team of FDA field staff, Civil Society representative and Community Mobilization Officers (CMOs) of SCNL visited the four communities in the Normon 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 persons that attended the election awareness and town level elections, disaggregated by gender and names of CA members elected by each town/village***

		# of attendants			persons elected to CA	
		Male	Female	Total		
1	Normon	42	10	52	Samukai Swaray	Massa Blama
2	Lyne	18	8	26	Momo Ensah	Morris Kanneh
3	Jawajeh	22	7	29	Charles A.Kanneh	Yatta Swaray
4	Gaylahun	13	4	17	Boakai Momo	Michael Z. Varney
5	Bumborhun	10	7	17	Francis Mcgill	Jumah Rogers
6	ULC	9	4	13	James Ford	Oldman Boakai
7	Smith-Wango	32	13	45	Jallah Konneh	Augustine Blama
8	Fayamah	15	8	23	Mohammed Swaray	Boakai Gbessay
	<b>Total</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>222</b>		

**Election of Executive Committee Officials**

On December 21, 2019, the Community Assembly convened its first session to elect officers of its Executive Committee. This event took place in the meeting hall in Normon Town in Normon Clan. The 16-member Community Assembly voted amongst themselves and used simple



majority to elect officers of the Executive Committee that included a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Finance Officer. In the presence of and under the supervision of FDA, Civil Society representative and staff of the SCNL Kumgbor office, the CA members made nominations and elected the EC.

**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	Samukai Swaray	M	Normon	Chairman			
2	Jallah Kanneh	M	Smith-Wango	V-Chairman	60	5	65
3	Charles Kanneh	M	Jawajeh	Secretary			
4	Augustine Blama	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. Samukai 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 Normon 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 Normon 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. Samukai Swaray together with the Community Assembly, put out vacancy information for anyone citizen of the Normon 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 23, 2020, the FDA technical team along with representatives from Civil Society and the National Union of CFMBs was in Normon 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 under the centralized palava hut in Normon Town. 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	Boikai Kanneh	M	Normon	Chief Officer			
2	Varney S.Kaba	M	Normon	Secretary	47	4	41
3	Francis B. Swaray	M	Jawajeh	Secretary			
4	Jamba M. Lahai	F	Kumgbor	Member			
5	Joseph Nyandibo	m	Lyne	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 educated on 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 Normon Community Forest.

### **OBSERVATION**

- The people of Normon CF are desperate to see their community forest sign CFMA and so they were very cooperative during the elections
- Owing to the enormous amount of assistance SCNL have given them, the people of Normon seem far from the traditional forest use of commercial logging.

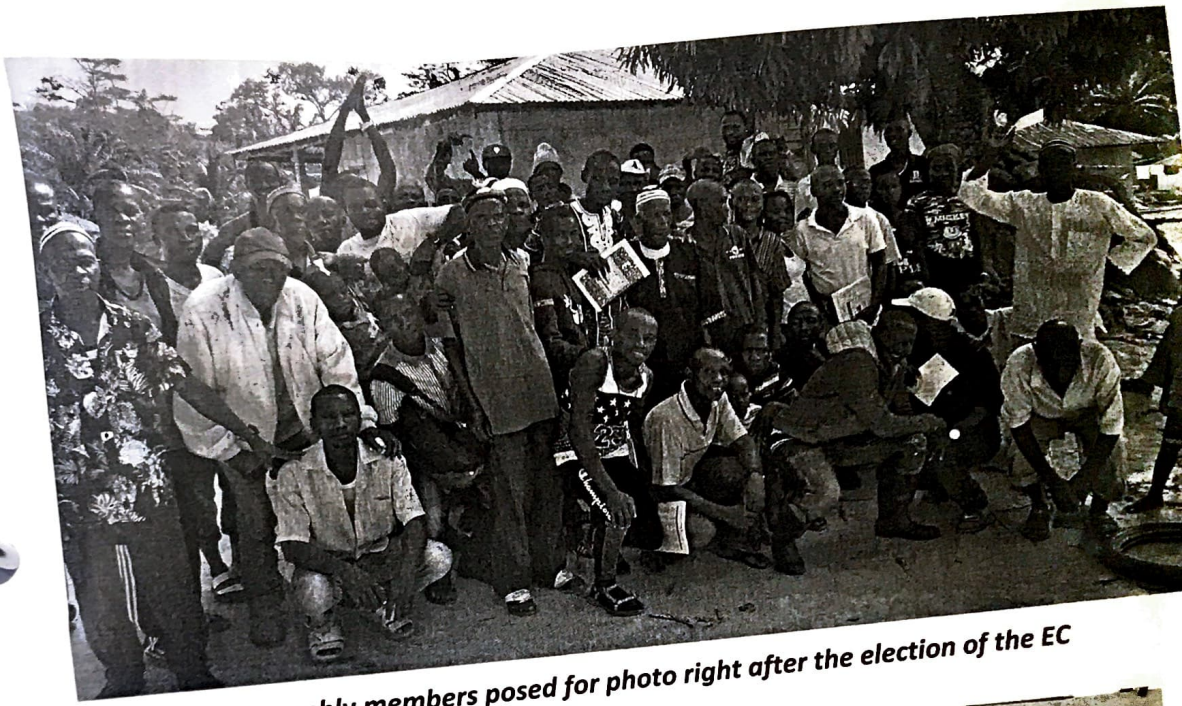
### **CONSTRAINTS**

- 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**



*Community Assembly members posed for photo right after the election of the EC*



*Community Assembly members being sworn in by the FSA team in Normon C*