

# LISA Monthly Newsletter – June 2025

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## Liberian-Swedish Access-Driven Rural Development Programme (LISA)

### Key Points

- The LISA project started in July 2024
- The LISA TA team arrived in March 2025
- LISA has been introduced to County officials in Bong, Lofa and Nimba Counties
- The team has shortlisted rural tracks for upgrading to VARs
- TMCs have been contracted to carry out the day to day management of all VAR sites
- LISA induction, launch and training is planned for the second half of June

### Background

The LISA project has been established within MPW with Sida support to continue the work on rural feeder roads and track access, which was started in the previous Liberian Swedish Feeder Roads Project (LSFRP).

LISA project aims at the following:

- Construct **195.0 km** of village footpaths to standard Village Access Road (VARs) in Bong, Lofa and Nimba Counties
- Maintenance of **174.6 km** of previously constructed VARs in Bong, Lofa and Nimba Counties.
- Spot improvement of **12.3 km** of selected feeder roads lined by proposed village tracks.
- Maintenance of **1000.0 km** of feeder roads as GoL contribution in Bong, Lofa, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River-gee, Maryland, and Grand Kru Counties.

MPW is supported by a TA team from Cowater International.

MPW and the TA work as a single LISA team in the same office in Monrovia and work together on site. County and District staff also join the team to plan and monitor the work.

The LISA team coordinates closely with Sida programme management, with frequent site visits, progress meetings and technical discussions.

VARs will be managed by CBOs and local committees in the communities where the VARs are located.

Track Management Consultants (TMCs) organise the CBOs, design the VARs, train the labourers and supervise the site work and the management.

The LISA team supervise the TMCs and provide additional expertise with engineering, community management, gender inclusion, agricultural productivity and social enterprise specialists.

## Progress

### County Introductions

Deputy Minister Jocelia J Taplah and Assistant Minister Isaac N Vaye held formal meetings in the three Counties in late March to introduce the MPW and TA team to the County Administrations. At these meetings, senior County officials expressed their commitment to supporting the work. During the week of meetings, a potential VAR site in Suakoko District in Bong County was inspected and various community and technical issues were discussed.

### TMC procurement

TMC procurement began in late 2024. Evaluation was delayed until the TA team arrived in March 2025. The TMCs have signed contracts and mobilized ready for training and then starting work with site surveys and community profiling.

### VAR shortlisting

Potential VARs in the three Counties were initially assessed in late 2024. They have now been shortlisted and the final selection will be made using a multi-criteria analysis (MCA) by the TMCs with LISA oversight early in July.

### Induction and training

An event is being planned for the second half of June. This will include 2 days of presentation and technical discussion, followed by 3 weeks of training for the TMCs and others, led by the Swansea University/LIDA-R team to whom research and training activities have been sub-contracted.

### Previous VARs

The LISA team has assessed the VARs constructed in the previous LSFRP programme, and will provide further support to those communities to implement their Community Maintenance Action Plans (C-MAPs).

### Technical discussions

The LISA team is currently considering two developments of the VAR approach that was implemented during LSFRP: a revised structure for

community VAR management; and an alternative technical standard that will allow access to be provided further at lower cost. Both developments are being considered for inclusion in the training and then to be trialed on the LISA VARs.

### Inception

The LISA project completed its inception phase with the submission of an inception report at the end of May.

## Future Plans

### Overall programme

After the submission of the inception report, the overall programme is to: select VARs, identify and train CBOs and management committees, and make all necessary preparations between June and September; carry out all construction work, mostly during the dry season from October to March 2026; and then spend the remaining months ensuring that the VARs will be sustainable in the long term under community management, funding and maintenance.

## Partnerships

Since the purpose of rural access is to provide access to services and facilities, it is important that LISA coordinates with projects and initiatives that can support the construction and maintenance work but, more importantly, support rural communities to benefit from the improved access. LISA has already worked with Grow-2 and VOSIEDA to see if their plans for agricultural improvement could form part of the VAR selection process.

## Challenges

The main challenge facing the LISA team is to make sure that all preparations are ready for the start of construction from September onwards, noting the recent start of the rains.

## Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

### Progress indicators

It is important for a project team and other stakeholders to assess progress against plans, so that the intended work will be completed in the time available.

An M&E specialist joined the LISA team in May and is choosing the indicators that will give the clearest picture of progress while not requiring excessive time to collect. An M&E framework showing these progress indicators against plans will be established and included in future newsletters. The 'results harvesting' approach to project impact will be included in the M&E framework.

### Person of the month

Each LISA newsletter includes the story of an individual associated with the project and tells how they hope to contribute to its work and results.



Augustine S Jeigula is the County Development Engineer in Lofa County and has worked on the track programme since 2012. He holds a degree in Civil Engineering from Sierra Leone and has attended many training courses associated with the programme. He will be working closely with the MPW Resident Engineer in Lofa, County officials, District Inspectors, TMCs, communities and the LISA team.

His specific roles will be to represent the County Administration and strengthen the coordination

between MPW and the County, identify potential tracks for upgrading and the communities that will manage them, give technical training, and supervise site work on VARs and feeder roads.

In light of the current transfer of authority to Counties, he has a key role in ensuring full coordination between the LISA team based in Monrovia and the communities and other stakeholders across Lofa County.

Of how he has benefitted from the track programme, Augustine says: "Building the professional capacity of relevant county team members like myself by the project has greatly improved skills and performance thus increasing level of active county oversight of project and reliable leadership."