

External Review of GROW



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SUBMITTED TO:

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Acronyms

ARI	Agro Rubber Industries
ASI	Adam Smith International
AVL	Africa Venture Liberia
BCD	Business cluster developer
CNA	Community Needs Assessment
DCED	Donor Committee for Enterprise Development
DFI	Development financial institution
EIA	Early Impact Assessment
FTE	Full time equivalent (jobs)
GoL	Government of Liberia
GVL	Golden Veroleum Liberia
IDH	Initiatief Duurzame Handel - The Sustainable Trade Initiative
IMT	Intervention Management Tool
LBDI	Liberia Bank for Development and Investment
LRD	Liberian Dollar
M4P	Making Markets Work for the Poor
MRM	Monitoring and results measurement
MSA	Market system assessment
NAIC	Net Attributable Income Change
NBC	National Bureau of Concessions
NICFI	Norway International Climate and Forest Initiative
OPOSITC	Oil Palm Out-Grower Scheme Implementation Technical Committee
PA	Partnership Agreement
PPA	Production Partnership Agreement
QBWA	Quintessential Business Women's Association
RSS	Ribbed smoked sheets (rubber)
SEK	Swedish Krona
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToC	Theory of change
TSR	Technically Specified Rubber
UFES	Unique Fumigation and Engineering Services
USD	United States Dollar
VFM	Value for money
Y1, Y2 etc.	Year 1, Year 2 etc. (of the programme)

1. Introduction and context

FCG Sweden and Nathan Associates have been contracted by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to provide external monitoring services to the programme “Support to the Development of Markets and Value Chains in Agriculture in Liberia” (GROW). In coordination with the Swedish Embassy in Liberia, FCG Sweden and Nathan have commissioned a team of three consultants to undertake the 2017 external review of GROW.

The main objectives of the review, which took place between 17th April and 30th June 2017, include:

- assess progress during implementation since the last review and against logframe milestones;
- assess the likelihood that the GROW market interventions will achieve their planned impacts;
- determine if any adjustments need to be made to ensure achievement of results by the end of the project period; and
- provide recommendations whether GROW is justified to continue in broadly their established direction, with re-alignments, or discontinued after June 2018.

Programme outline

Sida is supporting GROW, a market development programme, with a maximum amount of SEK 141 million over a five-year period (2013-2018). The programme seeks to use the “Making Markets Work for the Poor” (M4P) approach, and is being implemented by a private sector contractor – Adam Smith International (ASI).

The overall goal of the programme is to contribute to sustainable peace and poverty reduction through inclusive and integrated economic development. Its objective (expected impact) is substantially increased incomes and employment opportunities for a large number of poor women, men and youth, created through market and value chain development in agriculture.

Context change

Since the programme’s inception, there is evidence of a good understanding of the many challenges to implementing a market development programme in a fragile and conflict-affected state such as Liberia.¹ Amongst other challenges, GROW operates in very thin markets (with very low number of private sector players, high price volatility, monopsony) and crowded with NGOs, which at times distort the markets through subsidies or other direct interventions. It is also the case that very low population density and poor access to infrastructure, mainly roads and energy, makes transaction costs very high.

Operating in Liberia became even more challenging during and after the major Ebola epidemic, which occurred in Liberia from 2014 to 2015, along with the neighbouring countries of Guinea and Sierra Leone. The first cases of the virus were reported by late March 2014 and cases escalated significantly by July and August, peaking in October 2014.

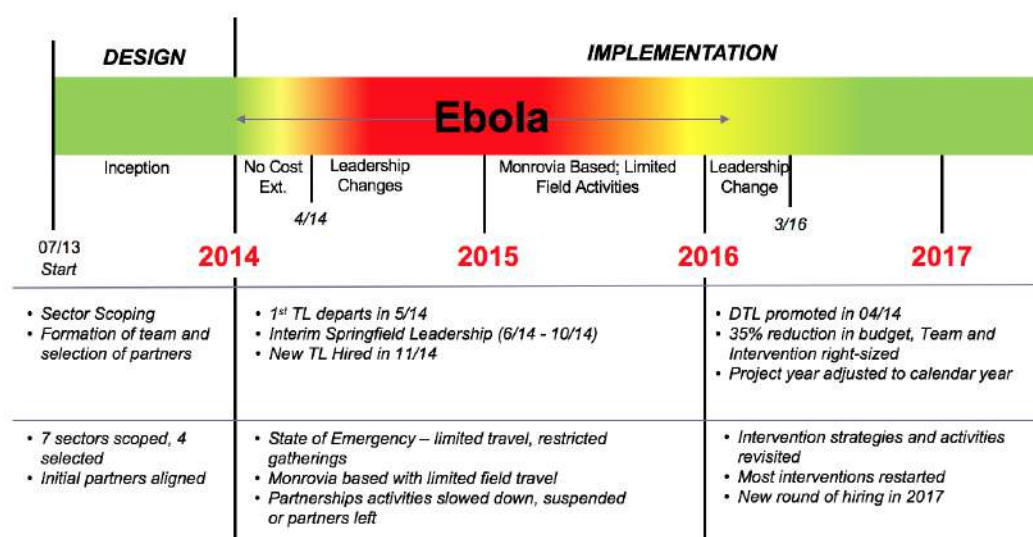
¹ GROW (2014) End design phase document. Annex 5_Programme Risk Management

In September 2015, the WHO declared Liberia free of Ebola virus transmission in the human population.

Ebola was clearly a major disruption factor for the programme, given the restrictions to normal life and travel, the impact on doing business (many private sector players left the country, including some partners), the closure of borders and normal trade routes, and the difficulty of recruiting and retaining consultants. Things started to head back to normal in mid-2015, and while some activities were possible in the Ebola period, the review has considered that the start of full implementation was from September 2015. The crisis also had implications for the programme budget and staffing levels, and the team consider that they “have just rebuilt the team in 2017.”

The current programme-end is scheduled for June 2018, meaning that it would only have one farming season left (2017/18). However, a no-cost extension could be granted until June 2019, giving the programme one more year to go and, instrumentally given the agricultural focus of the programme, one more farming season in which to operate (2018/19).

Figure 1: Timeline of GROW programme presented to reviewers



Theory of change and expected results

The most up-to-date theory of change (ToC) the reviewers could find is presented in Annex 4 and came from the Y2 Annual Report (GROW, 2016f). However, the programme does not appear have a ToC updated regularly, as it is not presented in the most recent reporting (GROW 2017a, 2017b, 2017c). The programme logframe does not exist in a single continuous excel format but instead is reported at semi-annual points. The logframe has changed several times, and targets have also changed. A summary of impact indicators and programme-end targets from the original logframe at design phase², the updated logframe in the 2014 business plan (GROW, 2014), and the most up-to-date version provided to the reviewers dated April 2017³ is provided in Table 1.

² GROW design docs 2014, Annex 11: Logframe and explanatory note

³ 170427_Logframe Explanatory Notes.xlsx

The major change to the impact and outcome level of the logframe has been the removal of indicators relating to the programme's stability goals⁴, in part because of the difficulty of measuring the concept in a meaningful and cost-effective way.⁵ As above, the programme does not appear to have clear 'targets' set and agreed with Sida, but instead presents *projections* in some of the annual reports and business plans. Table 1 shows that the trajectory of the projections at the programme-end date (assumed to now be 2019) has been downward, with the net attributable income change (NAIC) projection reducing from USD 51.8 million in 2014 to USD 9.9 million in 2017 and for jobs, projections down from over 5,000 to 1,640 in the same period.

Table 1: Impact indicators and programme-end targets for three phases of the programme logframe

Impact indicators	Design phase logframe		GROW 2014 business plan logframe		GROW April 2017 logframe	
	Indicator wording	2018 target	Indicator wording	2018 projection (2014 business plan)	Indicator wording	2019 projections
Impact 1: Outreach	Number of enterprises experiencing positive change in incomes	39,306	Number of enterprises experiencing positive change in incomes	32,755	Total number of women, men and small firms with positive NAIC	31,100
Impact 2: Income	Aggregated change in cumulative income (USD) for benefitting enterprises and employees	USD 41.3 million	Aggregated Net Attributable Income Change (NAIC) USD for benefitted enterprises and employees	USD 51.8 million	Aggregated Total NAIC amongst women, men and small firms as a result of program activities	USD 9.9 million
Impact 3: Employment	# of FTE jobs created in agriculture markets	6,472	# of FTE jobs created in agriculture markets	5,394	Total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs created	1,640
Impact 4: Stability	% of target beneficiaries with a decreased likelihood of participating in conflicts	Not measured	% of target group members with a perception of increased participation in market systems they are engaged in, over the last 12 months (disaggregated by gender and age) ⁶	Not measured	Dropped	Dropped

Operating model, stages of intervention and Intervention Fund expenditure

The programme completes *market system analysis (MSA)* for each sector, forming these into *iPlans*. Each sector then has one or more 'interventions', which are usually discrete ideas of where to intervene in the market. Partners are then identified by Intervention Managers or the Team Leader, sometimes approaching the programme directly. The programme sets out *partnership justifications* outlining the broad intervention idea to be agreed with the programme management; this leads to *Partnership Agreements (PAs)* signed by both ASI and the partner, setting out budget, work plans and reporting requirements (GROW, 2017m). As of May 2017 the programme has signed 15 PAs across all four sectors, as well as two memoranda of understanding in the oil palm sector. Recently

⁴ The outcome-level stability indicators were removed in the recent logframe change because they are "very difficult to measure or keep track of every six monthly or on an annual basis. These are not just difficult to measure but also takes a lot of time and resources." See: 170325_Logframe Revisions_ Revision & New Indicators.xlsx

⁵ The programme shared following the initial draft three documents that demonstrate this (Perceptions around stability in the cocoa sector 2017-02-23.docx, Perceptions around stability in the rubber sector 2017-01-12.docx, and Perceptions around stability in the veg sector 2017-01-31.docx)

⁶ This indicator is included in the Y2 annual report (GROW, 2016f)

the programme has worked outside of interventions through '*action research pilots*' in agro-processing, with the idea of assessing results first before deciding whether to make agro-processing a fully fledged 'sector' for the programme.

Programme spend is split between fees and expenses, and an Intervention Fund. Out of SEK 68 million total programme expenditure to Y3, only SEK 12 million or 17 per cent has been via the Intervention Fund⁷, short of the 30 per cent of the total budget projected in ASI (2012), in the Y2 business plan (GROW, 2015a), or the latest budget⁸. The Intervention Fund can include international or national short term technical assistance, making up three quarters of Intervention Fund expenditure in Y2 for example. In addition, MRM reports are also funded via the fund, as well as some expenses and other costs. For the Y3 budget, around 90 per cent of the fund was spent directly supporting partners including through specific short term consultancies to provide that support.

⁷ Year 1 intervention fund numbers from GROW (2015a) (SEK 761,000); Year 2 intervention fund numbers from GROW (2016f) (SEK 4.72 million); Year 3 intervention fund numbers from Y3 Annual Report_Financials_Sida.xlsx (SEK 6.33 million)

⁸ See Y3 Annual Report_Financials_Sida.xlsx

2. Effectiveness and impact

This chapter sets out the findings of an in-depth review of the four main sectors of GROW⁹. The programme's ToC (as presented in Annex 4) does not specify sectors, but rather sectors were selected based on appraisals of poverty reduction potential, contribution to stability and other factors.¹⁰ Sectors have also been ranked on relative risk and return (see Figure 2). The first business plan focussed on rubber, oil palm and vegetables (GROW, 2014). At that stage cocoa was considered “*well covered and lacking in intervention potential*”, while cassava was “*placed on hold*”, as well as piggery, fruit and aquaculture due to “*low outreach numbers*” and “*low feasibility*”.

By the Y2 business plan submitted in August 2015 (GROW, 2015a), cocoa was brought on, and the four major sectors were in place. Aquaculture was still being explored in November 2015 (GROW, 2015c) and was re-labelled within ‘Investment Promotion’ in the Y3 business plan (GROW, 2016e), but this had gone by the Y4 business plan in February 2017 (GROW, 2017c). The programme considered a ‘*Business competition*’, which has been discontinued and was not presented to the reviewers. The reviewers were presented with a new idea for an impact investment fund, labelled *Expand*, as a potential new component. New activities in processing are also being explored, which are considered in vegetables and oil palm below.

Table 2 sets out the current logframe performance for the four main sectors, including the latest ‘actuals’ for the 2014 to 2016 period, and the latest projections for 2019 (the reviewers assuming 2019 is likely to be the new programme-end date). The next sections go into each of the four main sectors in more depth.

Figure 2: GROW appraisal of risk-return ratios of sectors in programme portfolio (GROW, 2017a)

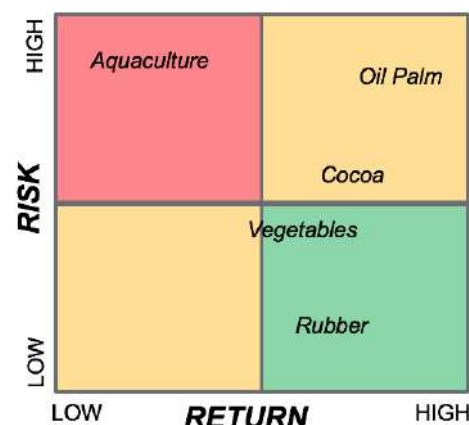


Table 2: Actuals and projections for impact indicators from April 2017 latest logframe¹¹

Impact indicator	Sector	2014-2016 actuals	2019 projection
Impact 1: Benefit outreach Total number of women, men and small firms with positive NAIC	Cocoa	2,788	23,200
	Oil palm	0	0
	Rubber	0	5,700
	Vegetables	47	2,200
	Total	2,835	31100
Impact 2: Income Aggregated Total NAIC amongst women, men and small firms as a result of program activities	Cocoa	USD 527,000	USD 5,872,000
	Oil palm	-	USD 1,517,000
	Rubber	-	USD 1,788,000
	Vegetables	USD 49,000	USD 686,000
	Total	USD 576,000	USD 9,863,000
Impact 3: Jobs Total number of full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs created	Cocoa	60	370
	Oil palm	0	690
	Rubber	0	430
	Vegetables	11	150
	Total	71	1640

⁹ This is based on a methodology set out in Annex 1, documents reviewed in Annex 2 and institutions consulted set out in Annex 3.

¹⁰ Grow Programme Document 2014-2018

¹¹ Actuals and projections from: 170325_Logframe Revisions_Revision & New Indicators.xlsx

Cocoa



Sector spend from Intervention Fund to Y3¹²:

SEK 1.9 million

Sector spend total to Y3 (including all costs):

SEK 15.8 million

Programme estimate spend by its end:

SEK 43.3 million

Beneficiary estimate to date (Impact 8):

2,788

Intervention 1	Buyer-Led Services for Quality Improvement
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Intervention 2	Spray Service Provision & Models
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GROW has focussed its efforts in cocoa on two main interventions. The first is based on a partner, Africa Venture Liberia (AVL), upgrading the productivity of farmers and buying at higher prices due to the better grades being sold. This is enhanced by an attempt to gain the price premium associated with UTZ certification.¹³ The programme wishes to replicate the model with a further partner, Trade Link, with a partnership justification drafted in April 2017 but no Partnership Agreement (PA) yet.

AVL have initially worked with 3,000 farmers to train them on better farming and drying practices, but they have so far only bought cocoa from a fraction of these farmers. AVL signed a PA in June 2016. At that time AVL had shareholders who brought finance (Emery Cooper; Cheryl & Kadija Morgan), as well as the technical lead on the ground (George Howard). In December 2016, the financial partners informed GROW they were divorcing themselves from the company. This left AVL without a source of finance.

The pilot for the second intervention – spray services provision (Intervention 2) through a PA with Unique Fumigation and Engineering Services (UFES), finished in February 2017, but GROW did not find evidence that it could work sustainably, and it was therefore terminated.

Cocoa sector: Justification and analysis

Area	Rationale
Market system 	GROW has developed a good understanding of the cocoa sector through the initial market analysis as well as the updated analysis undertaken after the Ebola crisis (see GROW 2015d, 2016h, 2017d). They have explored several different interventions - working on the policy side, improving support functions like

¹² For each sector, Sector spend from intervention fund: Y3 Annual Report_Financials_Sida.xlsx, GROW (2015a) & GROW (2016f); Sector spend including all costs & spend estimate by end: CBA calculation v4.xlsx; Beneficiaries to date: 170427_Logframe Explanatory Notes.xlsx

¹³ UTZ is a standard based on two sets of guidelines – a Code of Conduct and a Chain of Custody – focussing on better farming practices and traceability respectively.

analysis	spraying and engaging with cooperatives - but most of them have been terminated as they did not have the potential for systemic change (GROW 2016f)¹⁴ or were found to be difficult to achieve results within the timeframe of the programme. The current intervention that the programme is pursuing (increase quality of cocoa through UTZ certification) is logical. There is currently no market for certified cocoa in Liberia although there is an institutional buyer (Theobroma) willing to buy certified cocoa at the premium price. However, many constraints remain unaddressed and the risk of failure due to the weakness of its only partner, AVL, is high (see more below).
Instruments used 	GROW has used facilitation when supporting the cocoa working group; technical assistance through work on spraying and supporting the training of farmers; and grants, funding the construction of cocoa processing and storage facilities, to support the transformation of the industry. For the AVL intervention to succeed there are two key instruments that GROW is not fully exploring, particularly now AVL has no financial backing with the departure of shareholders (January 2017) who may have been able to fund working capital. Firstly, providing AVL with technical assistance in the form of designing a business plan and offering mentorship and coaching support to run the business. AVL is a committed partner with a grand vision but with significant limitations in its ability to capture the scale of the enterprise and the challenges laying ahead. Secondly, securing access to finance for AVL in the form of working capital so it can pay farmers cash for cocoa purchases is now critical.
Partner selection 	GROW's appraisal of partners has evolved over the course of the programme. In March 2016, LAADCO and Wienco were the focal partners, rated as <i>high skill</i> and <i>high will</i> by the programme (GROW, 2016a). This had changed by the April 2017 updated iPlan (GROW, 2017f), with the programme noting a reduction in will of LAADCO and Wienco, with neither interested in a model involving the certification of farmers, hence the lack of partnership. In contrast, AVL has always been ranked as lower in skill but with high will. The programme therefore currently identifies AVL and, more recently, Trade Link, as the key partners for intervention #1. A PA was signed with AVL in June 2016 with an addendum in September 2016, with a maximum cost of USD 75,000, the majority allocated to warehouse construction and the construction of 150 solar dryers at village-level. The PA ends in June 2017, and it is likely some form of extension or continuation will be needed. Given the infant state of the market for certified cocoa in Liberia and the financial weakness of partners involved, working with only a limited number of partners and making them succeed seems the right approach. However, the programme has been slow in working to find a financial partner (e.g. commercial bank, large institutional buyer, angel investor, that could provide pre-financing) with no progress since January 2017 when it was clear the financial partner had left.
Risk appraisal (including on) 	There are major risks to the current proposed business model for AVL. There are large expectations from the side of cocoa farmers for the upcoming season in terms of the amounts of certified cocoa that will be bought at a premium. AVL also have highly unrealistic expectations, stating to the reviewers that 2,000 tonnes for export was the target for this year, despite only approx. 25 tonnes being exported in 2016. The principal reason for expectations being unrealistic is the working capital

¹⁴ "It started to become apparent that even if the Executive Order was passed, it would not immediately solve all the problems.... From these experiences, the team reached consensus that regulatory change was not actually the most important or immediate binding constraint in the sector as previously imagined. This re-oriented GROW's strategy towards pursuing partnerships with buyers based on commercial incentives rather than legal requirements." GROW, 2016f.

environmental risks)	constraint. Without access to working capital financing, AVL will not be able to purchase cocoa for farmers at a premium price and farmers will have to sell their cocoa to the usual set of traders offering lower prices. The programme has acknowledged this; the partnership justification for AVL of June 2016, noted as a risk “AVL may not be able to secure enough capital to purchase cocoa and pay farmers throughout the cocoa season”. The Year 3 Business Plan highlighted as a Medium likelihood risk: “Buyers do not have sufficient access to finance to offer new services and make investments” (GROW, 2016e). By the time of the external review, the likelihood of the same risk was rated as High (GROW, 2017a), clearly linked to the loss of AVL’s initial financial partners. However, it is not clear this risk is being adequately addressed, particularly as the size of the warehouse being constructed is based on AVL’s expectations of sales quantity rather than a more realistic appraisal. Another risk to the success of the model is around transportation and logistics. The distance from market and state of the roads makes access to markets very costly, which could have serious implications for the viability of the business model. During the rainy season there is a risk of not being able to reach the market. The programme’s estimates include that the cost of transporting cocoa from Lofa or Bong to Monrovia is around USD 60 to 100 per tonne (GROW, 2015d). While a figure for Nimba is not provided, this could imply the cost for AVL to transport a single container of USD 1500 to 2500. On the positive side, the market for certification and the abandoning of the spray services intervention means that most cocoa is organic and environmental risks are very low.
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Cocoa sector: Impact and results	
Area	Rationale
Results to date (up to May 2017) 	Cocoa is by far the biggest contributor to the current estimates for the programme’s logframe – including Impact indicators on attributable income increases (Impact 7), the number of individuals benefitting from usage and access to improved services (Outcomes 4 and 5) and the number benefitting from income increases (Impact 8), as well as job creation (Impact 6). The evidence for this has come from an ‘Early Impact Assessment’ (EIA) of the AVL intervention (GROW, 2017e). Estimates are made based on the premise that 3,000 farmers received UTZ training supported by GROW, of which an estimated 2,788 achieved higher incomes as a result. Total income benefits are estimated at USD 517,000 to date. All of the benefit comes from the training, as the primary goal of AVL purchasing from farmers and attaining a UTZ premium has not yet been achieved. However, the estimates of results from the EIA are likely to be significant over-estimates, more details on this are provided below (see the MRM sub-section on Measuring change, p.23-24). In addition to the above, a number of activities agreed in the PA with AVL have not been completed, although this may be because of the loss of the financial partner. Solar dryers are not ready and behind schedule (the PA said they would be done by September 2016). Further, GROW field trips have consistently found progress behind schedule (see GROW 2016l, 2016n).
Target groups (pro-) 	The cocoa value chain is one which focusses on smallholder farmers, with the sector rated as having <i>high pro-poor relevance</i> by the programme (GROW, 2016h). Farming an average of five acres (GROW, 2017e), an estimated 69 per cent of household income comes from selling cocoa (GROW, 2015d), implying average household income for cocoa farmers of approximately USD 760 in

poor, gender, youth)	2015¹⁵, spread between a very large household size (estimated at 10 individuals in GROW, 2015d). The programme has been clear that women are mainly indirect beneficiaries in the cocoa sector. Within the AVL partnership justification of June 2016 it states: <i>“Women in cocoa farming are mainly involved in transporting and collecting of cocoa pods and then preparation of the pods for processing. Women harvest, process, and men sell and benefit from the proceeds.”</i> The review slide-deck (GROW, 2017a) states: <i>“Cocoa is a family-based activity, but men typically make decisions and control earnings from cocoa”</i>. However, the reviewers find the case women will be indirect beneficiaries to be strong. Farmers are not likely to be young, with an average age of 46 (GROW, 2017a). However, youth are involved in cocoa farms as casual labourers (AVL partnership justification). The reviewers’ field trip suggested that there were likely to be significant community spillovers from improvements in the quantity and quality of cocoa production.
Potential for systemic change 	The cocoa sector in Liberia performs poorly compared to in the country’s neighbours such as Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire (GROW, 2016h) particularly in terms of low productivity. These neighbours sell higher grades of cocoa at a price premium compared to Liberia. At the analysis stage, the programme clearly identified core market constraints of low productivity and a lack of incentive for farmers to invest in the maintenance of their farms, as well as for buyers to invest in quality improvements in the sector (see GROW 2016f). Certification and buyer-led extension services provide a clear model for overcoming these systemic constraints. In addition, the cocoa MSA and iPlan (GROW 2016a, 2016h, 2017f) set out the potential for a demonstration effect from a certification model with embedded services, with the ultimate systemic goal that international buyers remove the <i>“price penalty”</i> on Liberian cocoa. If either AVL or Trade Link can prove the feasibility of producing and exporting certified cocoa in Liberia, the demonstration effect could be significant, which could successfully attract other players to this new market.
Potential to meet programme’s 2019 projections 	The programme’s projection is to have 23,200 beneficiaries in cocoa by 2019 (Impact 8), generating USD 5.6 million of income benefits (Impact 7)¹⁶. The projections are based on the estimates of the EIA for AVL (GROW, 2017e), scale-up of operations, and replication of the model by other partners directly supported by GROW and indirectly in terms of copying the certification approach¹⁷. As indicated above, the reviewers’ analysis suggests that the estimates to date are not likely to be accurate. Furthermore, progress to date (as of May 2017) with the main intervention partner (AVL) makes it unlikely that any level of scale-up will be achieved during the lifetime of the programme, let alone replication. As a result, the large targets for cocoa are not likely to be met by June 2018 and are highly unlikely to be achieved by June 2019.

¹⁵ Based on 90 Liberian Dollar (LRD) to US Dollar (USD) exchange rate, price received of 130 LRD per kilogram (kg), average sales of 363 kg, and 69 per cent of income coming from cocoa (source for last three numbers is GROW, 2015d).

¹⁶ GROW (2017f) iPlan - Cocoa. April 2017

¹⁷ 170423_IMT_Cocoa Warehousing Aggregation_FINAL.xlsx

Rubber



Sector spend from Intervention Fund to Y3:

SEK 3.6 million

Sector spend total to Y3 (including all costs):

SEK 19.5 million

Programme estimate spend by its end:

SEK 50.2 million

Beneficiary estimate to date (Impact 8):

0

Intervention 1	RSS Processing
Intervention 2	Access to finance for RSS
Intervention 3	Skills development (via TVET)

GROW's rubber interventions centre around the processing of rubber into ribbed smoked sheets (RSS). RSS is a higher value-added stage of rubber production, which can fetch a higher price in international markets than the predominant form in Liberia, Technically Specified Rubber (TSR). Further, RSS is less energy intensive in its production than TSR. The programme aims to link commercial farmers or business cluster developers (BCDs) interested in RSS processing technology with smallholder farmer cooperatives that can supply latex. GROW has established Partnership Agreements with COR Corporation (known also as Bright Farms), Agro Rubber Industries (ARI) and MRE for Intervention #1.

In addition, GROW has engaged a finance provider, the Liberia Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI), to facilitate BCDs' access to finance (Intervention #2) via a loan guarantee facility.

GROW is also seeking to develop curricula for training young people in RSS production, in partnership with technical, vocational education & training (TVET) institutions (Intervention #3).

Rubber sector: Justification and analysis	
Area / RAG	Rationale
Market system analysis 	The programme undertook significant analysis on the rubber sector and has developed a clear justification for its RSS intervention in particular. RSS was identified very early on as a key area for intervention as “RSS could be an easy start to drive behaviour changes” to drive value addition (GROW, 2014). The programme has a good understanding of the challenges faced by the private sector in developing the RSS technology and has been able to appropriately assess the challenges and address them through effective and adaptive learning. For example, sourcing advice from a Sri Lankan rubber expert who will be in country on a medium-term basis supporting the expansion of RSS technology.

	It is important, however, that the programme develops a better analytical understanding of how introducing RSS technology affects GROW's beneficiaries (i.e. smallholder rubber farmers and tappers), as this is an area that is not fully outlined in market system analysis or iPlans developed to date (GROW, 2016j, 2016c, 2017g). The programme has undertaken some outline calculations on pricing, but the reviewers believe that further evidence-based analysis could be undertaken to better understand the benefits and implications to smallholder farmers of the different models being proposed by the programme.
Instruments used 	The programme has been able to effectively use the variety of tools at its disposal, including technical assistance through the sourcing of in-house technical expertise; grants that support commercial farmers engaging with smallholder communities); facilitation including the identification of interested commercial farmers); and the development of a credit guarantee scheme to allow commercial farmers access finance for purchasing RSS processors. This seems to be a logical set of instruments. The one area that could be enhanced is technical assistance to the cooperatives themselves to increase their ability to produce for the RSS processors, i.e. BCDs.
Partner selection 	The main challenge faced by the programme has been engaging commercial farmers who are interested in adopting RSS technology and have enough financial capacity. By working with COR Corporation (Bright Farms), GROW identified a market innovator with financial capacity and is building on its leadership to attract other commercial farmers. Other commercial farmers with interest in RSS technology have been identified, although the engagement is still at early stages (ARI is furthest along with a Partnership Agreement). The programme has now engaged with several cooperatives to strengthen the pooriness of the business model that was originally identified. This is a key addition as it can ensure that the benefits of RSS technology trickle down. However, some cooperatives are still at an early stage (e.g. Kwapahgei Cooperative has not yet been formally registered as a cooperative) and a lot of support will be required to get them to effectively participate in this market. The programme has also developed a very strong partnership with LBDI, which is key to the replication and scaling-up of the RSS model as access to finance remains the major constraint. This was a solution introduced by the programme after the expected financing from government did not materialise.¹⁸
Risk appraisal (including on environmental risks) 	There are significant risks that the replication/scaling up of the intervention does not lead to improved livelihoods of GROW's direct beneficiaries. Under the current approach, GROW's beneficiaries (smallholder rubber farmers as part of rubber cooperatives as well as their tappers) will benefit from supplying latex, which requires value addition and captures a higher price, to commercial farmers with RSS technology. However, the availability of different sizes of RSS processing machines means that, in the future, commercial farmers with access to finance could simply source machines that are adjusted to their nucleus farm size, and therefore not need to engage with smallholder farmers. On the other hand, the availability of smaller machinery could create opportunities for co-operative producers seeking to get into RSS processing themselves. In addition, the rubber iPlan (GROW, 2017g) highlighted as 'very low' risk that <i>"Firestone tries to kill competition by temporarily raising prices to 'steal' supply"</i>. However, the reviewers found evidence that this risk has already materialised. This risk should be reappraised and measures introduced to ensure

¹⁸ "Funding for RSS processing originally hinged on a promised USD10 million government guarantee fund. In the course of 2016, it became clear that this government commitment would not materialise as planned and the local banks, alone, did not have the risk appetite for long-term lending, underscoring the challenges of working closely with the public sector on such interventions." (GROW, 2017b).

	that Firestone does not kill the RSS market by purchasing USS (unsmoked sheets) at prices designed to dis-incentivise producers to move to RSS production.
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Rubber sector: Impact and results	
Area / RAG	Rationale
Results to date (up to May 2017) 	The rubber sector is currently not contributing results to the programme logframe for outcome or impact indicators. This is despite projections in the Y3 business plan of USD 27,000 for income (Impact 7) and 81 beneficiaries (Impact 8). Progress has been slow as the programme has had to address the access to finance constraint (through a credit guarantee with LBDI) before it could engage with partners. Two PAs have been signed with COR Corporation and Agro Rubber Industries (ARI) in September 2016 and July 2016 respectively, but implementation stalled awaiting for LBDI financing. At the time of the review, three loans had been approved (pending final signatures from LBDI board) but disbursement has not yet started. No baselines have been conducted for the intervention.
Target groups (pro-poor, gender, youth) 	The rubber sector MSA highlighted it as having high pro-poor relevance, particularly for employee tappers, who <i>“have a regular monthly wage that works out to USD 2–5 per day, and contractor tappers work mainly on a daily salary of USD 1–4”</i> (GROW, 2016j). In addition, the programme highlights smallholder farms with a median of 20 acres under cultivation, where <i>“these farms brought in a net of USD 57–263 per month”</i> (ibid.). The reviewers find the model to be pro-poor if it incorporates cooperatives. This is because the increased price will generate income for the smallholders involved in the cooperatives, and tappers are usually paid a set proportion of the price. However, it is unclear that work with commercial farmers if cooperatives are not involved will be particularly pro-poor in the Liberian context, as the price impact may all accrue to the farmers, who may not pay their tappers higher wages. In terms of gender, the programme has highlighted rubber as a <i>“male-dominated sector”</i> (ibid.). However, the gender strategy sets out that <i>“women in the rubber sector report having a strong voice in decision making over the use of the household income.”</i> (GROW, 2016p). And for youth, while there are opportunities it is <i>“generally not seen as very attractive by most youth”</i> (GROW, 2016j).
Potential for systemic change 	As GROW’s 2014 business plan set out, rubber processed in Liberia has been dominated by low-grade TSR, with a monopsony buyer setting prices <i>“only up to 80 per cent of the world market price”</i> (GROW, 2014). Diversifying the sector is a clear systemic goal, and with higher prices for RSS, the commercial RSS model has strong potential for systemic change. The reviewers’ conversations with LBDI indicated the bank believes the RSS sector has strong potential to take-off in the coming two or three years. However, the current intervention model of GROW is dependent on cooperatives to ensure it reaches the intended programme beneficiaries. The current cooperative model requires significant work from the programme, and is therefore less likely to be replicated without support. The intervention #3 in TVET is also unlikely to be sustained unless the sector grows at a rate able to sustain a demand for employees.

Potential to meet programme's 2019 projections 	The programme projects that rubber will generate 5,700 beneficiaries by 2019 (Impact 8), and USD 1.8 million of income benefits (Impact 7)¹⁹, most of which accruing to those in 430 FTE jobs created (Impact 6). The projections are based on an estimated five partners including the partners already having PAs. However, the projections do not match with those in the current IMT following recent revisions.²⁰ On the current trajectory, the project will achieve only a small portion of these targets by June 2018. It also seems unlikely that the projections for June 2019 are met, unless there is a very rapid expansion of loans provided by LBDI to RSS producers during 2017.
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¹⁹ 170427_Logframe Explanatory Notes.xlsx

²⁰ 170416_IMT_Rubber RSS Processing_DRAFT.xlsx

Oil palm



Sector spend from Intervention Fund to Y3:

SEK 2.6 million

Sector spend total to Y3 (including all costs):

SEK 19.2 million

Programme estimate spend by its end:

SEK 28.6 million

Beneficiary estimate to date (Impact 8):

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Intervention 1	Development and implementation of out-grower operational model and financial plan
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GROW's work in the oil palm sector was primarily done in the first three years of the programme (Y1, Y2, Y3), with less activity this year (Y4). GROW's activities have centred on developing out-grower schemes as laid out in the 2009 concession agreements, by bringing together stakeholders and facilitating the Government of Liberia's (GoL) efforts to get the schemes financed and operational (Intervention #1). This has mainly involved working with GoL institutions, the National Bureau for Concessions (NBC), as well as the oil palm developers Golden Veroleum Liberia (GVL) and Sime Darby.

The model that has emerged is being led by IDH (Initiatief Duurzame Handel - The Sustainable Trade Initiative), through Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI). IDH have the express interest of protecting forests, with involvement based on protecting five hectares of forest for every one hectare of out-grower land. GROW is now seeking to support IDH to bring in development financial institution (DFI) finance to fund 4,000 hectares of out-grower schemes with GVL. IDH will provide 35 per cent first-loss guarantee to DFIs for loans up to USD 16 million (GROW, 2016g). The suggested structure is that each concession should manage an off-balance sheet Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) that houses the investment into the community out-grower schemes.

The programme has also partnered with the Quintessential Business Women's Association (QBWA) and Pasama Agriculture and Trading Corporation, with Partnership Agreement's for both signed in April 2017. These partners are seeking to produce processed palm oil for marketing, as well as branded palm oil products including soaps. However, the programme has not yet framed these as an 'intervention' and they are only at a pilot phase.

Oil palm sector: Justification and analysis

Area	Rationale
Market system analysis 	GROW has shown understanding of the barriers to the out-grower schemes, and its primary role in the market has been that of facilitator. GROW identified, early on, ‘capacity gaps’ among key stakeholders in the sector²¹. In support of these stakeholders, mainly the National Bureau of Concessions (NBC), it has subsequently contributed some analytical pieces of work - a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) through Subah Belleh Associates (SBA), and then a first attempt at defining the operational and financial model for out-grower schemes through LTS International. However, a lot more operational/financial analysis needs to happen to further refine the model before the first out-grower scheme is operational and starts to deliver benefits to GROW’s target population. In addition, given that IDH is focused on forested communities, there is still no clear viable model on how out-grower schemes could work for non-forested communities. For the palm oil processing partnerships with QBWA and Pasama, there is a significant lack of analysis to date.²² For example, the QBWA partnership justification claims that 431 farmers will earn USD 638 on average per year from selling palm oil to QBWA²³. This does not analyse any additionality or price impact – i.e. are farmers selling palm oil they would otherwise not be selling, and will the price be any different from the standard market price if not?
Instruments used 	The key instrument used in the oil palm sector to date has been facilitation²⁴. The programme has played a key role in kick-starting the process towards setting up the smallholder out-grower model, initially via the development of the Oil Palm Out-grower Scheme Implementation Technical Committee's (OPOSITC) Annual Work Plan, which was endorsed in May 2015 (GROW, 2015c). Following this, the programme provided direct funding to develop key components of the model in collaboration with the NBC and the working group – this included the CNA, finalised in February 2016. At this stage, IDH came in with their specific forestry model, and this formed the basis of the operational and financial model, finalised in July 2016.²⁵
Partner selection 	GROW has played a key role in bringing to the table all key partners in the sector. At Government level the key partner has been NBC. For the forestry model, IDH is now the key player going forward, with a clear mandate and significant technical and financial resources to support the establishment of the first out-grower scheme. Overall, GROW itself is regarded as a valuable partner that has contributed to significantly speed-up the process towards making the first out-grower scheme in Liberia operational. GROW has also partnered with QBWA and Pasama for palm oil processing.
Risk appraisal (including on environmental) 	GROW has consistently presented unrealistic appraisals of the timeframes required for the out-grower model to be implemented. The April 2016 annual report stated implementation would begin in November 2016 (GROW, 2016f). The January 2017 business plan assumed implementation would begin, including payments for clearing, within 2017 (GROW, 2017c).

²¹ See Design phase docs (2014) - Appendix I_Oil Palm.pdf

²² The team’s comments on the draft report note that they were operating pilots and plan to analyse after pilot completion.

²³ Quintessential Business Women Association (QBWA) Partnership Justification, 28th March 2017

²⁴ “GROW fits into this arrangement as a neutral facilitator that can help the Government align the incentives of these different groups of stakeholders, and bring everyone on to the same page.” (GROW, 2016f)

²⁵ See LTS International & Greenstar Resources (2016a, 2016b, 2016c, 2016d)

risks)	However, there are significant challenges ahead that the programme needs to acknowledge and act upon if it is to stay operational in the oil palm sector. This includes that DFIs to fund even the IDH model are not on board yet; the details of the out-grower community oil palm legal entity ²⁶ are still not defined; details of how the forest identified will be protected are not clear; and the actual operational model in terms of the division of responsibilities between GVL and the community SPV once in the production phase is also yet to be defined.
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Oil palm sector: Impact and results

Area	Rationale
Results to date (up to May 2017) 	The delay in the finalisation of the out-grower scheme model has meant GROW does not claim any logframe results to date for beneficiaries, income, or jobs at outcome or impact level. However, GROW report USD 11.7 million for ‘investment leveraged’ (Output 2) in the current logframe²⁷. The programme states this <i>“refers to the USD29million allocated by IDH to the out-grower program as a guarantee for concessions. Based on yearly allocation of USD5.8million. We claim the investments applicable until GROW project end-date.”</i>²⁸ There are issues with the degree of attribution GROW claims here for the investment leveraged, for one that the investment has not yet taken place. Other issues are set out in more detail below (see Chapter 3 MRM sub-section on Attribution and reporting results, p.25). Given the long-term nature of the investment, GROW have a clear case for a significant qualitative ‘result’ to date, which is the acknowledged role in facilitating and launching the process around out-grower schemes. The reviewers found multiple stakeholders testifying that the programme’s actions have likely sped-up the development of the out-grower model (this qualitative result is the reasons the reviewers give an Amber rating rather than Red rating for this area).
Target groups (pro-poor, gender, youth) 	The oil palm MSA (GROW, 2016i) identified the sector as having ‘medium’ pro-poor relevance, although with significant potential for a model that could have stronger relevance for the poor. The out-grower model developed undoubtedly could have a very poor target group, impacted through <i>“creating employment opportunities for community members as labourers on both nucleus and out-grower land”</i> (ibid.) In terms of gender and youth, the programme has stated <i>“While future smallholder oil palm farmers (out-grower scheme participants) will likely be predominantly older male heads of household, additional labour will be supplied by 18-35 year old male and female youth in activities such as underbrushing, harvesting and transport to concession processing facilities.”</i> (GROW, 2015c) Furthermore, the out-grower model operated by GVL in particular entails community investments that could have strong positive spillover benefits for both women and youth.
Potential for systemic change 	GROW’s justification for operating in the oil palm sector has been based on the transformational potential of out-grower schemes for farmers and for the expansion of concession ‘nucleus’ farms. The MSA for oil palm sets this out very clearly in that: <i>“concessions can act as a bridge to market for smallholders as they have existing relationships with large international buyers and the technical knowledge</i>

²⁶ “As a condition of IDH/NICFI’s participation, the de-risking facility seeks to introduce PPAs, tripartite agreements signed by the GoL, the community and the palm oil concession holding company, in which parties agree to conserve and actively protect a certain area of natural forest in exchange for a similar area of oil palm invested in” (LTS International & Greenstar Resources, 2016a).

²⁷ 170427_Logframe Explanatory Notes.xlsx

²⁸ 170428_GROW Aggregation File_Summary of Actuals, Projections & Estimates.xlsx

	<i>required to produce high-quality volumes for export</i>” (GROW, 2016i). Interventions in the oil palm sector have also been justified on the grounds of ensuring greater stability²⁹ - <i>“The standoffs that result between communities and concessions create a perception in communities that they are not benefiting from the presence of the concessions – a key stability concern.”</i> (GROW, 2014). If the out-grower scheme can be successfully rolled-out, it has the potential to allow the concessions to expand with potential impacts for jobs and income. This would likely have a demonstration effect that could lead to replication. However, the current model is for communities with forestry land to offer, and there is currently no model for non-forestry communities. The systemic change potential of current interventions is therefore limited to forestry communities.
Potential to meet programme’s 2019 projections 	The April 2017 iPlan (GROW, 2017i) and latest logframe indicate that benefits will begin to accrue in oil palm from 2018. By 2019, 690 jobs are created with income totalling USD 1.5 million. This is larger than the latest draft oil palm concession IMT, which projects USD 1.1 million of income by 2020³⁰, because the former assumes other partnerships will be developed. However, it is highly unlikely that the intervention will deliver any results to GROW’s target population during the lifetime of the programme on the current trajectory, at least based on the reviewers’ interviews with representatives of the key stakeholders, IDH and GVL. This is because of the issues discussed above still to be resolved with the operational model and financing structure for the concessions, as well as the political, logistical and practical challenges to getting the necessary agreements in place. Because of this, replication and the addition of new partners through concession models by 2019 is extremely unlikely. The fledgling intervention in palm oil processing (edible palm oil) has not been analysed in a way to create clear targets for any of the impact or outcome indicators, as such it appears very unlikely it will contribute significantly to results for the sector by June 2018 or even by June 2019.

²⁹ The programme’s original logframe (Grow, 2014: Annex 11_Logframe and Explanatory Note) had two outcome indicators and one impact indicator on Stability, which were removed in later revisions.

³⁰ 170420_IMT_Oil Palm Concession Outgrowers_DRAFT.xlsx

Vegetables



Sector spend from Intervention Fund to Y3:

SEK 2.4 million

Sector spend total to Y3 (including all costs):

SEK 13.2 million

Programme estimate spend by its end:

SEK 45.2 million

Beneficiary estimate to date (Impact 8):

47

Intervention 1	Seeds, Inputs & Irrigation Equipment
Intervention 2	Buying, Aggregation and Market Information - Traders
Intervention 3	Buying, Aggregation and Market Information – Commercial Out-growers
Intervention 4	Access to Finance

GROW's interventions in the vegetables sector have evolved over time and are currently interlinked – support to an inputs and extension services partner that provides farmers with embedded services (AIM Global – Intervention #1); provide traders from Monrovia's Vegetable Sellers' Association (MVSA) with business development support to improve business performance and expand their markets for "exotic" vegetables (Intervention #2); and link these traders to Afriland First Bank with a credit guarantee scheme leading to loans for traders to access inputs and working capital (Intervention #4).

In addition, Intervention #3 is aiming to develop a model where the large commercial farmers with ability to pre-finance the production and purchase of vegetables establish out-grower models with smallholder farmers.

A new area of 'action research' has also been developed with the processing of cassava leaves with a partnership justification for Pape Foods developed in April 2017.

Vegetables sector: Justification and analysis	
Area	Rationale
Market system analysis 	Interventions in the vegetables market have been the result of identifying constraints faced to the success of earlier interventions and incorporating new solutions that aim to address them. As a result, the principle business model proposed for this market has become highly complex and is a combination of Interventions #1, #2 and #4. In addition, there seems to have been limited analysis on the

	financial/commercial viability of some aspects of the model proposed, such as the trader model, and the viability for adaptation and crowding in. The project's new '<i>action research</i>' intervention in processing of cassava leaves has not been supported by evidence, no analysis has been developed. This includes a lack of evidence in the partnership justification for processing with Pape Foods. The programme states that it is their intention to conduct analysis after the 'pilot phase' is complete, continuing or discontinuing depending on the results.
Instruments used 	GROW has used a wide range of instruments to support interventions in the vegetables sector, including extensive facilitation by the team, sub-contracting a business service provider to train traders, giving a grant to an input provider to test a new model of delivering embedded services, and setting up a credit guarantee scheme with Afriland First Bank. Individually, all of the instruments used have a clear rationale. Issues arise from the degree to which the instruments have become interlinked and reliant on one another to function.
Partner selection 	The programme has identified some capable partners, mainly an innovative input provider (AIM Global) that is willing to provide embedded services to farmers through input selling; some traders willing to try different models to expand their operations and access finance; and a commercial bank (Afriland) who is willing to provide finance albeit with a very low risk appetite (taking 20 per cent of the principal exposure risk with 80 per cent taken by the credit guarantee scheme put in place by GROW).³¹ GROW has also identified some commercial farmers (Wulki Farm, Sumo Farm) that, according to the recently developed partnership justifications, seem to have strong interests in investing in an out-grower scheme with vegetable smallholder farmers. However, this intervention (#3) is at an early stage of development as no Partnership Agreements have been signed yet.
Risk appraisal (including on environmental risks) 	The main business model being proposed by the programme for the vegetables sector is very risky as there are too many moving parts. This makes it near to impossible to envisage replication or scaling-up to take place. This has been acknowledged to the reviewers by the programme team and the emphasis appears to be shifting to the new model with commercial farmers. The conditions of the loans provided through Afriland to traders are restrictive, in that they must use 65 per cent of the loan for inputs bought from AIM Global as a sole provider, with the remaining 35 per cent available for their working capital needs.³² This model means that traders themselves are forced to carry much of the risk of the farming business, rather than the farmers or the input provider. This raises questions on the viability of the facility, as expressed by the traders themselves when meeting with the review team. Ultimately traders must provide collateral of 100 per cent of the value of the loan, and while the bank estimate only 3 per cent of loans are non-performing in the sector³³, the risk of default is significant with the inflexibility in the current model.

³¹ Partnership Agreement with Afriland First Bank signed 16th June 2016

³² Afriland First Bank Guarantee Fund Operational Guide-signed 12th September 2016

³³ Based on reviewers interview with Afriland.

Vegetables sector: Impact and results

Area	Rationale
Results to date (up to May 2017) 	The vegetables intervention has begun to generate some numbers for the GROW logframe. This includes (for 2016) - 47 individuals, 11 jobs and net income of USD 49,000. These numbers are based on two traders reaching 47 out-growers. However, the achieved numbers are far below the 503 individuals, 39 jobs and USD 200,000 of income projected for the year in the Y3 business plan (GROW, 2016e).
Target groups (pro-poor, gender, youth) 	The vegetables sector MSA highlights its ‘<i>high</i>’ pro-poor relevance (GROW, 2016k). This is clearly the case in as much as the programme seeks to work with smallholder farmers. However the analysis often refers to 300,000 vegetable farmers (e.g. GROW, 2014), although only a fraction of these are likely to be involved in the ‘exotic’ vegetables being worked on by the programme.³⁴ The MSA also highlights the sector as having strong potential for women, with involvement at all stages of the value chain and “<i>women are much more likely to control the income from vegetable sales and to be responsible themselves for conducting the sale</i>” (GROW, 2016k). This is consistent with anecdotal findings by the review team, mainly through women traders and sellers.
Potential for systemic change 	As the MSA states: “<i>Liberia has strong potential to supply the domestic market with fresh exotic vegetables, but significant constraints exist in use of inputs, equipment, access to finance, buying/selling relationships, and market information.</i>” (GROW, 2016k). The case for systemic change in the sector is therefore clear. The existing model being used (the combination of Interventions #1, #2 and #4) is highly complex, linking a large number of different players. This complexity makes it less likely to function once GROW ends, and extremely hard to replicate. Moreover, the loan operational guide developed for Afriland states that GROW is required to actively find the traders to apply for loans, posing questions on the sustainability of this facility once the programme ends. There is likely more potential that the outlined commercial farmer model (Intervention #3) could deliver change if proved viable, however it is too early to assess at this stage.

³⁴ “According to the Monrovia Vegetable Traders Association, there are about 100 traders engaged in the wholesale of exotic vegetables, compared to more than 3000 in indigenous vegetables.” GROW (2016k).

Potential to meet programme's 2019 projections  A	The current logframe has projections of reaching 2,200 individuals (Impact 8) with USD 686,000 additional net income (Impact 7) by 2019, as well as 150 FTE jobs (Impact 6). These are smaller than the projections in the Y3 business plan which had income projections at USD 3.3 million (GROW, 2016e), or the Y4 business plan, which projected income at USD 1.6 million (GROW, 2017c). The current projections appear to be based on the extension model reaching 800 farmers by 2019, and 25 traders getting loans of USD 5,000³⁵. The models also appear to have a number of benefits associated with the commercial out-growers model³⁶. The reviewers believe that the current trader/out-grower model is unlikely to generate the scale of benefits currently projected due to the capacity weaknesses and complexity of the model as discussed above. The commercial farmer model shows more promise, but given timing is unlikely to generate any benefits before June 2018 and only some benefits by June 2019.
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³⁵ 170428_IMT_Vegetables Trader Aggregation_FINAL.xlsx

³⁶ Two commercial farmers with 152 outgrower farmers as direct beneficiaries by 2019. An additional seven farmers entering the market through a 'crowding-in' effect by 2019. See 170411_IMT_Veggies Commercial Outgrowers_DRAFT.xlsx

3. Monitoring and results measurement (MRM) and value for money (VfM)

The programme's approach to monitoring and results measurement (MRM) was set out in its MRM Manual at design phase³⁷, updated as its MRM and Knowledge Management (KM) Manual in April 2015 (GROW, 2015b). The programme's value for money (VfM) framework was last updated at the design phase in 2014.³⁸ As with most programmes, these documents set out an ideal approach, but the practical reality may differ. The reviewers have attempted to assess the current system in practice rather than the theoretical approach set out in the two manuals.

According to the MRM Manual, the MRM system seeks to conform to the Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) Standard for Results Measurement. As such, the DCED Standard is used by the reviewers to assess the current system.³⁹ Annex 4 presents a review of GROW's MRM system against each 'control point' of the DCED Standard. For simplicity in this chapter, the review findings are then summarised into an assessment around five key areas:

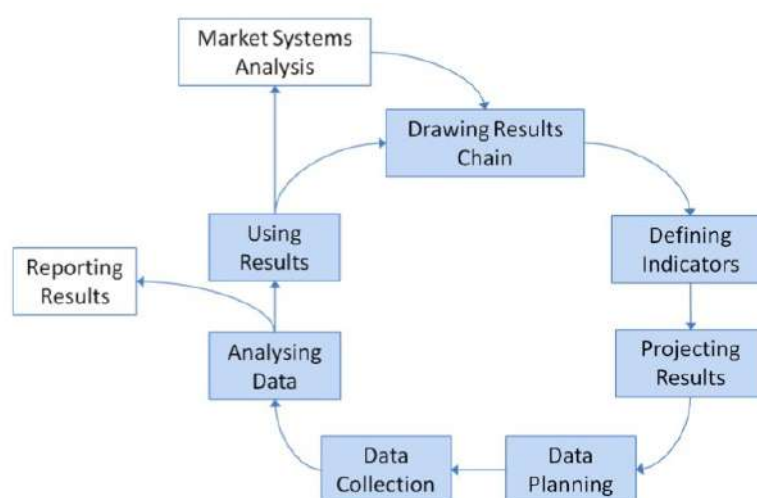
- The MRM system
- Results chains and defining indicators of change
- Measuring change including systemic change
- Attribution and reporting results (including on gender)
- Tracking costs and VfM

Figure 3: Programme MRM cycle

The MRM system

The MRM Manual (GROW, 2015b) defines an ideal MRM cycle as shown in Figure 3, with the use of evidence to inform market systems analysis, and in theory to inform programme design through updated results chains, as well as to provide information to report results through the programme logframe.

In practice the programme operates a slightly different work flow for MRM. Interventions are defined initially as ideas, while the programme may then work with a single or multiple partners for each intervention. Partnerships initially go through a stage of a partnership justification, before becoming a formal Partnership Agreement (PA). The PAs effectively amount to contracts with intervention partners and are signed by the partner representative and the ASI Programme Director.



³⁷ GROW design phase (2014) documents - Annex 3_MRM Manual

³⁸ GROW design phase (2014) documents - Annex 4_VfM Framework

³⁹ See DCED (2015) *The DCED Standard for measuring results in private sector development. Control points and compliance criteria*. Version VII. April 2015.

After a PA is signed and operational the MRM team in collaboration with the Intervention Managers, create an Intervention Management Tool (IMT). The IMT is the central tool for managing MRM information, and is the first point at which a results chain is developed, as well as key indicators. While the IMTs include a number of indicators, they are not explicitly linked to the PA or partner reporting requirements. Indicators are collected on an ad hoc basis, with partners sending in excel forms or emails at irregular points in time. For two interventions, the programme has undertaken *Early Impact Assessments (EIAs)* to measure baseline indicators and some changes – this has been done for the AVL cocoa intervention as well as for the traders/out-grower model in vegetables. The MRM team now have a calendar for planning major MRM studies such as EIAs.

Overall, the reviewers found that the team capacity on MRM is good, particularly given some strong recent additional support. There is generally the right ethos expressed in the team in terms of MRM being ‘everyone’s responsibility’ rather than operating in a silo. However, it is not clear if this is always the case in practice.

Results chains and defining indicators of change

Under the DCED Standard, results chains should be developed and in place for each intervention. This is the case for all interventions of GROW apart from the recent agro-processing interventions, although these have been developed outside of the usual operating procedures and rather been framed as ‘*action research pilots*’. Although the results chains in the IMTs appear to be available for most of the current interventions, having recently been updated into a new template, they appear to be put in place after an intervention has been developed and are therefore not used to outline the design of the intervention or the linkages with the overall MRM system.⁴⁰

While indicators are provided for results chains in some of the IMTs (for example the ‘M-Plan’ in 170428_IMT_Vegetables Trader Aggregation_FINAL.xlsx) it is not clear they are used in practice, or linked directly to the requirements in the PA. This is in part because the results chain is not included in either the partnership justification nor PA, and have been completed after the PAs are signed and in some cases operational for several months. As a result, the number of indicators in IMTs does not match other parts of the system (e.g. work plans in the PAs).

The IMTs are constructed to populate the indicators of the logframe that can be aggregated, in particular indicators for access and usage (Outcomes 4 and 5), as well as jobs, income and beneficiaries (Impacts 6, 7 and 8). The linkages to these indicators through the results chains are relatively clear and it is possible to see how the aggregation takes place.

Measuring change including systemic change

The measurement of change around the key outcome and impact indicators are now based on ‘early impact assessments’ (EIAs), with models extrapolating from backward-looking (retrospective) baselines. These have only so far been done for two interventions – the AVL intervention (Intervention #1 in cocoa), and the vegetable trader-out-grower model (which

⁴⁰ The MRM Manager notes in response to this point in reviewing the draft report: “Whilst results chains might not be developed during partnership negotiation stage it’s well thought out and reflected in the partnership justification under following headers; (1) Key partnership activities; (2) Expected output level changes; (3) Expected outcome level changes; and (4) Expected Impact. Going forward the following approach will be taken – (1) Draft results chain will be developed once a potential partner has been identified at partnership justification stage; and (2) Results chain will be finalized during development of partnership agreements once partnership activities has been finalized.”

links impact for Interventions #1, #2 and #4 in vegetables). The definition of an ‘intervention’ in the latter case was complicated by the degree of overlapping of the partners and beneficiaries, and it is therefore logical to have a single IMT and impact assessment for them. However, it should still be expected to then combine data from all the different partners involved.

The two EIAs that have been produced are not clearly set out and best practice methods are not followed (i.e. study biases are generated). For example, for the AVL, some simple triangulation from what is known about the partner’s operation over the past year shows up some serious issues with the EIA. The reviewers found that in 2016, AVL exported one container - approx. 25 tonnes. However, the EIA estimates imply AVL purchases from farmers were equivalent to over 1,000 tonnes. In addition, the estimates of productivity yields from training are flawed, with leading questions.⁴¹ The productivity estimates are based on comparing production in the current season with what production had been in the previous season - without taking into account that the different seasons within the year yield different amounts of cocoa.

It is not clear how baselines are being commissioned in terms of their timing, and how the EIAs and other follow-up studies are triggered. There could have been baselines undertaken in the rubber sector, given that two PAs were signed with COR Corporation and Agro Rubber Industries (ARI) in September 2016 and July 2016 respectively for example. The current MRM calendar only includes a ‘EIA / Baseline-Farmer survey’ in February 2018 (updated following draft report to August 2017). In addition, the first business plan in 2014 (GROW, 2014) set out the need for baseline data collection for target beneficiaries in oil palm, but this has still not been completed (the CNA does not operate as a baseline).

The process for measuring change beyond the EIAs is not very clear, particularly because there is no systematic template for partner reporting against requirements set out in the PAs. The programme shared some programme team ‘field trip reports’ (GROW, 2016m, 2016n, 2016o, 2017j, 2017k), but these are, again, ad hoc, and do not report against particular indicators or use the work plans provided in the PAs in any systematic way.

Finally, in terms of the measurement of systemic change, while the MRM manual sets out an approach to capturing systemic change including tools to do so (GROW, 2015b)⁴², it is unclear this has been used in practice. The current IMT templates allow space to report systemic changes but it is not clear any have been captured to date.

Attribution and reporting results (including on gender)

The programme aggregates the logframe in semi-annual and annual reports. In addition the aggregated outcome and impact indicators are updated more frequently including in recent excel documents⁴³. However, indicators have changed during the programme period and there is no clear single logframe template with a clear set of targets. Targets do not appear to exist, instead ‘projections’ are reported, which change from one semi-annual report to the next annual report (see Table 1 on p.6 above). The current projections do not appear to be

⁴¹ For example – “How much cocoa did you harvest in the last season before starting to work with AVL / Cooperative or Buyer?” + “Of the many ideas or skills you learned from AVL, which ones are you putting into practice?” source: Annex 3_Cocoa Impact Assessment_Data Analysis.xlsx, questionnaire also sent to reviewers as Annex 1, and raw data as Annex 2.

⁴² For example: “GROW identifies and claims Market System Change through the following steps. 1. Portfolio Managers make claims of Market System Change. 2. These claims are reviewed together with the Market Analysts. 3. Both parties reach agreement about the change. 4. The result is identified in the quarterly report and a plan is set in place to observe (monitor) this change in the field. 5. If warranted, this change is reported in the Semi-Annual and/or Annual Report.”

⁴³ See 170428_GROW Aggregation File_Summary of Actuals, Projections & Estimates.xlsx and 170427_Logframe Explanatory Notes.xlsx

realistic for a number of sectors and indicators, including the likely impact for current partners, the timing of partnerships, and the likely take-up of new partners as well as replication and scale-up (see Chapter 3 for examples).

While the programme does seek to disaggregate gender indicators, it has not gathered in-depth gender-disaggregated information about outcome and impact performance beyond the analysis in the programme's gender strategy (GROW, 2016p). The gender strategy states the need for *“gender-based research to inform the assumptions and results chains”*, however there is little evidence for this in practice. In addition, the gender assumptions in the most up-to-date VfM report do not follow the Gender Strategy and do not provide a reflective view of gender issues⁴⁴.

The MRM system makes no clear attempt to estimate the attribution of programme indicators. This issue is clearest in the estimation of Output 2 in the logframe, the estimate of investment leveraged. In oil palm, the programme attributes the full value of the IDH credit guarantee to the programme during its implementation period (USD 11.6 million). This does not tally with two key pieces of information – namely that other key actors were involved in facilitating the out-grower model (including the Tony Blair African Governance Initiative (AGI) and notably IDH themselves who are spending USD 8 million alone on developing the model), and in addition that GROW most likely brought the model forward in time rather than causing it to exist in its entirety. Both issues point to the need for an approach to attribution to be used, particularly for the reporting at impact and outcome-level.

Tracking costs and value for money (VfM)

The original VfM framework⁴⁵ set out - *“At regular points during implementation we will measure and report progress on a selection of key effectiveness and cost effectiveness indicators (see below).”* However, no indicators were included at the time, and VfM indicators have not been systematically reported since the beginning of the programme for economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity, as the framework had set out.

The annual reports set out costs of interventions, and documentation seen by the reviewers⁴⁶ splits overall costs including fee cost apportioning to sectors. But this has not been used to create (actual) cost effectiveness measures including in the very recent VfM report (GROW, 2017I). As a result, it is clear that VfM considerations have not been systematically utilised as a decision-making tool on the programme.

The VfM report produced for the reviewers does report on some cost benefit analysis for each sector including net present value (NPV) and internal rate of return (IRR) calculations over a forward-looking, ten-year period. However, it is not clear this is very useful and it does not constitute an up-to-date set of VfM indicators that could be used in reporting. The report does though give a figure of *‘Actual beneficiaries to date’* of 3,065, with USD 7.6 million spent to December 2016, estimating a *cost per beneficiary* to date of USD 2,480 (GROW, 2017I).

⁴⁴ *“In Liberia a farming household is made up of a family unit (husband, wife and childrens). Both husband, wife and in most cases the children are actively involved in farming and any additonal income is shared by the family household. Women are mostly involved in planting, weeding harvesting and martketing of agricultural produce. As such we have assumed a 50:50 women & men split.”* (GROW, 2017I).

⁴⁵ GROW design phase (2014) documents - Annex 4_VfM Management Framework.

⁴⁶ CBA calculation v4.xlsx

4. Programme management

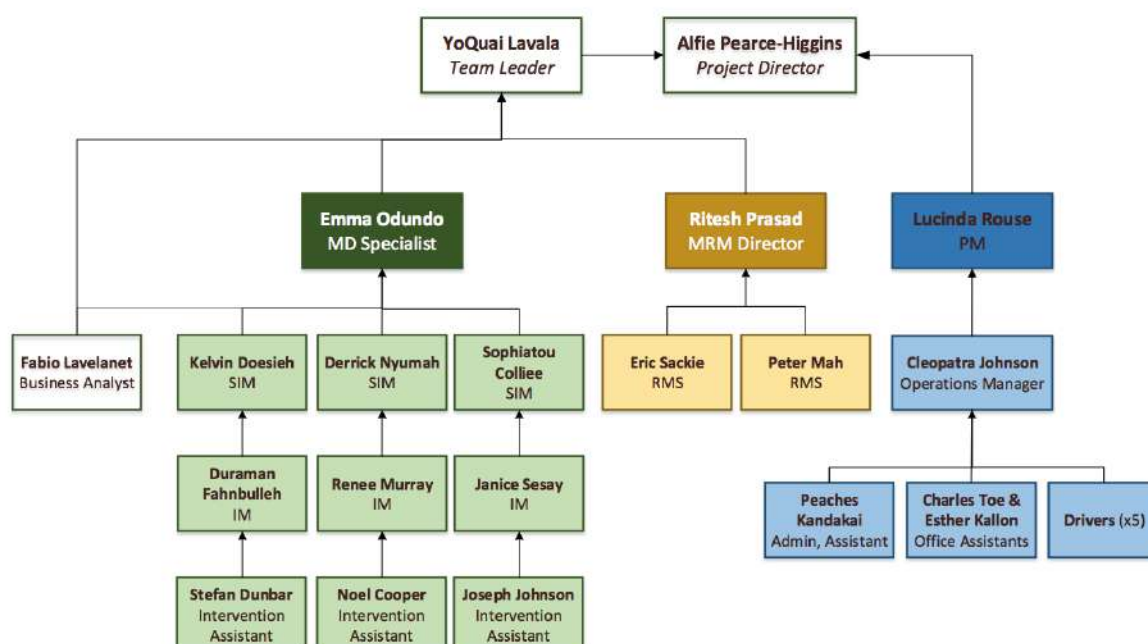
The programme's approach to management was set out in the GROW programme document 2014-2018. As both the team and the structure of the team have changed significantly since this report was approved, the review has focused on the current team and how it is operating at present.

Composition of team/staffing/M4P capacity

The GROW team seems to be a capable with a good understanding of the market systems approach and the role of the private sector. A number of members of the team have private sector experience, which allows them to engage with private sector firms and be trusted as a partner. Several team members have also benefited from classroom-style market systems training as well as on-the-job training through the Market Development (MD) Specialist and the contribution of short term consultants. As a result, the team seems to be regarded as a credible and independent facilitator within the sectors in which it operates.

The current structure of the team is presented in Figure 4 below. Following Sida's approval, the size of the team increased from 2016 to 2017 and several new staff have recently joined the team, including key positions such as the MRM Director, the cocoa Senior Intervention Manager, and the Business Analyst. At present, team staffing levels seem appropriate given the current number and range of interventions that the programme is undertaking. This is on the basis of the existing work-load - if a significant number of interventions are dropped or revised then staffing levels and/or allocation of responsibilities should be reassessed.

Figure 4: GROW organogram presented to the review team



Management and operating procedures

The field team is led by YoQuai Lavala, the Team Leader, who has been with the programme since the start (initially as Deputy Team Leader) and holds most of the institutional knowledge of the programme. The Team Leader is largely responsible for the

technical outputs of the programme and has limited financial oversight. Financial management, including that of the Intervention Fund, falls under the responsibility of ASI's Programme Manager, who works full-time on GROW and divides her time between London and Monrovia.

The field team receives backstopping support from ASI's headquarters in London, mainly through ASI's Programme Director. For the last year however, the team seems to have received very limited strategic support from the management team based in London, creating a number of challenges and resulting in slow progress in implementation. Some of the issues identified include:

- **Limited flexibility to adapt the market systems approach to take more “direct action” when required given the realities of operating in a post-conflict, thin market environment.** The team, for example, has been reluctant to identify solutions if this goes beyond a strict “facilitation” role for the programme.⁴⁷ For example, to address the financial challenges faced by AVL (i.e. through a returnable grant), or to work directly with rubber cooperatives to enable them to supply to RSS producers (i.e. through direct technical assistance around incorporation or skills capacity).
- **Poor capacity to prioritise and focus team efforts and resources in those interventions that are most relevant and are most likely to deliver results within the timeframe of the programme.** The team, for example, has developed pilots for new interventions in agro-processing and devoted efforts to think about the follow-up to GROW (e.g. developing a proposal for *Expand*, an impact investment fund), when significant efforts were required to make ongoing interventions deliver results (e.g. supporting AVL to prepare a business plan or supporting rubber cooperatives to start operating).
- **Slow approval of contracts and partnership agreements** as limited involvement of ASI's Programme Director during their process of elaboration has led to significant “back and forward” after agreements were deemed as final by the field team.

From an operating procedures perspective, the review team has observed that best practice project management systems are in place, although the review team was not able to verify if they were all being implemented effectively. The review identified a number of cases that showed that the follow-up and implementation of these systems needed to be further strengthened. Mainly, the need to ensure that work plans developed with implementing partners were being implemented (and if not followed, develop corrective measures) and ensure that partners submitted all reporting templates before invoices are paid.

Learning and adaptive management

A key strength of the GROW team has been its ability to use an adaptive management approach - terminating interventions that were not likely to deliver the desired results, adjusting ongoing interventions to address new challenges/constraints identified, and starting new (pilot) interventions. However, on several occasions this has been at the expense of adequate analysis or thinking through how these adjustments affected GROW's beneficiaries and how they were meant to deliver results within the timeframe of the programme. For example, assessing the risk to traders of the stringent conditions on the

⁴⁷ Sometimes seen as a 'M4P purist' approach. Although the reviewers do not accept this interpretation of the M4P approach given the context faced in Liberia with thin markets etc.

Afriland loan facility; reassessing the functioning of the partnership with AVL following the departure of their financial partners.

Reporting

On the reporting side, it is clear from the annual and semi-annual reports reviewed⁴⁸ that a range of approaches and structures have been used over time. From conversations with the programme and with Sida this has been based on a number of rounds of feedback. At times this feedback has been considered contradictory – for example request for clearer narratives for the Year 2 Annual Report, followed by the request for a tabular format and activity-level reporting for the Year 3 Annual Report.

The review team agrees that GROW's annual and semi-annual reports are not adequate and fit-for-purpose. Their current structure (as of the Y3 Annual Report) does not allow for someone external to the programme to understand what are the objectives/vision/targets for the programme, what has the programme achieved so far, what are (and have been) the challenges faced and how will the programme adapt to ensure that the objectives/vision/targets are met. In addition, it is difficult to easily assess the overall financial position of the programme. For example, the Y3 Annual Report only presents detailed fee expenses for that year and the overall spend against total contract value; while market interventions and fund expenses are only presented at the aggregate level.

⁴⁸ For example GROW (2015a, 2015c, 2016e, 2016f, 2016g) etc.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

This section presents the conclusions and recommendations gathered from the previous sections. For ease, we have structured them in the same order as presented earlier.

The review undertaken has looked in depth at each of the four main sectors, MRM and VfM, and programme management. The conclusions and recommendations look at the overall likely effectiveness of the different interventions as well as the risks of continuing or discontinuing them, and factors that need to be taken into account to understand the implications of those decisions. Overall it is clear that the programme needs to consolidate its efforts around key interventions with the highest likelihood of success, and focus resources accordingly. Understandably, there is a tendency for the programme to keep on exploring for new areas of intervention. However, given the amount of time remaining on the programme and the precarious state of some of the principal interventions, this appears to be a diversion of effort and is unlikely to deliver the desired results for impact and outcome indicators.

Finally, in some markets there has been a reluctance to go beyond a 'facilitative' role and take a more direct approach. While this is in the spirit of the market systems approach generally applied, the review team finds that in the Liberian context, both with thin markets, a post-conflict and fragile environment and therefore limited private sector operating, there is a justification for the programme to directly support partners and play a more active role in the market.

Cocoa sector

Despite the discontinuation of a number of interventions in the cocoa sector (e.g. policy work and spraying), Intervention #1 (Buyer-Led Services for Quality Improvement) still has the potential to deliver significant impact in terms of results and systemic change. For this to occur the GROW cocoa team needs to focus all its efforts in ensuring that there are at least two firms that are able to source and export certified cocoa from Liberia by the end of the programme.

In the case of AVL, the first of the two partners identified for Intervention #1 and the only one with an existing Partnership Agreement (PA), the programme is now at a critical phase. The existing expectations of cocoa farmers and AVL appear to be far in excess of what the current reality suggests is feasible. AVL has currently no access to working capital and no links have been established with any commercial bank or international buyers. Failing to buy certified cocoa at a premium this season means that AVL might no longer be a credible partner for the programme or for farmers.

The review team find that there is a clear justification for GROW to now take a much more active role in the market, including intervening on the financial side. This is due to the early state of the market - the lack of a supply chain for certified cocoa in Liberia, the need to demonstrate to other players that the market is willing to pay a premium for certification, the need to prove that the proposed business model with AVL works, and the lack of finance available in the market.

A more active approach is also justified in the case of Trade Link Inc., the other partner identified by GROW with potential to export certified cocoa. Realistically, however, this partnership is only at its early stages (the review team has only had access to a recent

partnership justification) and it would only be able to deliver results, if any, during the 2018/2019 farming season.

It is important to take into account that if there is no certified cocoa being exported, the benefits of this intervention would then only come from the (limited) training provided to farmers as part of the certification process. There would be no benefits from increases in sales of higher quality cocoa (and its associated premiums). The overall returns to GROW's five-year investment in the cocoa sector would therefore be most likely negative.

As a result, the main recommendations for GROW's work in the cocoa sector include:

1. GROW to design and finance a returnable grant mechanism that allows AVL to access financial resources for its working capital needs. This needs to be done immediately as otherwise AVL will not be able to buy any certified cocoa from farmers during 2017. The size of this should be based on a full business plan of what is feasible.
2. Support the development of a full business plan for AVL for the remainder of 2017, based on a realistic appraisal of what is possible in terms of the number of containers to export given the working capital available.
3. GROW to provide direct support, strong mentorship and coaching to AVL to ensure that the current Partnership Agreement is implemented fully ahead of the harvesting season and that AVL is able to efficiently manage its working capital facility; in addition that UTZ certification is achieved and premiums are received.
4. GROW to start discussions with potential sources of finance (commercial banks, angel investors, Theobroma) to try engage AVL for the 2018/2019 season, therefore seeking to identify a longer-term solution to the working capital constraint.
5. GROW to pursue a Partnership Agreement with Trade Link that ensures the conditions for UTZ certification are reached in time for the 2018/2019 season.

Risks and issues to consider

It is important to note that there are significant risks of failure of the proposed approach (i.e. using a returnable grant) with AVL. As GROW's appraisal of partners has shown (GROW, 2016a and 2017f), AVL's skills/capacity have always been ranked as 'low'. In early 2017, it has grown weaker with the company's split and the loss of the other two shareholders who brought financial backing to the enterprise.

However, the reality is that AVL appears to be the main player from the programme's point of view in the cocoa sector at the present time and the capital at risk would be relatively low.⁴⁹ If GROW cannot use this partner to demonstrate that there could be a market for certified cocoa in Liberia, this would mean that Sida's investment in this market could deliver very low returns by 2019 with costs outweighing benefits. At the present time, the overall GROW investment in the cocoa sector is projected to be SEK 43 million.⁵⁰

If AVL manages to export three or more containers of UTZ certified cocoa (around 75 tonnes, which could mean purchasing from 250 to 500 farmers) in 2017, then it would begin to demonstrate itself as a credible partner. This would increase the chance of scaling-up operations for 2018 and reaching a scale to attract some further finance (e.g. pre-financing from an international buyer) or generate some level of demonstration effect (albeit small).

⁴⁹ As a rough estimate, the reviewers find that around USD 150,000 in the form of a returnable grant could allow AVL to export at least six containers this season.

⁵⁰ Projections from the document - CBA calculation v4.xlsx

However, continued support is only likely to lead to this outcome if there is much more active involvement and support from GROW both from a financial and technical point of view.

Rubber sector

The RSS model shows good potential for systemic change in Liberia. RSS technology is significantly less energy intensive than TSR (the most common processing technology available in the country), fetches higher prices in the international markets, can allow rubber farmers to break Firestone's current monopsony, and is the necessary step to move into generating higher value addition in the rubber sector. It is also well-aligned with the GoL's vision and strategy of generating higher added value in the country.

The RSS model also has the potential to be pro-poor, benefitting rubber smallholder farmers and tappers, but mainly if interventions focus on business models linking RSS processors to cooperatives or other groupings of smallholders for the supply of latex. The programme is doing so in the case of ARI, MRE and COR.

The TVET intervention (#3) is not likely to create a useful cadre of RSS experts. This is mainly because the scale of RSS is so small at present, which makes it very unlikely to generate significant demand for specific technical skills in the sector. The programme has contracted an RSS expert for a year to support the development of the TVET curriculum and support active BCDs to improve their technical capacity and the co-operatives supplying them. This targeted approach is more likely to generate a pool of technical expertise commensurate with the current size of the sector.

The main recommendation for the rubber sector is therefore to focus all efforts of the rubber team on making interventions #1 and #2 succeed. This means:

1. Actively support ARI and MRE to establish their RSS processing factories, and ensure that they are able to meet the quality and logistical requirements to successfully export in 2017.
2. Engage directly with the cooperatives that will be supplying to COR Farms, MRE and ARI to build their capacity and help them meet the conditions for supplying latex in 2017.
3. Identify at least three additional BCDs that the team can support in developing the proposed rubber business model for 2018.
4. Closely monitor and reappraise the risk that Firestone could seek to diminish demand for RSS by purchasing USS (unsmoked sheets) at prices designed to disincentivise RSS producers.
5. Ensure the specific business model with linkages to smallholders / cooperatives is evidenced and documented in a way that allows for easier replication and scale-up (e.g. with standardised contracts / operating procedures / production blueprint).
6. Support the development of the RSS processing curricula (taking advantage of the Sri Lankan expert being in country) and then terminate the TVET intervention. Reallocate any time remaining of the expert to support intervention #1 and #2.

Risks and issues to consider

The key risk the programme needs to address in carrying forward with the RSS intervention is in the degree to which it is pro-poor. The involvement of smallholder farmers is vital for the intervention to generate beneficiaries for the programme, to be pro-poor and to create employment opportunities and income growth. The co-operatives linked to ARI, COR and

MRE have very low capacity and are likely to require significant support to be able to deliver the quality requirements of RSS production. Without this support there is a risk that the RSS model becomes unviable, or that the RSS model expands using a different business model (i.e. without strong involvement of smallholder farmers).

Oil palm sector

Interventions in the oil palm sector have centred since the beginning of the programme on the facilitation and development of the out-grower model as included in the 2009 concession agreements. Due to the length of time this has taken, the work undertaken by GROW in this market is highly unlikely to deliver logframe outcome or impact results within the lifetime of the programme. However, there has been a strong rationale for GROW's involvement in this sector to promote peace and stability through "enhanced socially inclusive economic growth", which has been one of the objectives of the programme from the out-set (see GROW programme document 2014-2018). GROW played a significant role in initiating the process that is expected to end with the establishment of the first oil palm out-grower scheme in Liberia. But the appearance of IDH with a clear mandate, more financial resources and a longer life span than GROW has meant that GROW's role and importance in pushing the process forward has significantly diminished in recent months.

The team is exploring options for interventions in the edible palm oil sector as part of 'action research pilots' into agro-processing. Two PAs have been signed to conduct *"learning pilots with two prospective palm oil processors, to better understand financial viability of formalising palm oil processing. These are focusing on packaging and other quality requirements to sell through formal channels, along with an evaluation of potential gains for smallholders"* (GROW, 2017a). However, the programme's MSA for oil palm (GROW, 2016i)⁵¹ provides no analysis of the edible palm oil sector, and GROW has failed to present a rationale for intervening in this market in either the partnership justifications or PAs for QBWA and Pasama. It is not clear to the review team how these interventions can deliver results for outcomes or impact within the lifetime of the programme, how GROW's beneficiaries are going to benefit, and how systemic change is likely to occur.

Looking at the latest programme estimates for the oil palm sector⁵², an additional SEK 9.4 million is planned to be spent in this sector (including fees and intervention fund) between Y4 and Y6. This level of investment suggests significant resources and time still to be allocated to the sector. Given the level of resources that seem to be committed to operating in this market, the limited role to be played in the commercial oil palm sector and the extremely weak rationale for intervention in the edible oil palm sector, the main recommendations of this review are to:

1. Terminate the programme's work in the oil palm (commercial) sector, due to IDH now taking the model forward with a clear mandate and their own resources. As part of the exit strategy finalise the activities relating to the NBC's concession cadastre due to finish in November 2017.⁵³
2. Finalise the programme's pilot in the palm oil (edible) sector with QBWA.
3. Finalise the programme's PA with Pasama Agricultural and Trading Company after the pilot phase (Phase 1).

⁵¹ The "MSA focuses exclusively on oil palm for industrial use (also referred to as crude palm oil, or CPO) rather than edible palm oil."

⁵² See CBA calculation v4.xlsx

⁵³ Details provided in 'Second round of feedback on Draft External Review Report', 28th June 2017

4. If programme would like to keep operating in the edible palm oil interventions (either with a new PA with QBWA or continuing to phase 2 with Pasama), a full business case should be developed including detailed results chains, a model for how smallholder farmers will benefit, the number of logframe beneficiaries generated, and a full appraisal of risks associated. Approval from Sida should be required to move forward following these steps.

Risks and issues to consider

From the analysis undertaken for this review, the GROW programme is no longer the key player in the development of the oil palm out-grower pilot, as IDH and GVL are taking it forward. The involvement of the partners is now not at all dependent on GROW⁵⁴ and therefore, while there are still inherent risks to the model, GROW cannot help to address them.

The current IDH model is entirely linked to communities living in or close to forested areas. There is therefore a gap in the concessions model for non-forested areas – no model exists at present. However, the demonstration of the forested model is likely to be a necessary step and would be catalytic to any future non-forested model. Given the time remaining and resources required, it is unlikely to be value for money for GROW to lead the development of a new model.

Vegetables sector

The GROW team has acknowledged that the business model being promoted for interventions #1, #2 and #4 is too complex, the risk of failure high and skewed against the traders, and the chance of replication or systemic change is highly unlikely. However, the commercial model proposed under intervention #3 has been identified by the team as a viable alternative. This new model links smallholder farmers to commercial farmers who have already well-established access to inputs, extension services and finance. Partnership justifications were developed in April 2017 for two such commercial farmers - Wulki and Sumo Farms. However, as yet, there is no clear explication of the model in programme documents.

The main recommendations for the vegetable sector include:

1. Terminate the interventions based on the current model (the trader-outgrower-finance model linking interventions #1, #2 and #4). The programme should finish the pilot after the current farming season and find a viable exit strategy. This includes:
 - a. For the traders training model with the Monrovia Vegetable Sellers' Association (MVSA), finish the pilot and do not undertake any further training.
 - b. For the Afriland loan guarantee facility, provide support to traders who have already received loans but do not provide more loans to new traders.
2. Test the commercial model (intervention #3) through establishing detailed Partnership Agreements with Wulki and Sumo Farms before the end of 2017 for full implementation in 2018/19. If needed, the Afriland loan guarantee facility could be leveraged to pilot the commercial model. If the two PAs are not signed before the end of the year, this intervention should then be terminated.
3. Engage with AIM Global and other similar partners if identified, to support them to expand operations in Liberia and develop new business models that are

⁵⁴ According to interviews undertaken with IDH and GVL by the reviewers.

commercially sustainable. This would help address the existing market failure for extension services. For example, the programme could look into supporting AIM Global to expand the outreach of their *Susu Box* initiative or strengthen their ability to sell services to more commercial farmers that are willing to pay for their extension advice.

4. The programme should not explore any further interventions in agro-processing (with Pape Foods) given that there is insufficient analysis around the viability of this intervention and the existing programme timeframe means that the results of the pilot will not allow for enough time for scaling-up.

Risks and issues to consider

The risks to the current model are clear with respect to the traders that have successfully received loans from Afriland, in terms of their ability to repay. This should be monitored closely by the project with support provided if required.

Testing the commercial model makes sense as an adaptive response to the challenges with the existing traders model. Commercial farmers are more likely to be able to handle the risks of accessing finance, be more credible potential clients for financial institutions, and are more likely to reap productivity gains from the intervention. However, if the programme did not have the extra year from June 2018 to June 2019 (and its associated growing season), it would be difficult to justify the intervention going forward.

Undertaking further work supporting firms such as AIM Global with lots of potential does contain risks. However, given the context of thin markets, there is a strong justification for more direct support to some firms that could help generate a systemic impact. Supporting the expansion of embedded services alongside input supply is the strongest component of the vegetables work undertaken so far, and should therefore be adapted and scaled.

MRM and VfM

The programme's MRM system has the components of a good system that adheres to the DCED Standard, though the review found there are areas in which it falls short of DCED best practices. A number of stages in the MRM cycle are carried out in an ad hoc manner including baselines and further data collection, results chains and their integration into intervention design process, and the collection, reporting and use of information on value for money (VfM). The programme has no clear targets, and instead projections are produced that are systematically unrealistic. The review of the current MRM and VfM systems therefore leads to a number of recommendations to the programme. These include:

1. Get agreement for a clear programme logframe in excel template, which should specify realistic targets for the end of the programme⁵⁵. Ensure a process for changing targets is specified with clear agreement between Sida and GROW required, and that any changes to targets are explained in annual or semi-annual reporting.
2. Develop clearer links between the IMTs and the systematic data collection from partners. This should be set out in Partnership Agreements including the linkage between work plan, indicators and the IMTs. Clear reporting templates for partners should be developed with regular points of data collection.

⁵⁵ The programme has confirmed that progress towards this recommendation has already begun to be agreed in the 2017 semi-annual report.

3. The process for conducting baselines should be made more systematic, including earlier baselines closer to the point at which Partnership Agreements are signed. This should include baselines for the rubber PAs with COR and ARI.
4. Attempt to estimate the attribution of programme impacts, particularly where the change is primarily qualitative and there are a number of players involved (for example in oil palm), including a strong qualitative story about how the change took place.
5. Strengthen the methodologies for Early Impact Assessments (EIAs), consider contracting evaluation expertise at least for the review of the EIA design and tools used. For prominent interventions consider contracting external partners to ensure the quality of methodologies used is improved.
6. Strengthen reporting of VfM in annual and semi-annual reports, including cost effectiveness indicators for each sector based on actuals rather than projections. Consider adding a VfM tab to a revised logframe template.

Programme management

Despite the ability of the field team to engage with the private sector and understand the market systems approach, the limited technical backstopping support received from ASI's management team has negatively affected the speed and quality of implementation of the programme.⁵⁶ In addition, although management and operating systems seem to be in place, further support is required to ensure that they are implemented effectively and the programme can deliver the expected results.

The main recommendations for programme management from the review are as follows:

1. Develop a detailed action plan for each sector for the remainder of 2017, so that the team works against clear targets and Sida can track progress of interventions against this plan on a weekly or monthly basis.
2. Increase the strategic and technical support provided by ASI's Project Director, particularly working with the field team to identify key priorities and ensure that these priorities are effectively implemented.
3. Mainstream approval process of Partnership Agreements to avoid unnecessary delays - e.g. ensuring the ASI Programme Director is involved during the drafting process of PAs so there is no delay at the final sign-off stage.
4. Significantly strengthen the technical sections of GROW's annual and semi-annual reports. A stronger narrative is required in these reports, detailing:
 - how interventions have progressed during the lifetime of the programme;
 - what are the cumulative results achieved to date, how do these results compare with GROW's logframe targets;
 - what other impacts (qualitative or quantitative) have been achieved;
 - what challenges has the programme faced; and
 - what corrective measures/actions are going to be put in place to ensure that the programme meets the desired outcomes and impact.
5. Significantly strengthen financial reporting in GROW's annual and semi-annual reports. Reporting of GROW's financial expenditure should be more thorough (including VfM reporting), and should include the cumulative spend to date and

⁵⁶ The team's feedback notes that "The addition of a FT in-country Programme Manager (already proposed to Sida before the review) plus more engagement from the PD should address this."

yearly breakdowns for core fees and expenses, as well as detailed spending by market and by intervention.

Extension of GROW programme from June 2018 to June 2019

As part of the ToR, the reviewers were asked to provide a recommendation on the potential continuation of the GROW programme beyond the original implementation period, with a one-year extension to June 2019, on the basis of a no-cost extension.

The reviewers find that there is good justification for extending the programme end-date to June 2019. This is given the delays to implementation caused by Ebola, and also to allow the existing portfolio of interventions to have a greater chance of achieving the desired outcome and impact results, as well as sustainable change in the market. By sector this includes the following observations:

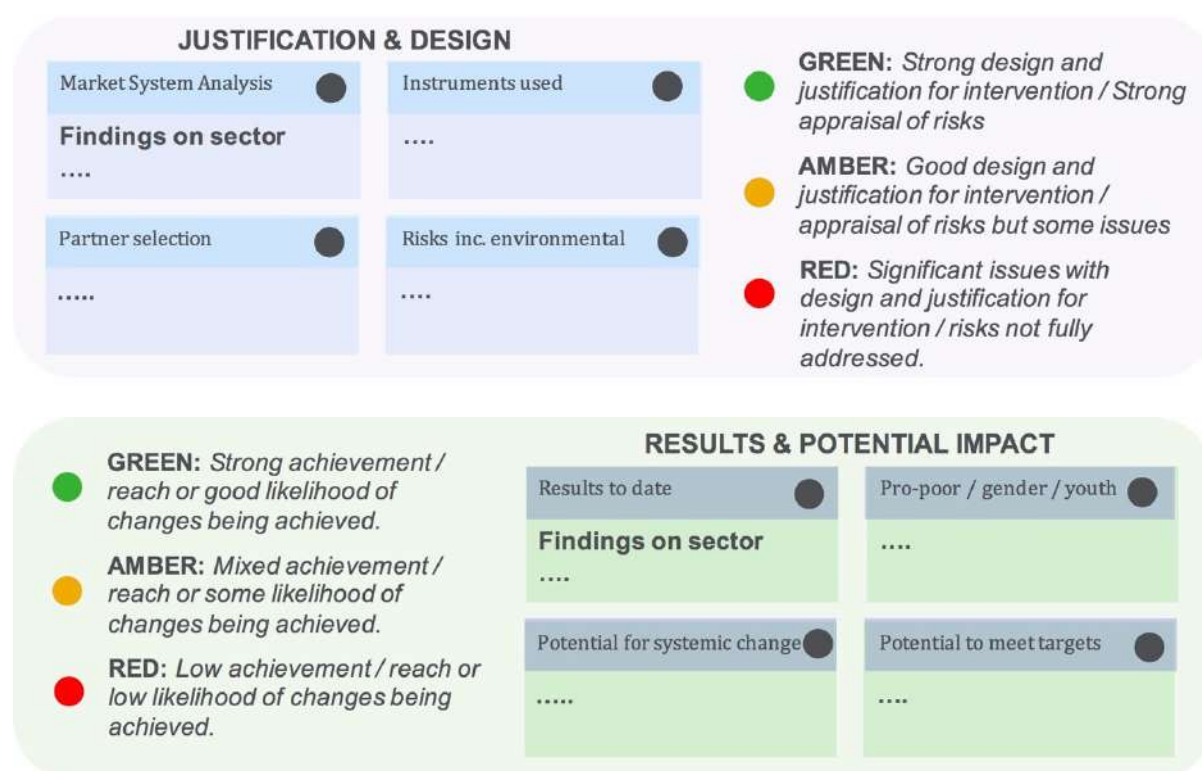
- For **Cocoa** - ending the main intervention with AVL in June 2018 would lead to the only benefits generated by the programme coming from training 3,000 farmers, the construction of some warehouse facilities, and whatever cocoa they are able to purchase in the upcoming season. Adding another year (and therefore growing season) would allow these benefits to be consolidated, and assuming the financing constraint is addressed, the sale and export of certified cocoa. It would also allow the potential addition of another partner (TradeLink) with the same model.
- For **Rubber** – ending in June 2018 would barely allow the three existing BCDs to start sourcing from smallholder farmers, producing and selling RSS. Extending by one more year would allow them to consolidate their relationships with co-operatives, move forward with their investment and production, and allow the programme to formalise the co-operative model to ensure it is replicable by other commercial rubber farmers. It would also allow other beneficiaries from the LBDI facility to begin operation.
- For **Oil palm** – the recommendations above would see the end of activities and investment. As a result, it is unlikely that extending the programme would have any impact on any partner currently supporting the forestry concessions model to move it more quickly towards its operational phase. From conversations with IDH and GVL it is unlikely that the model will be finalised and in operation even by June 2019.
- For **Vegetables** – terminating in June 2018 would mean that no clear model would have been demonstrated with the potential to be sustained. The programme results for the sector would therefore be scattered, with low outcome and impact numbers, and a lack of systemic impact. Another year would allow the programme to adapt, move towards the commercial farmer model, and explore new areas of support to AIM Global. Although the risks of failure are high, if successful, this could generate more sizeable impacts for the programme and would have a greater chance of being value for money.

Annex 1: Assessment methodology

For each of the four sectors of operation, the team has taken an analytical approach to the review, ensuring that findings and recommendations are sound, objective and based on evidence gathered from existing documentation, discussions with the GROW team, and interactions with stakeholders.

In each of the four sectors, the review team has assessed two areas: justification & design, and results & potential impact. The team has further broken down each area in four sub-areas, as shown in the figures below, and rated them following a Red-Amber-Green (RAG) methodology, as set out in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Review methodology for the analysis of each of the four sectors of operation



These areas and sub-areas have been identified applying well-accepted development frameworks. Mainly, SCD/DFID's M4P Operational Guide (second edition) to assess market interventions and management, the DCED framework for assessing the strength of M&E systems and processes, and DFID's VFM framework for assessing value for money in the programme.

Annex 2: Documents reviewed

GROW reports and documentation

GROW (2014) Annual Business Plan 2014

GROW (2015a) Year 2 (1st April 2015 – 31st March 2016) Annual Business Plan Final

GROW (2015b) MRM and KM Manual 2015.04.27 revision

GROW (2015c) Year 2 semi-annual progress report and work-plan. November 2015.

GROW (2015d) Cocoa Scoping Survey. Based on Focus Group Discussions in Bong, Lofa and Nimba counties. July 2015.

GROW (2016a) iPlan - Cocoa. March 2016.

GROW (2016b) iPlan – Oil Palm. March 2016.

GROW (2016c) iPlan – Rubber. March 2016.

GROW (2016d) iPlan – Vegetables. March 2016.

GROW (2016e) Year 3 Annual Business Plan. April 2016.

GROW (2016f) Year 2 Annual Report. April 2016.

GROW (2016g) Year 3 Semi-annual progress report & work plan update. September 2016

GROW (2016h) Cocoa Market Systems Analysis. March 2016

GROW (2016i) Oil Palm Market Systems Analysis. March 2016.

GROW (2016j) Rubber Market Systems Analysis. March 2016.

GROW (2016k) Vegetables Market Systems Analysis. March 2016.

GROW (2016l) 2016-10-18 AVL Field Trip Report.docx

GROW (2016m) 2016-11-03 Spray services Field trip report.docx

GROW (2016n) 2016-11-18 Stability Field Trip Report.docx

GROW (2016o) 2016-12-16 Veg verification field trip report.docx

GROW (2016p) Gender and Youth Strategy. April 2016.

GROW (2017a) GROW External Review slides v5.7.2_Upload_v2

GROW (2017b) Year 3 Annual Report. January 2017

GROW (2017c) Year 4 Annual Business Plan. v1.1 February 2017

GROW (2017d) Financing Liberian Cocoa Production & Trade. Report for GROW Liberia by Rupert Day, Nov 2016 - Jan 2017

GROW (2017e) Cocoa Warehousing Intervention Early Impact Assessment 1. February 2017

GROW (2017f) iPlan - Cocoa. April 2017

GROW (2017g) iPlan - Rubber. April 2017 v2

GROW (2017h) iPlan - Vegetables. April 2017 v2

GROW (2017i) iPlan – Oil Palm. April 2017 v2

GROW (2017j) Vegetable Trader Aggregation Early Impact Assessment 1. March 2017

GROW (2017k) 2017-04-26 Field Trip Report Forward Contract.docx

GROW (2017l) GROW VFM report - May 2017

GROW (2017m) GROW Intervention Fund. Manual of Operations. v1.2, 1st January 2017

Joseph W. Nyan, Dala T. Korkoyah, Jr. (2017) GROW Cocoa Impact Assessment. Summary of preliminary findings. (Annex 2_Cocoa Impact Assessment_Research Firm.pptx)

LTS International & Greenstar Resources (2016a) GROW Liberia – Community Oil Palm Outgrower Scheme: Operational Plan. 15 July 2016.

LTS International & Greenstar Resources (2016b) GROW Liberia – Feasibility Review of a Proposal to Establish a Liberian Oil Palm Outgrower Scheme. 15 July 2016.

LTS International & Greenstar Resources (2016c) Liberia Oil Palm Outgrowers Scheme Concept Note. 15 July 2016.

LTS International & Greenstar Resources (2016d) GROW Liberia – Financial Plan. 15 July 2016. (160715 -GROW Liberia_LTS_Financial Plan_FINAL.xlsx)

Subah-Belleh Associates (2016) Oil Palm Community Needs Assessment. Draft Report. February 2016.

Other Budget and Vfm docs:

CBA calculation v4.xlsx

Vfm Report Spreadsheet.xlsx

Y4 ABP Budget Jan 2017_Sida.xlsx

Y3 Annual Report_Financials_Sida.xlsx

Additional MRM docs provided:

Annex 1_MRM Calendar.xlsx

Annex 3_Cocoa Impact Assessment_Data Analysis.xlsx

170427_Logframe Explanatory Notes.xlsx

170428_GROW Aggregation File_Summary of Actuals, Projections & Estimates.xlsx

GROW_RSS Financing Model.xlsx

Discussion with Sida - Mar 14 2016 - V1.pptx

Intervention Management Tools

170411_IMT_Veggies Commercial Outgrowers_DRAFT.xlsx

170416_IMT_Rubber RSS Processing_DRAFT.xlsx

170420_IMT_Oil Palm Concession Outgrowers_DRAFT.xlsx

170423_IMT_Cocoa Warehousing Aggregation_FINAL.xlsx

170428_IMT_Vegetables Trader Aggregation_FINAL.xlsx

GROW (2014) End design phase documents:

Annex 1_Intervention Management Manual

Annex 2_Flexible Facility Management

Annex 3_MRM Manual

Annex 4_VfM Management Framework

Annex 5_Programme Risk Management

Annex 6_Communications Strategy

Annex 7_Cross-Cutting Frameworks

Annex 7c_Gender and Youth Framework_FINAL_Jan 30

Annex 7d_Environmental Risk Management_FINAL_Jan 30

Annex 8_Operational Finance and Administration Manual

Annex 9_Human Resource Management Manual

Annex 10_Grow Budget 2014-18

Annex 11_Logframe and Explanatory Note

Appendix I_Oil Palm

Appendix J_Rubber

Appendix K_Vegetables

Appendix L_Cassava

Appendix M_Sector Scoping Reports

Appendix N_Budget

Grow Design Phase Report

Grow Programme Document 2014-2018

Partnership Agreements in Rubber

Agro Rubber Industries (ARI) signed 27th July 2016

Agro Rubber Industries (ARI) Addendum signed 21st April 2017

COR Corporation (Bright Farm) signed 12th September 2016

COR Corporation (Bright Farm) Addendum signed 22nd April 2017

Liberia Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI) signed 5th October 2016

LBDI Addendum + Operational Guide signed 15th December 2016

Bong County Technical College (BCTC) signed 22nd March 2017

Booker Washington Institute (BWI) signed 20th March 2017
Grand Bassa Community College (GBCC) signed 20th March 2017
Nimba County Community College (NCCC) signed 20th March 2017
Tumutu Agricultural Vocational Training Center (TAVTC) signed 20th March 2017

Partnership Agreements in Cocoa

Africa Venture Liberia (AVL) signed 17th June 2016
AVL addendum signed 15th September 2016
Unique Fumigation and Engineering Services (UFES) signed 13th October 2016
UFES addendum signed 9th December 2016

Partnership Agreements in Edible Oil Palm

Quintessential Business Women's Association (QBWA) signed 25th April 2017
Pasama Agriculture and Trading Corporation signed 26th April 2017

Partnership Agreements in Vegetables

Afriland First Bank signed 16th June 2016
Afriland First Bank Guarantee Fund Operational Guide-signed 12th September 2016
Afriland First Bank Addendum Signed 13th April 2017
Aim Global PA signed 22nd August 2016
Monrovia Vegetable Sellers' Association (MVSA) signed 23rd September 2016

Memoranda of Understanding in Commercial Oil Palm

MOU with the National Bureau of Concessions signed 1st April 2016
MOU with the IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative signed 29th April 2016

Partnership justifications in cocoa

African Venture Liberia (AVL), 26th April 2016
Trade Link Incorporated, 12th April 2017
Unique Fumigation and Engineering Services (UFES), 27th July 2016

Partnership justifications in vegetables

Farmers Union Network (FUN) of Liberia, 20th March 2017
Pape Food, 27th April 2017

Sumo Farms, 4th April 2017

Wuiki Farms, 4th April 2017

Partnership justifications in rubber

Agro Rubber Industries (ARI) – 14th June 2016

Partnership justifications in palm oil (edible)

Pasama Agriculture and Trading Corporation – 12th March 2017

Quintessential Business Women Association (QBWA) Partnership Justification, 28th March 2017

Other

ASI (2012) Proposal. Support to the Development of Markets and Value Chains in Agriculture in Liberia. July 2012.

Annex 3: Institutions consulted

Interviews in vegetables sector

Afriland First Bank
Aim Global PA
Monrovia Vegetable Sellers' Association (MVSA)
Vegetable farmers

Interviews in cocoa sector

African Venture Liberia (AVL)
Cocoa farmers

Interviews in rubber sector

COR Corporation
Agro Rubber Industries (ARI)
Liberia Bank for Development and Investment (LBDI)
MRE
Kwapahgei Cooperative

Interviews in oil palm sector

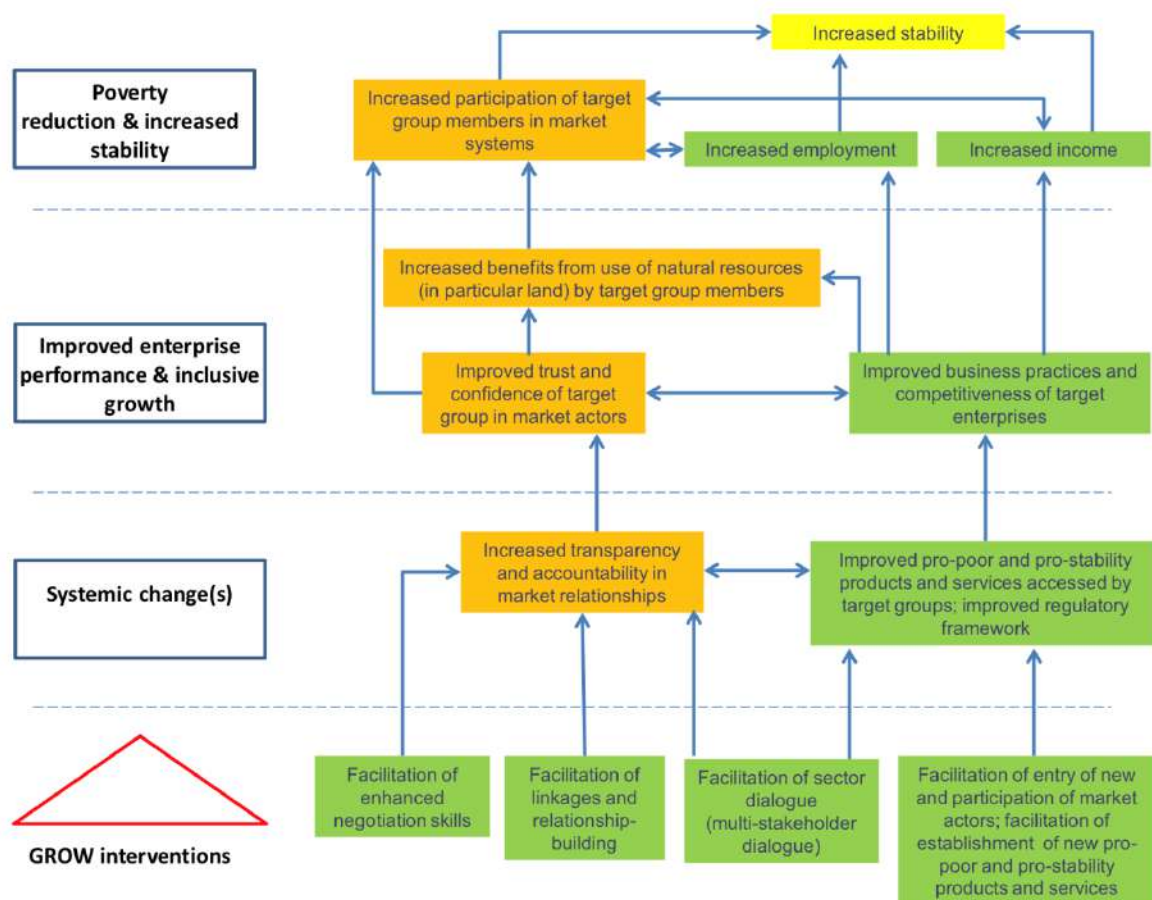
Initiatief Duurzame Handel - The Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH)
Golden Veroleum Liberia (GVL)
National Bureau of Concessions (NBC)

Other interviews conducted

Adam Smith International
GROW programme team including senior leadership, project manager, intervention managers, and MRM team
Tony Blair African Governance Initiative (AGI)
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Annex 4: GROW theory of change

GROW theory of change presented in Y2 Annual Report (GROW, 2016f)



Annex 5: MRM assessment of GROW against DCED Standard

The following table provides an assessment by the reviewers of the GROW programme's MRM system against each key 'control point' outlined in the DCED Standard⁵⁷. Each control point is outlined by its status highlighting whether it is a compulsory or recommended part of the Standard⁵⁸. This is used to guide the draft and results and recommendations in Chapter 4 above.

No.	Control Point	Status	Reviewers' assessment of GROW
1. Articulating the Results Chain			
1.1	An appropriate, sufficiently detailed and logical results chain(s) is articulated explicitly for each of the interventions.	Must	Evidence that results chains are created and included in IMTs.
1.2	Each results chain is supported by adequate research and analysis.	Must	Some evidence used for results chains where EIAs conducted (for example in vegetable traders IMT), but not otherwise (for example in oil palm IMT).
1.3	Mid and senior level programme staff are familiar with the results chain(s) and use them to guide their activities; key partners can explain the logic of interventions.	Must	Good logic to most interventions and clearly articulated by programme staff, but not with reference to the results chains.
1.4	The results chain(s) are regularly reviewed to reflect changes in the programme strategy, external players and the programme circumstances.	Must	Results chains recently reviewed and updated for revised IMTs.
1.5	The results chains or another tool outline what broader systemic changes are expected, and how the programme expects to influence them.	Rec	Results chains include boxes for 'adapt', 'expand', 'respond', but not clearly set in context of assumptions. Programme activities to enhance these systemic changes are not included.
1.6	The research and analysis underlying the results chain(s) take into account the risk of displacement.	Rec	No analysis of displacement risk.
2. Defining Indicators of Change			
2.1	There is at least one relevant indicator associated with each change described in the results chain(s).	Must	Latest IMTs include 'M-Plan' with large number of indicators. However, this is very recent. No apparent linkage between results chains and Partnership Agreements (PAs).
2.2	Information to be collected includes qualitative information on changes at various levels of the results chain.	Must	Recent IMTs include qualitative indicators.
2.3	A small number of indicators at the impact level can be aggregated across the programme.	Must	Programme aggregates indicators for access and usage (Outcomes 4 and 5), as well as jobs, income and beneficiaries (Impacts 6, 7 and 8).
2.4	There are specific indicators that enable the assessment of sustainability of results.	Must	There are no indicators around sustainability. Previous indicators around stability were removed from the logframe.
2.5	Mid and senior level programme staff understand the indicators and how they illustrate programme progress.	Must	There appears to be a lack of connection between MRM staff and programme staff (Senior Intervention Managers and leadership) on the numbers generated, particularly in the development of targets and projections.

⁵⁷ DCED (2015) *The DCED Standard for measuring results in private sector development. Control points and compliance criteria*. Version VII. April 2015.

⁵⁸ Status is Rec for 'recommended' or good practice, and Must for areas 'deemed necessary for all participating programmes' in the standard

2.6	Anticipated impacts are realistically projected for key quantitative indicators to appropriate dates.	Rec	Projections do not appear to be realistic for a number of sectors and indicators, including the likely impact for current partners, the timing of partnerships, and the likely take-up of new partners as well as replication and scale-up.
3. Measuring changes in indicators			
3.1	Baseline information on key indicators is collected.	Must	Baselines have been conducted 'ex post' / retrospectively. Many baselines have been ad hoc, and information is not systematically collected on project partners via PAs.
3.2	Information for each indicator is collected using methods that conform to good research practices.	Must	Mixture of methods have been used for the limited number of studies done. Quality of the Early Impact Assessments (EIAs) has at times been weak.
3.3	Programmes have a mechanism for assessing and understanding differentiated results by gender.	Must	Gender disaggregation is mandated within programme's gender strategy (GROW, 2016p) including that " <i>gender-based research to inform the assumptions and results chains</i> ", however little evidence for this. Quality of analysis in VfM report on gender equity (50 per cent beneficiary assumption, see GROW 2017l) is very shallow.
3.4	Programmes monitor to identify unintended effects.	Rec	No evidence programme is looking into unintended effects.
4. Estimating attributable changes			
4.1	Attributable changes in all key indicators in the results chains are estimated using methods that conform to established good practice.	Must	Programme tending to take 100 per cent attribution for interventions, including those where it was a player among a number of other players (for example in oil palm, with attribution entirely taken for leveraging IDH credit guarantee).
5. Capturing Wider Changes in the System or Market			
5.1	Systemic changes are assessed using appropriate methods.	Rec	The programme has not made any attempt to measure systemic changes as of yet. Although the recent MRM calendar now includes a plan to " <i>Look into the effects of GROWs work on influencing and changing market actors (concessions, government, IDH, communities, etc) perceptions and behaviours</i> ".
6. Tracking Programme Costs			
6.1	Costs are tracked annually and cumulatively.	Must	While ASI tracks costs and reports at annual report and semi-annual report stages, they have not always been reported cumulatively, for example in Annex 1 of the Y3 annual report (GROW, 2017b). VfM indicators are not used by the programme in decision-making as they have not been systemically collected or reported during the programme period.
6.2	Costs are allocated by major component of the programme. (Applicable only to programmes with more than one main component).	Rec	Costs have been broken down by sector for the Intervention Fund, and by intervention (though not intervention partner) in the Y3 annual report (GROW, 2017b). However, fees are not broken down or allocated by sector, except in recent work done (see CBA calculation v4.xlsx). The recent VfM report (GROW, 2017l) reports projected cost effectiveness, but not by sector, and only looks at projected cost per beneficiaries not actuals.
7. Reporting Results			
7.1	The programme clearly and appropriately aggregates programme-wide impact at least	Must	The programme aggregates the logframe in semi-annual and annual reports. In addition the

	annually.		aggregated outcome and impact indicators are updated more frequently including in recent excel documents ⁵⁹ . However, indicators have changed during the programme period and there is no clear single logframe template with a clear set of targets. Targets do not appear to exist, instead 'projections' are reported, which change from one semi-annual report to the next.
7.2	The programme produces a report at least annually which describes results to date.	Must	Annual reports and semi-annual reports are produced as well as annual business plans. Results and not consistently reported.
7.3	Results of systemic change are reported.	Rec	No reporting of systemic changes to date.
7.4	Results are published.	Rec	Results shared with Sida, but not clear if they are published more widely.
8. Managing the System for Results Measurement			
8.1	The programme has a clear system for using information from the results measurement system in management and decision-making.	Must	There is no evidence that the MRM system is used in decision-making. For example, there is no evidence that resources within the programme are prioritised based on likely beneficiary impact. VfM indicators are also not systematically produced nor used in decision-making.
8.2	The system is supported by sufficient human and financial resources.	Must	The current MRM team includes a MRM Manager, and two MRM specialists, as well as recent short-term international support. The team appears to have good capacity. MRM studies appear to be financed via the Intervention Fund. It is unclear if there is a cap on such expenditure.
8.2	The system is well managed and integrated with programme management	Must	The MRM system appears to have had a lot of improvements recently. However, significant work is required to properly integrate it with programme management, and there are a number of ways in which integration could be improved.

⁵⁹ See 170428_GROW Aggregation File_Summary of Actuals, Projections & Estimates.xlsx and 170427_Logframe Explanatory Notes.xlsx