

Research for Health in Liberia



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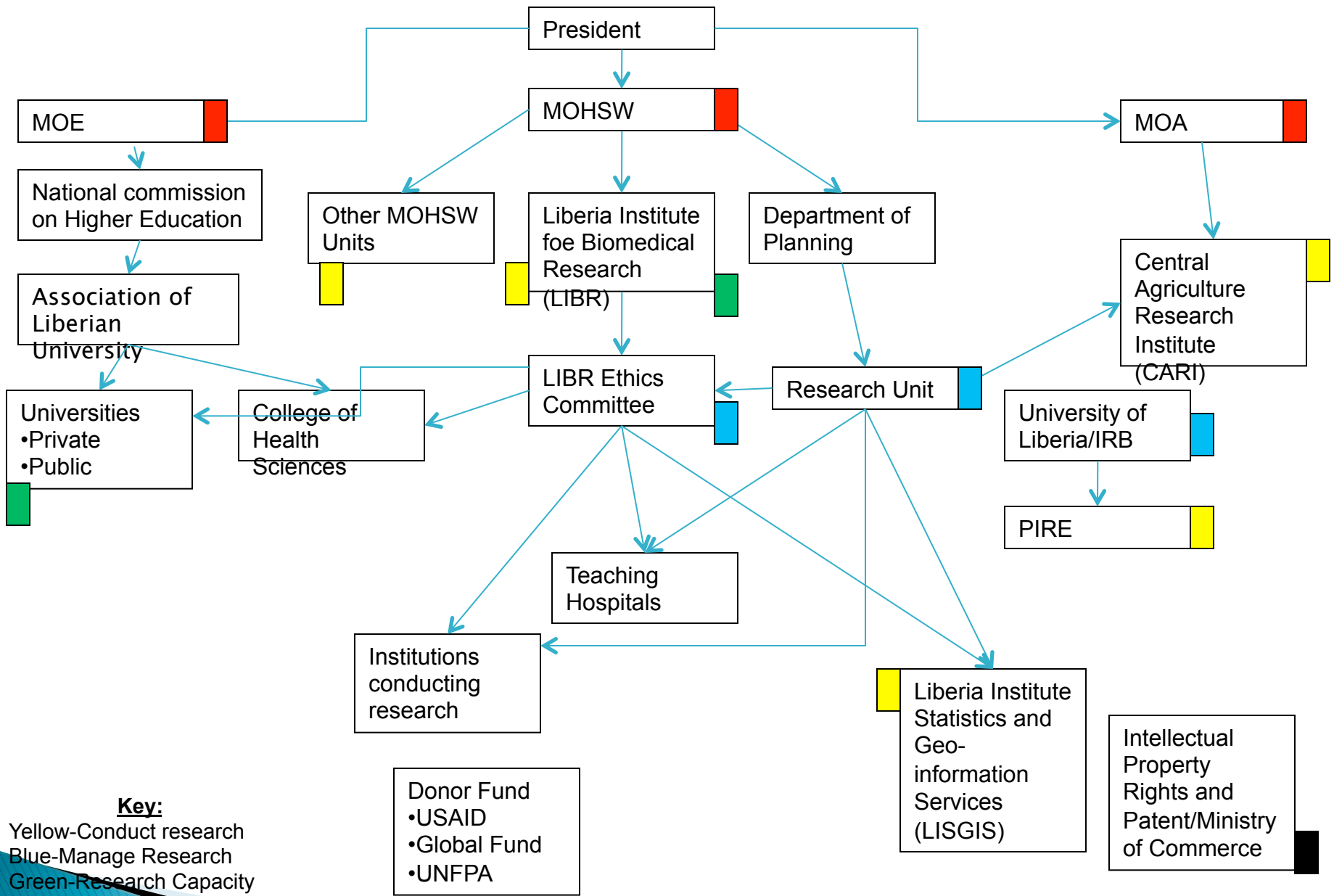


Background

Policy: *‘The Ministry would like to promote a culture of inquiry into the best methods of delivering health and social welfare services.’* (HNP 2011–2021)

The Research Unit **Reestablished** in 2011

- ▶ The Research Unit is headed by a director and situated within the Department of Planning and Research and Development
- ▶ It currently has three full time staff



Map of Liberia Research System

Terms of Reference

Purpose:

- *“To determine the mandate, decision making powers, responsibilities and work procedures of staff of the Research Unit of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare.”*
- The Roles of the Research Unit of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
 - Governance
 - Management
 - Coordination
 - Research system strengthening
 - Conduct of research

National Health Research Priorities


- Research priorities have been identified based on four domains in accordance with the 10yr National Health and Social Welfare Policy and Plan of Liberia, namely:
 - Health Service delivery
 - Systemic components
 - Disease specific
 - Social Welfare
- A total of 24 research priority topics were identified in July of 2011 and ranked for 1-24 in December of 2011

Management of Ethics in Research


- ▶ There are two ethics committee:
 - Liberia Institute for Biomedical Research–Ethics Committee (LIBR–EC)
 - University of Liberia Institutional Review Board (UL–IRB)

There is currently no national committee on health research in Liberia but there is ongoing initiative to establish one

Policy on Research for Health

- There are plans to develop a policy on research
 - Proposed issues for policy consideration:
 - Ensuring that research conducted meets International standards
 - Generating scientific evidence that Inform policy and sound decision making
 - Guaranteeing the protection of research subjects
 - Promoting the coordination all stakeholders in research for health (IRBs, researchers, research institutions, donors, decision makers, etc)
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Recent & planned activities

- ▶ Development of Research Unit TOR
 - ▶ Prioritization and ranking of research for health topics
 - ▶ Workshop for stakeholders (IRBs, program staff, academic institutions, etc) on Health Research Ethics
 - ▶ HRWeb training in Burkina Faso for Research Unit staff
 - ▶ Proposed development of research policy
 - ▶ Planned training for stakeholders in Operational Research
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▶ Strengths

- Strong political/institutional support for research
- The development of a 3-year (2012–2014) operational plan for research
- Gradual stakeholders' recognition of the roles and importance of the Research Unit
- Strong partnership with WAHO and COHRED for Health Research System Strengthening

▶ Challenges

- No allocated budget for the Research Unit
- Limited coordination in the management, governance and implementation of activities for research for health
- Lack of feedback system on the dissemination of research results
- Limited institutional capacities in the IRBs

Thank you

