



USAID | **LIBERIA**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Core Education Skills for Liberian Youth (CESLY)



Submitted by:
Education Development Center, Inc.



Contract No. EDH-I-00-05-00031-00
Task Order No. EDH-I-05-05-00031-00

OCTOBER 31, 2010

This document was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Education Development Center, Inc. for the USAID/Core Education Skills for Liberian Youth (CESLY) Project, Contract No. EDH-I-00-05-00031-00

This report is made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development. The contents are the sole responsibility of Education Development Center, Inc., and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Core Education Skills for Liberian Youth (CESLY)

Table of Contents

ACRONYMS

I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. ACTIVITY UPDATE	2
<i>Summary.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>TASK 1 Final Two Levels of Students Currently Enrolled In ALP Plus Graduated.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>TASK 1 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS</i>	<i>9</i>
1.1 Enrollment and Retention	9
1.2 Age Appropriate Enrollment.....	11
1.3 Engagement of Youth Volunteers.....	12
1.4 Use of Media to Promote Enrollment	12
1.5 School Performance Mapping.....	12
1.6 Focus on Gender	13
<i>TASK 2 Improved access to and improved quality of basic education, with emphasis on improved core literacy and numeracy skills.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>TASK 2 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS</i>	<i>15</i>
2.1 Pedagogical Support to Classroom Teaching	15
2.2 Instructional Approach to Reading	20
2.3 Learning Materials and Promotion of a Culture of Reading.....	21
2.4 Development of Distance Education Materials	24
2.5 School Community and PTA Engagement	25
2.6 Tutoring.....	26
2.7 Night Lighting.....	27
2.8 Monthly Salary Payments.....	28
<i>TASK 3 MOE assisted in designing, piloting and implementing a non-formal literacy and numeracy curriculum for overage and out of school youth as a successor to ALP.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>TASK 3 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS</i>	<i>29</i>
3.1 Nonformal Education Curriculum Development.....	29

3.2	NFE Curriculum Pilot.....	32
3.3	Non Formal Education Field Testing.....	33
3.4	Use of Media to Promote NFE enrollment	34
3.5	Training of NFE Facilitators.....	34
	<i>TASK 4 Quantitative assessments of reading and numeracy skills acquisition.....</i>	35
	<i>TASK 4 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE</i>	
	<i>DIRECTIONS.....</i>	36
4.1	Baseline assessment.....	36
4.2	Mid-term Assessment.....	37
	<i>TASK 5 Life skills program expanded, improved and integrated in ALP Regular, ALP Youth and non-formal literacy and numeracy program.</i>	39
	<i>TASK 5 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSES TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE</i>	
	<i>DIRECTIONS.....</i>	40
5.1	Utilization of Service Learning and Life Skills Manuals in Accelerated Learning Classes.....	40
5.2	Development of Life Skills Curriculum Content for NFE program.....	40
5.3	Content Development in Work Readiness.....	42
5.4	Field Testing of Curriculum.....	43
5.5	Service Learning.....	44
5.6	Career Guidance Counseling	44
5.7	Year 2 Plans for Completion of Life Skills Curriculum and Program	45
	<i>TASK 6 Six or more LRCs supported and strengthened.....</i>	46
	<i>TASK 6 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE</i>	
	<i>DIRECTIONS.....</i>	46
6.1	Service Provision to the Public.....	46
6.2	Quality of LRC Staff Support to Field Implementation Activities.....	47
6.3	Preparation for Sustainable Transition of LRC Management.....	49
	<i>TASK 7 Improved policies and strengthened capacity for implementation.....</i>	50
	<i>TASK 7 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE</i>	
	<i>DIRECTIONS.....</i>	51
7.1	Relationships.....	51
7.2	Education Officer Training.....	51
7.3	Monitoring	52
7.4	Policy Dialogue.....	53
7.5	Strategic Directions for Technical Collaboration and Capacity Building	54
	<i>TASK 8 Educational supplies distributed.....</i>	55
	<i>TASK 8 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE</i>	
	<i>DIRECTIONS.....</i>	55
	<i>TASK 9 Small grants are issued under contract in support of project objectives</i>	59

TASK 9 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS	59
9.1 Development of Grants Strategy.....	59
9.2 Distribution of Instructional Materials.....	60
9.3 Back to School Campaign.....	61
9.4 Yearly School Package	61
TASK 10 Identify, promote and manage implementation of public-private partnerships in support of project objectives and workforce development	62
TASK 10 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS	62
10.1 Work Readiness Strategy	63
10.2 Public Private Partnership Development	64
TASK 11 Outreach	67
TASK 11 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS	68
11.1 Capacity Building of MOE Communications and Outreach	68
11.2 ALP/NFE Enrollment/Retention Campaigns Strategy Developed and Executed	68
11.3 Information on CESLY activities disseminated	69
11.4 CESLY Text Messaging Strategy	70
11.5 MoE Website Development	71
III. CHALLENGES	72
IV. PLANS FOR THE COMING QUARTER	74
V. SUCCESS STORIES	78
<i>Quarter IV Success Stories</i>	78
VI. CONCLUSION	81
<i>YEAR 2 New Directions</i>	83

ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ALP (P)	Accelerated Learning Program (Plus)
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CBO	Community Based Organization
CEO	County Education Officer
CESLY	Core Education Skills for Liberian Youth
CYI	Community Youth Intern
DEO	District Education Officer
DSTV	Digital Satellite Television
ECSEL	European Commission Support to Education in Liberia
EDC	Education Development Center
EGMA	Early Grade Math Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EMIS	Education Management Information Systems
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GDA	Global Development Alliance
GOL	Government of Liberia
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HR	Human Resources
IFESH	International Foundation for Education and Self Help
ILO	International Labor Organization
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IT	Information Technology
LRC	Learning Resource Center
LTP	Liberia Teacher Training Program
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MYS	Ministry of Youth and Sports
NGO	Non Governmental Organization

NFE	Non Formal Education
NYSV	National Youth Service Volunteers
OSI	Open Society Institute
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RFA	Request for Applications
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
SCOPE	Standards-based Classroom Observation Protocol for Educators
TA	Technical Assistance
TWG	Technical Working Group
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
WAEC	West African Examination Council
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

Core Education Skills for Liberian Youth (CESLY)

Annual Progress Report

Submitted by: Education Development Center, Inc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education Development Center (EDC), Inc. is pleased to submit this annual report for Year 1 of the Core Education Skills for Liberian Youth (CESLY) project, detailing activities undertaken during the course of the year. The following report summarizes key programmatic accomplishments, provides an update on specific activities delineated in the work plan, discusses challenges and identifies activities planned for implementation in the upcoming quarter and some of the conclusions resulting from efforts over the past year.

This report is organized by task area, with key accomplishments realized during the reporting period highlighted.

II. ACTIVITY UPDATE

Summary



CESLY commits itself to continual focus on quality improvement...

Over the course of Year 1, the CESLY project has overcome considerable challenges and achieved significant accomplishments.

The project succeeded in conducting a meaningful intervention to improve enrollment rates and quality of accelerated learning despite startup occurring concurrent with the start of the school year. The project facilitated the bulk of training interventions in a condensed period during the first quarters of the project. CESLY was able to reach over 1,436 teachers through Pre-service training, Tutoring Training, In-Service I, In-Service II, cluster-based experience sharing circles and continual monitoring of teachers in classrooms.

CESLY looks forward to the next year as a time for reinforcing monitoring of teachers to ensure student performance, focusing attention on the production and quality enhancement of curricular materials and to actualize the work linkage components of the work readiness component.

The project has reflected below on its:

- a) top three achievements for the fiscal year
- b) top three achievements for the last two quarters, and
- c) noteworthy achievements of year 1.

TOP THREE ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE YEAR

1 Accelerated learning classes operationalized in 266 school programs, engaging 13,349 overage children and youth

Over Year 1, the projects key focus in accelerated learning has been to increase quality in the classroom. Below are some of the components of the strategy that CESLY has used to increase quality in the classroom.

- A Coherent Instructional Design- with increased reading focus
- Supply of Instructional Materials
- Promotion of a literate environment and culture of reading
- Engagement of communities in education
- School community activities through PTAs and youth volunteers and community mobilization
- Continual monitoring and teacher observation by project field staff
- Efforts to engage EOs in monitoring

2 1436 teachers and school principals trained and supported

Over Year 1, CESLY has designed and operationalized the following teacher support system.

- Pre-service training – for newly transferred ALP teachers and new NFE teachers
- In-service training- focus on evidenced-based approach to reading time on task, critical thinking and effective pedagogy
- Monitoring, observation and supportive supervision -Continual supportive supervision and mentoring from Training Officers, Master Trainers and County/District Education Officers.
- Experience sharing circles- school based regular meetings to support uptake of activities at the local level
- Distance education – reading-focused radio modules disseminated through low –cost broadcasting

During the 2009-2010 academic year, the main thrust of improving teacher capacity year 1 focused on accelerated learning teachers and aimed to effect change in the following areas:

- teacher time on task, attendance, punctuality
- effective pedagogy and use of critical thinking in the classroom
- Instructional methodology for teaching reading and math specifically in:

- Phonological awareness
- Decoding
- vocabulary knowledge
- oral reading fluency
- reading comprehension

During the 2010-2011 academic year, the main thrust of improving teacher capacity year targets both accelerated learning as well as nonformal education teachers. It has focused and will continue to focus on effecting change in the following areas:

- Reinforcing all the messages of Year 1 (teacher time on task, attendance, punctuality; effective pedagogy; use of critical thinking in the classroom; and evidence-based instructional methodology for teaching reading)
- In-depth core content strengthening in the areas of literacy, numeracy, work readiness, life skills, math and reading (*within in-depth training in teacher’s specific specialty*)
- principals’ supervision and support of teachers
- facilitation methodology appropriate for teaching youth and adults
- *Teacher training placed huge emphasis on teacher’s continual practice of “micro-teaching” and receipt of peer feedback.*

3 Curriculum produced in the areas of literacy, numeracy, life skills and work readiness for 54 days of instruction for Level 1 (of a four Level curriculum)

- CESLY works jointly with Ministry of Education (MOE) on design of nonformal education program.
- Curriculum will include content areas of literacy, numeracy, and life skills, and work readiness.
- Learning will be purposeful and relevant to a youth audience.
- Project aims to flesh out content for instructional content for level 1 during this phase of the project life.

TOP THREE ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE LAST QUARTER

In terms of the top three achievements of the last quarter, CESLY has highlighted the following activities.

1 Nonformal education Level 1 being field tested in 90 sites in six counties

- Field testing will target 4500 learners in six counties.
- 90 new NFE sites teach the holistic package (literacy, numeracy, work readiness and life skills) to people with no or only basic literacy skills.
- These classes run 3 days a week, usually at night according to learning selection of timing.
- Work readiness and life skills curriculum will also be field tested 2 days per week in accelerated learning classes.
- The ALP and NFE programs will be integrally linked. Progress made in teacher development, implementation modalities and reading improvement in ALP during year 1 will directly flow into the NFE program, so that accelerated learning and nonformal education develop in tandem as a system of alternative education for older learners.
- The field test is to be implemented through the Ministry of Education with CESLY support. Three NGOs will also pilot the curriculum over the course of the year: Concern, Ibis and Red Cross

2 Interim nonformal education policy drafted

- This document was brainstormed, drafted, validated and discussed with inputs covering:
 - Goals of Nonformal Education
 - Objectives of the Nonformal Education System
 - Intended Beneficiaries of Nonformal Education Services
 - System Components including:
 - 1) *Planning and development*
 - 2) *Implementation*
 - 3) *Professional development/training*
 - 4) *Research, Monitoring and evaluation*
 - 5) *A Management Information System*
 - 6) *Communication and information sharing*
 - 7) *A flexible service delivery system*

- Accountability and Evaluation of the System of Nonformal Education
- Management/ Administration
- Funding and Resource Mobilization

3 Youth Apprenticeship program established

- Youth Apprenticeship program established with Ministry of Youth and Sports and a Global Development Alliance partnership with the Open Society Institute which is providing \$1 million to World ORT – to strengthen and expand the apprenticeship/job creation program

This Traditional Apprenticeship strategy operates as part of the Work Readiness Strategy that the project has operationalized in which:

- ALP and NFE programs directly link youth in work readiness activities, provide career guidance and counseling as well as curricular activities in work readiness
- CESLY will carry out an “accompaniment phase” to help students move into post-program options:
 - further education- junior secondary school,
 - apprenticeships
 - internships /mentorships
 - skills training/vocational training
 - apprenticeships or self employment,
 - work in the formal economy.
 - Project tracks graduates to gather lessons of what is working and what is not
- Project develops public and private sector partnerships into development of opportunities for youth

OTHER NOTEWORTHY ACHIEVEMENTS

In addition to the activities highlighted above as key accomplishments, a number of other noteworthy achievements of year 1 include the following:

- Over 171,559 learning materials delivered to teachers, students and trainers, including:
 - TEXTBOOKS - Over 150,000 Formal school primary and junior high school textbooks for 1,7, 8, 9 grades
 - NONFORMAL EDUCATION MATERIALS
 - Facilitator's Manual - 1 of each set of curricula in Literacy, Numeracy, Work Readiness and Life skills, Resource Materials for Literacy Facilitators , Sonie's Story
 - SUPPORT TO ALP TEACHERS
 - Service Learning , Life Skills Lessons, EGRA Teachers Volume I and II , Short Stories for Learners, Decodable Books, Accelerated Learning Teaching Manuals for Level II and Level III
 - TRAINING GUIDES AND MANUALS
 - In-service II Master Training Guide , In-service I Master Training Guide ,
 - School Community Training Guide, Youth Volunteer Training Guide
 - SCHOOL START UP PACKAGE of classroom aids and materials – delivered to 356 ALP and NFE sites
- 216 PTAs trained and mobilized to support basic education for overage students.
- 111 Education Officers trained in teacher monitoring and supervision and oriented to nonformal education.
- 10146 visits to LRCs, exceeding targets by over 300%
- Relationship of technical collaboration established with the Ministry of Education, including Divisions of Professional and Technical Education, Curriculum, Primary Education, Secondary Education, Teacher Education, Communications; Department of Planning; and 6 County Education offices
- Mechanisms established to operationalize work readiness and apprenticeship program targeting up to 1000 youth through the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Open Society Institute partnerships.
 - Approximately 3,000 Taa Bora Solar energy lanterns have been built. By mid-November 5,200 plus Taa Bora lanterns will light up the accelerated learning and nonformal education classes conducted at night

- Mobilization of 14 high quality technical specialists who provided on-target technical inputs and mobilize other stakeholders to engage in support of CESLY investment in the education sector, as well as over 72 LRC staff mobilized to participate in supporting high quality programming across 11 separate task areas.
- Good will and support elicited from stakeholders in support of USAID/CESLY investment in the education sector

The report below covers each of the 11 task orders, discussing accomplishments, responses to challenges, and future directions in each task order area.

TASK 1 Final Two Levels of Students Currently Enrolled In ALP Plus Graduated

Item	Indicator Targets	Current Level
Student Enrollment	17,000	13,439
# of adult learners enrolled in USG supported schools or equivalent non-school settings.	2594 ALP Youth	3297 Adult Learners
% of female students enrolled in ALP program	minimum of 50% for ALP regular, minimum of current 58% for ALP youth	44% ALP Regular 60% ALP Youth

Key Accomplishments

- Massive recruitment campaign launch for accelerated learning and nonformal education from May 2010 to September 2010
- PTA, youth volunteers and other school community actors mobilized to enroll and retain students (with focus on girls)
- Adult learner targets exceeded by 27%
- Targets for ALP Youth female enrollment exceeded.

TASK 1 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

1.1 Enrollment and Retention

During Year 1, CESLY was able to enroll 13,439 ALP students and graduate 77%. This represents the culmination of one cohort of students who was able to move through three levels of ALP and exit Level 3. In addition, CESLY's efforts enabled another cohort of students to move through Level 2 and prepare themselves for the last year of ALP.

After start-up in September 2009, CESLY was able to hire core technical staff, beginning the full enrollment campaign in late October and November of 2009. While considerable effort was made, the timing of startup and late campaigning had an adverse impact on student enrollment, resulting in Year 1 enrollment figures at 79% of first year targets.

Monitoring trips over the course of the year helped technical staff to understand the various factors influencing retention of students. Some include:

- Need to generate income
- Competition between school and seasonal occupations (agriculture, fishing, tree distribution, gold mining, etc.)
- Insufficient lighting of school classrooms
- Gender-specific responsibilities and expectations, including pregnancy
- Cultural issues (i.e. initiation ceremonies, being sent to “bush school” for long periods that overlap with formal school time)

During Quarters 2 and 3, the technical team analyzed these factors to determine what could be influenced by the project. Through the course of the academic year and the summer, the CESLY team increased the frequency and length of field visits and committed additional human and staff resources to supporting retention. The project team adopted the following strategy for addressing enrollment and retention issues.

Strategies for Addressing Dropout

- Differentiated strategies for addressing irregular attendance as opposed to complete dropout
- Engagement of PTA and parents
- Engagement of youth volunteers (CYIs and UNDP NYVS)
- Review recruitment, selection and output of the CYIs
- Replacement of underperforming CYIs
- Let core education issues be dealt with through PTA, CYI and community actors
- Map out the sources of influence in community, utilizing them for greater impact
- Liaise and build relationships within communities
- Identify values and custodians of values within the community
- Reinforce close supervision of LRC staff engagement in monitoring.

Strategies for Addressing Poor Enrollment and Performance

- Develop and elaborate strategy for reaching female learners and project gender strategy
- Implement CYI tool for tracking drop out
- Use of tutorials to influence student performance
- Encourage peer review and peer monitoring
- Utilize the SCOPE tool with teachers
- M & E officers reinforce the use of the teacher observation tool
- Strategic engagement of principals
- Incorporate lessons learned into NFE curriculum implementation
- Recognition of constraints that impact quality teaching in the education program (distance of teachers, farming responsibilities, amount of stipend)

For Year Two, CESLY began its enrollment campaign in May of 2010 before the end of the school year ended to ensure adequate coverage in all counties. The campaign approach included:

- LRC visits to all sites
- Half of country office technical team to travel as a team to every county to conduct enrollment outreach as a model for LRC staff
- Significant use of media (particularly community radio and talk shows) as a means of disseminating information.
- Focus on gender, with girls’ enrollment and retention prioritized.
- Improved impact through consolidation of ALP and NFE enrollment efforts.
- Targeted messaging for

- Dropout
- Failures
- Repeaters
- Campaigning through town meetings

The enrollment campaign continued through the summer months with an increased focus during the last 3 weeks of August and all of September with a strong technical team presence in all counties. CESLY staff reinforced and supported county enrollment efforts through radio talk shows, town meetings, public discussions, and through publicity in churches, mosques, market places and community centers and communal farms. The early summer campaign resulted in the enrollment of approximately 4019 individuals for NFE and ALP. In monitoring visits during September 2010, most schools were found to be in session, with both students and teachers in class.

CESLY will continue to focus on monitoring and follow up to ensure retention throughout the year. The constant presence in the community of Community Participation Officers, Training Officers, Team Leaders, Specialists from the Technical Team and District Education Officers that promotes accountability among teachers and community members. A Gender and Distance Education Specialist on staff will place specific attention on maintaining adolescent girls' enrollment in school. The key to the effectiveness of this field presence is relationship building, close mentorship, and the sense that staff also make sacrifices to ensure that teachers and learners receive support and the materials they need. This type of closeness is what motivates learners to stay in school, encourages teachers to follow students, and ensures engagement of youth volunteers and PTAs.

To reflect demographic realities in counties where CESLY operates, revised life of project indicators were submitted to USAID in July 2010, targeting 5330 learners for enrollment in ALP during year 2. CESLY also revised the expected completion rate to 70%.

1.2 Age Appropriate Enrollment

In response to Ministry concerns about enrollment of students not of appropriate age in CESLY classrooms, specific sessions were held during the In-service training to address and clarify differences between accelerated learning, conventional school and nonformal education with principals, teachers, master trainers and Education Officers present. These messages were reinforced through field visits of all county level staff and five technical specialists to all counties. A marked improvement was witnessed during the first month of school operations in September 2010. This said, there were still some sites with enrollment issues. CESLY has honed in on discrepancies and will continue to transmit messages around age-appropriate enrollment. The project will make a specific effort to ensure that there are not ALP schools where primary education is not being offered, with any issues reported to the County Education Officer.

1.3 Engagement of Youth Volunteers

To ensure an on-the-ground voice for enrolment and retention of students, Community Youth Interns were placed at project sites. These individuals are active in all communities and are responsible for mobilizing students and communities throughout the school year. For additional support, UNVS were also recruited in the first quarter of Year One to serve in selected project locations. These youth volunteers placed at project sites were given the mandate to support PTAs, school clubs, tutorial provision, culture of reading, service learning, enrollment and retention especially of girls, school safety and a number of other activities. Peace Corps volunteers were identified in two LRCs engaged to support reading as well as successful community engagement, while IFESH volunteers were deployed in In-service Training.

Over the course of Year 1, CESLY was impressed with the valuable contributions and technical inputs of IFESH, Peace Corps and UNVS volunteers. However, CESLY realized that Community Youth Interns were often under qualified or underperforming. During the LRC experience sharing, CESLY reviewed the selection and output of the CYIs and determined where issues were most prevalent. The process for selection of youth volunteers was also revisited. Recommendations were made for the replacement of underperforming CYIs as well as those who were also current CESLY students. LRC staff were also engaged in discussions about how to support the youth volunteers for improved performance when their literacy levels are low.

Over the course of the upcoming year, CESLY will make a determined effort to better engage youth volunteers in the core operations of the project. As part of quarterly work plans, Community Participation Officers will conduct regular visits to youth volunteers for active monitoring to ensure their engagement in regular Experience Sharing Circles and support of student retention. When community youth interns are deemed ineffective or lacking appropriate skills, they will be replaced.

At the start of Year 2, the project continues to work with Peace Corps, IFESH and other organizations for support to communities in tutoring, promotion of a culture of reading, service learning and a multitude of other areas.

1.4 Use of Media to Promote Enrollment

See description under Task 11, Communications and Outreach

1.5 School Performance Mapping

To maintain a better grasp of the situation in the field, to identify successes, and to respond to problems of poor quality and retention, CESLY developed a school performance mapping tool. The tool was introduced at the LRC Experience Sharing Circle in May 2010, with staff from all six counties engaged in its completion. All schools were rated by staff, using the tool, against four criteria: Presence of Teachers and Principals, Enrollment/Attendance, Support from Community and Quality in Classroom. As a result, CESLY identified 33 of the highest quality programs with the most teaching time on task, highest attendance, and most engaged

communities. 129 schools were categorized as “good” with ongoing programs and good attendance. 80 schools were categorized as “functional” but with serious weaknesses that could be corrected and 22 as completely dysfunctional or non-functioning. In all, 162 of CESLY’s 266 schools are categorized as functioning well. The remaining schools need serious support and dialogue from the program and continuous and ongoing assistance.

During the last quarters of Year 1, CESLY prioritized these sites for substantial targeting and focus for enrollment, retention and quality improvement efforts. During Year 2, CESLY will continue to employ the school mapping tool as a means for prioritizing technical assistance and monitoring. CESLY will also continue to engage LRC field staff and county level Ministry staff in the mapping of schools.

1.6 Focus on Gender

To promote the engagement of female students in the classroom, various efforts were undertaken through the course of Year One. Coordination meetings with the Empowering Adolescent Girls project helped CESLY staff learn what strategies had worked for them and how these could be incorporated into the ALP and NFE program development process. As an example of an action taken as part of follow up, gender violence/reproductive health lesson plans were moved into earlier stages of the NFE curriculum to ensure that girls received essential information before drop out.



A clarified gender strategy was later delineated for implementation as part of the accelerated learning program, with clear roles established for each stakeholder. Specific efforts were made to identify an appropriate gender violence focal person as a contact in each county. The overall gender approach was then shared with all LRC staff through an intensive training. Development of specific action plans around how to address girls’ needs and girls’ retention was a specific focus for the first quarterly LRC experience sharing of Year 2. This process was led by the CESLY Gender and Distance Specialist.

TASK 2 Improved access to and improved quality of basic education, with emphasis on improved core literacy and numeracy skills

Item	Indicator Targets	Current Level
% of learners completing ALP Regular and Youth programs.	77%	77%
# of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided with USG assistance	<i>A minimum 16744 materials distributed to CESLY learners + formal school textbooks to be determined</i>	171,559
# of PTAs or similar school governance structures supported	<i>A minimum of 150 institutions supported</i>	216
# of teachers/educators trained with USG support	<i>A minimum of 1200 CESLY teachers and educators trained</i>	1436
% change in academic scores	<i>5% over baseline</i>	<i>Still being tabulated</i>

Key Accomplishments

Teacher Support and Training

- Teacher assessment tool customized for CESLY ALP classes in Liberia
- Ongoing teacher support occurring through monitoring and teacher observations
- Development of training materials for In-service I training
- In-service I Training of Master Trainers held for 53 participants in December 2009
- New pedagogical approach, focusing on evidence-based approach to reading introduced through In-service training.
- Development of training materials for NFE Orientation for Education Officers and Master Trainer Training-of-Trainers
- Delivery of NFE Orientation for Education Officers and Master Trainer Training-of-Trainers in August 2010 for 111 Education Officers and 70 master trainers
- 55 Cluster –based Experience Sharing Circles conducted in all counties with 1121 teachers
- Monitoring conducting to all ALP sites by Training Officers and/or Education Officer
- Program human and material resources focused on improving quality inputs in the classroom

Learning materials and Culture of Reading

- New pedagogical approach to reading delineated
- Instructional materials delivered to all CESLY school sites, including: EGRA Plus teachers manual, Teacher’s ALP curriculum and teacher’s guides, service learning lessons, life skills lessons and Teach the World to Read decodable books and set of stories

- Culture of reading implemented through school clubs, community engagement, celebration of International Literacy Day and the announcement of the CESLY Writing Contest
- Plans underway for large scale distribution of books through Brother’s Brothers

School Community Support and Training

- School community mobilized for access and quality of education through School-level Experience Sharing Circles
- School level plans created in each school site and monitored through regular experience sharing
- Identification of 177 sites for CESLY Alternative Energy Program (90 NFE and 87 ALP Youth sites)
- Total of 5,400 Taa Bora Lantern materials
- Conducted 6 days Taa Bora Technical Training for 18 CESLY Staff in partnership with the Daphne Foundation
- Total of 2,705 Taa Bora Lanterns built and placed in 177 ALP Youth and NFE Classes

TASK 2 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

2.1 Pedagogical Support to Classroom Teaching

In-Service I: Through the In-service teacher training, a new approach for effective pedagogy was introduced to 1066 teachers, with reading, time on task—which included attendance, punctuality, and time spent on teaching and learning during class hours—and a general evidence-based approach as key elements. The main In-Service training was conducted in January with a make-up session held for 68 teachers in March.

Reading pedagogy was strengthened through various discussions. Prevailing mental models around teachers were elaborated and then challenged. A phonics based approach to reading was discussed at length, as well as the EGRA and EGMA approach to testing and evaluation. Teachers were also enabled to engage students in the development and production of reading materials. The components for teaching reading were broken down as follows:

- phonological awareness
- decoding and word recognition
- vocabulary knowledge
- oral reading fluency
- reading and comprehension
- purposefulness and context of reading

To strengthen numeracy training, the team reviewed the results of the earlier Devtech evaluation, and subsequently reinforced core content in areas of numeration, addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

Teachers were also engaged in a review of elements of good pedagogy. This review included a discussion of how to prepare and plan lessons, effective classroom management, engaging students through content and relevant examples, critical thinking and linkages of class work to problem solving, ensuring participation of a broad group of students, and providing regular feedback on homework and class work.

To ensure that teachers received the monitoring, supervision, observation and mentoring necessary for effective performance, the SCOPE tool was introduced as a means to track performance and to provide parameters for support. Teachers were mentored to uptake the practices introduced as part of the SCOPE tool along with the content of the regular in service training. Ongoing teacher support also occurred through School-level Experience Sharing Circles—monthly meetings during which school stakeholders discuss challenges faced in their work as well as successes and lessons learned. Teachers, principals, youth volunteers and school community actors all took part in an orientation on how School-level Experience Sharing Circles can be used as a means for teachers to share lessons learned and receive input on ways to overcome challenges.

It was challenging to ensure that each school was actually holding Experience Sharing Circles on a regular basis. The concept, methods and frequency for these meetings were reinforced during School Community Training and Cluster-based Experience Sharing. During Year 2, the project will continue to reinforce this regular meeting, during each CESLY gathering and during CESLY monitoring visits.

Spot checking was conducted in Quarters 2 and 3 by Technical Specialists to assess progress in the classroom, to identify areas in which teachers or LRC staff lacked understanding of core concepts. The following items were highlighted as items that required particular emphasis.

- time on task, attendance and punctuality
- teacher professional comportment –
- understanding the accelerated learning system
- functionality of ALP youth schools
- enrollment and retention
- use of instructional materials

- instructional materials management
- understanding results of early grade reading assessment
- life skills
- service learning
- challenges in pedagogy
- progress on school level plans

CESLY response was to specifically address these items through cluster-based teacher experience sharing circles in which teachers from 3-4 schools gather in each county to reinforce and underscore comprehension of core concepts and compliance with CESLY objectives. These cluster-based experience sharing circles were carried out in all counties during April and May. In sum, 55 Cluster-based Experience Sharing Circles were conducted in all counties with 1121 teacher participants (Males 1005, Females 116).

The cluster-based training allowed teachers to grapple with difficult problems together in an interactive manner, which proved useful. Understanding culture of reading, how to implement service learning, and the meaning of life skills topics were all issues that teachers explored

further during Cluster-based Teacher Experience Sharing. It provided a forum for teachers to learn from each other, to gain clarity on the use of the EGRA manual, and to share new ideas and lessons learned for teaching difficult concepts. Reinforcement was provided around writing daily enrollment information on chalk board, use and management of instructional materials and other key issues.

In terms of effectiveness, Cluster-based Experience Sharing was useful, but should have been held earlier in the school year to have real effect. The project has prioritized this to happen early on in the second marking period of Year 2. The event was also hindered by the logistics for getting teachers to cluster centers in remote areas. The project has since planned for more than one day of contact, since walking distances limited teachers' ability to utilize a full day.

In-Service II: The second major In-service training was held in August of Year 1. The purpose of this investment was to prepare ALP teachers, NFE Facilitators and principals with in-depth training. Through this training activity, teachers gained appropriate background knowledge needed in the core content areas of reading, math, life skills, work readiness, literacy and numeracy, as well as in how to deliver core content in nonformal education and accelerated learning. Teachers and principals also required guidance for implementation of accelerated learning and nonformal education over the next academic year. Emphasis was placed on learning facilitation techniques appropriate to older learners, rather than teacher-centered didactic techniques. Teachers and facilitators were trained in specialized areas, receiving three full days of content specific instruction: NFE literacy and numeracy, NFE life skills and work readiness, ALP math and work readiness, ALP reading/language arts and life skills, with a separate training for principals.

Familiarization of teachers with content was crucial since none of the teachers had ever worked with the NFE curricular materials. It was important to reinforce this with ALP teachers who would teach life skills and work readiness. Another emphasis was micro-teaching. In every section, teachers were involved in preparation of actual lesson plans, practice teaching, and receiving feedback from their peers. This peer review was instructive for helping teachers compare what others rated as good teaching and poor teaching.

The CESLY team witnessed a lack of capacity among principals for effective on the job performance. Some of this could be attributed to a lack of understanding of the role of the principal. To address this gap, the In-service II training engaged principals in specialized training so that they first gained an overview of each of the content areas, rather than becoming a specialist in one. They were later given training in teacher supervision and monitoring, ensuring proper teacher conduct and comportsment and other supervision issues.

For teachers, the midterm evaluation referred to the January training as a "resounding success" and stated that teachers were "almost joyful" when they correctly employed learner-centered teaching. Many teacher participants communicated that this was the highest quality training they had ever attended. However, some teachers continued to teach using teacher-centered methods. CESLY directly responded to this need by reemphasizing the difference between teacher and learner-centered facilitation during the August In-Service II workshop. This difference was emphasized considerably, with participants receiving micro-teaching feedback on whether they

employed teacher or learner centered methodologies. This distinction will be continually addressed through ongoing monitoring and mentoring efforts over the next year. In addition, Education Officers and NFE Facilitators were trained to distinguish between the two types of pedagogy as monitors of this activity.

Teacher Monitoring and Classroom Observation: The project adapted and refined the SCOPE teacher monitoring tool for enhanced use and customization in areas of effective pedagogy, time on task and teaching of reading. Joint monitoring was conducted through visits from Education Officers and Training Officers. Detailed training materials were developed for Education Officers, with an emphasis on teacher supervision.

Following the delivery of mid January In-service Teacher Training and Youth Volunteer training, the project conducted numerous monitoring trips to assess the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom, while also overseeing the management of LRCs. The earliest visits in December and January allowed for identification of counties in particular need of management support and strengthening. Additional technical support has also been focused for backstopping and oversight in implementation of project activities. Visits to counties were prioritized so that, during training, the weakest counties had the strongest technical presence. Technical specialists engaged in intense monitoring trips during Quarter 2 and 3.

In visits to some ALP classrooms in March, classes were found in which there was a significant difference in official CESLY enrollment figures and the actual number of students in the classrooms – particularly for those classes occurring during evening hours. Furthermore, CESLY found the quality of teaching to be very poor in the same classes. Teachers were not following basic procedures for class management or demonstrated little commitment to their work. A factor not unique to poorly performing classes was teachers’ poor grasp of core content areas to be taught. These findings were serious challenges to quality and motivated CESLY to place an enormous shift in effort toward the issue of quality in the classroom. Because of the findings from the classroom visits, CESLY instituted the following measures to address the situation:

- Development of a streamlined Classroom Observation form for use during long or short classroom visits, based on accepted classroom management techniques and the SCOPE tool.
- Notification of all LRC Training Officers and Team Leaders of the importance of improving classroom visits, and encouragement of EOs and school principals to observe teachers more frequently. This notice (delivered via email) was followed up by phone calls from the Program Director to each Team Leader.
- Team Leaders and Training Officers were required to send copies of their monthly visitation schedules as well as monthly reports on the visits directly to the Program Director and the Training and Community Development Specialists.
- The Program Director and Technical Team members have carefully reviewed these reports to ensure that planned visits are sufficient and that they have indeed taken place.

CESLY continued to place a heavy emphasis on the use of the SCOPE Teacher Observation Tool. CESLY engaged principals in teacher observation, presenting each with a letter of commendation when observations were conducted. The project also engaged DEOs and CEOs in teacher observation but the lack of available incentives for these individuals limited their level of engagement. Monthly plans for teacher observation are closely monitored by the Program Director, with follow up communication as needed to address any gaps.

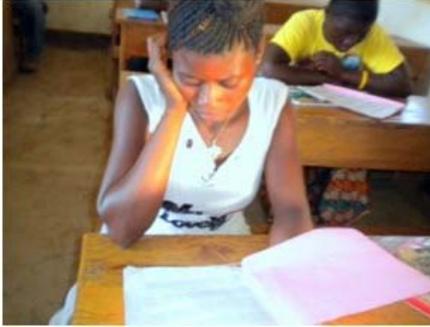
The SCOPE tool has been used 163 times in classrooms. A streamlined version was created that is more easily understood by implementers and less cumbersome for tracking purposes while retaining the original content and intent. Data entry and analysis for the SCOPE tool is ongoing.

In terms of classroom monitoring, teacher uptake of skills continues to be a priority. During year 2, technical specialists and field officers will continue to prioritize regular, intensive, supportive visits to teachers as one of the key strategies for helping teachers uptake skills learned through In-service training and reinforced during Cluster-based Teacher Experience Sharing.

Coordination in Support of Teachers: The CESLY and LTTP projects have been working together through the course of the year to identify synergies. CESLY offered a list of teachers to LTTP as recommended for field-based training. The project also actively sought out ways to coordinate, in terms of not scheduling over training, coordinating on per diem and transport allocations, sharing training materials, connecting CESLY-supported teachers to LTTP math and reading support. This collaboration will certainly continue into Year Two.

Responding to Challenges in Teacher Support: One huge challenge understood during Year 1 was the slow pace at which teachers absorbed new information or put into practice new skills. When noting the slow pace of teacher learning, CESLY responded by placed considerable emphasis on teacher support through monitoring and supervision, encouraging teachers to spend time on task effectively through punctuality and attendance. CESLY prioritized investment to reduce continued absence from the classroom and disengagement. Master Trainers did not always grasp new concepts easily in the past, which inevitably affected quality of teacher training. During In-service I, all Master Trainers were selected by CEOs and a great many were EOs themselves. During In-service II, the Deputy Minister issued a request that EOs act not as trainers, but as supervisors. This enabled CESLY to collaborate with CEOs to select new Master Trainers with greater attention to quality. The project also sent central MOE and Technical Specialists to all 24 training sessions during In-service II to train, support, guide and intervene to ensure that appropriate content was delivered to teachers.

In the coming year CESLY will utilize the LTTP Core Content reading and math books to strengthen teachers' foundational skills and will collaborate with the LTTP project for training teachers in their use.



2.2 Instructional Approach to Reading

As mentioned above, during Year 1 a new pedagogical approach to reading was introduced in ALP classrooms through teacher training, dissemination and use of the EGRA manual, and ongoing pedagogical support in the classroom. Teachers were oriented to the following concepts during the first In-service training:

- Understanding and challenging mental models about reading
- Understanding phonics based approach to reading
- Understanding EGRA\EGMA Approach
- How to teach components of reading:
 - phonological awareness
 - decoding and word recognition
 - vocabulary knowledge
 - oral reading fluency
 - reading and comprehension
- purposefulness and context of reading
- strengthening teacher core content in Reading and Language Arts topics

To incorporate the revised pedagogy for reading instruction, teachers were provided with guidance to adjust their lesson planning for languages arts. They now teach a reading component three days a week during the language arts session during Spring 2010 to strengthen basic reading competencies before the end of the school year. Other ALP lessons are taught two days a week.

In Year 1, there was an emphasis on single phonemes. In year 2, phonetic awareness skills will be gradually shifted to emphasize blends and diagraphs. It was deemed counterproductive to teach blends and diagraphs when learner comprehension of single letter phonics was weak and in some cases non-existent.

The midterm evaluation noted a “*failure to make the connection between oral language and text.*” As discussed above, in Year 1 the emphasis was on the basics of reading. In Year 2, CESLY will introduce and reinforce the foundations of reading, with specific interventions to help teachers focus on reading comprehension skills. Learners will be more attracted to reading after the development of engaging, suspenseful text relevant to youth.

Through the nonformal education literacy curriculum, CESLY introduces engaging content revolving around a girl named Sonie and the story of her life. The curriculum requires learners to read sentences at their level and listen to content that is above their reading level. The literacy curriculum supports the development of skills for comprehension of content they are exposed to through the written text. This story will be introduced in all ALP classes in Year 2, as well as in the NFE curriculum.

Need for focus on Writing: A need to emphasize writing, not only reading, was also emphasized in the midterm evaluation. By the end of year 2, CESLY had begun implementing this new focus by:

- Sponsorship of a writing contest where CESLY students write their own stories and their stories are then published
- Commissioning a writer to develop stories to accompany the NFE curriculum
- Commissioning development of other Liberian literature
- Working with Brother's Brothers to secure book donations to Liberia

In upcoming versions of the literacy curriculum, writing is also incorporated into beginning literacy from the beginning, in an explicit and purposeful manner. Examples of some of the tasks that involve writing are:

- Printing full name and address
- Recognizing, reading and writing phone number
- Recognizing, reading and writing date of birth using words, abbreviation and numbers
- Identifying jobs and work places for various occupations
- Completing a job application form
- Reading, following and writing a work schedule
- Writing simple sentences using sight words and vocabulary words learned
- Writing pieces that involve comparison, analysis, synthesis, critiquing, etc.

Need for Math Focus: CESLY consciously and intentionally focused on reading more than math during Year 1, since reading is a proxy indicator for grades in all other subjects. This was motivated by a desire to focus teachers in on one area and support them in mastery of reading content early on. Math content was taught during In-service I for 1.5 days and then was greatly built upon during In-service II with 3 days of math strengthening and 3 days of numeracy strengthening for the respective types of teachers. In August, CESLY also trained 70 master trainers with two select pools trained specifically in numeracy and math support. These trainers will be drawn upon to provide additional support for these areas in the future. In addition, a Literacy and Numeracy Specialist has been added to the team to place particular emphasis on math content during year 2.

2.3 Learning Materials and Promotion of a Culture of Reading

Promoting a Culture of Reading was a topic introduced through training to teachers, youth volunteers, PTAs and other community stakeholders (Youth Volunteer Training, School Community Training, In-service I and In-Service II) and continually reinforced over the course of the year. The following activities supported this effort:

Supply of Instructional Materials to Classrooms: Teachers were supplied with a rich collection of instructional materials for use in the classroom during Quarter 3. Teachers received the EGRA Plus teacher manual, ALP curriculum and teacher guides, service learning lessons, life skills lessons and Teach the World to Read decodable books for learners.

Many teachers did not have ALP key materials, including the teachers' curriculum and teaching guides, from which they have been expected to teach from for the last three years of the ALPP program. These materials were consequently redistributed. Life skills lesson plans were also supplied to teachers, drawing on the lessons developed for Level 2 during the Creative Associates ALPP implementation period. Service learning lessons were also distributed to all classrooms for integration across subjects.

To increase the quality of education, materials were also distributed to learners. Each classroom received a set of five decodable books and by the end of the quarter, production of materials for each learner was in progress, with each individual to receive a copy of the stories taught by teachers in the EGRA Plus Manuals.

School Community Reading Clubs: In the communities where CESLY operates, there were 82 reading clubs in operation during Year 1. The clubs are spearheaded by community members and therefore take on a different form in each location. For example, in Grand Gedeh and Nimba, clubs tend to be classroom centered, with teachers reading from passages in curricular materials. The teacher encourages spelling and reading contests as part of this design. In Nimba County, students form small groups and work together. They often assign chapters for reading to one another, practice reading aloud, and discuss the content of their reading.

During Year 2, CESLY plans to encourage a uniform approach to reading clubs as part of a strategy to promote a culture of reading in communities. Writing will also be emphasized. Additional reading materials will be supplied to schools through the CESLY school in kind grants program, and through the Brother's Brother Foundation, which will add fuel to the activities of clubs.

Celebration of International Literacy Day: During the 2010-11 school year, CESLY has heightened awareness and excitement around reading through the celebration of International Literacy Day. Students and honored guests read stories aloud and culminate the ceremony with the presentation of a dictionary in each site on September 8. International Literacy Day also inaugurated the start of a writing contest in all CESLY supported schools. CESLY were invited to submit their own original work or written versions of oral traditions from their community. Winning submissions of students will be printed and distributed during year 2.

Development of Liberian Literature: On September 8, International Literacy Day, all CESLY-supported schools inaugurated the CESLY Writing Contest. Students competed to write short original real-life stories built around a positive, inspiring and unifying theme. Students were encouraged to listen to the oral traditions of community elders spoken in the vernacular and to write these stories down in English. Award winning stories will be compiled, published and disseminated to other students across the country to promote the culture of reading and the value of Liberian stories by Liberian authors.

Through its nonformal education curriculum, CESLY is also developing a series of Liberian stories to be utilized in the curriculum and to be distributed to all youth participating in the project. These stories are tied around everyday life situations of teenagers in rural and urban Liberia. The stories seek to stimulate lively discussion and dialogue around social and educational themes such as arranged marriages, female education, community service, livelihood

constraints, and other pressing issues. These stories are also linked and utilized as a medium for teaching basic phonetics, decoding, oral fluency and reading comprehension skills.

The project also engages other Liberian authors to develop series of new and innovative that will be distributed to students in all sites.

Promotion of a Literate Environment: Needed student and classroom learning materials are placed in the classroom to strengthen reading instruction and overall instruction in the classroom. Some of these materials have included reading-focused teachers manuals, decodable books, short stories for learners, accelerated learning teaching manuals, service learning lessons, life skills lessons and other materials for teachers and students.

CESLY is also working to secure larger scale book donations for Liberia through Brother's Brothers for placement in schools as well as within Learning Resource Centers in six counties. CESLY's Private Sector/ Global Development Alliance program component supports the provision of these reading materials. Learning Resource Centers work with schools to make use of book donations to promote a culture of reading through clubs and extracurricular activities, in-school projects, creative use of school wall space, documentation of locally produced content, and other locally-developed projects.

Mobile Library System: It was noted that the previous ALPP project had secured copies of Macmillan reading materials for placement in each LRC. CESLY made efforts to assess the status of the materials and formulate a mobile library system whereby materials can rotate from school to school within one county. During quarter 4, CESLY technical team members trained LRC staff on how to operationalize mobile libraries and how to fit them in with the pattern of current staff movement. The libraries will begin movement in Year 2 to coincide with the start of the next school year.

Future Directions: During Year 1, one challenge was the delay in distribution of learning and reading materials to the field. CELSY, in its initial quarters, had planned that supplementary learning materials would be procured through the grants budget and that reading materials would be obtained through GDA partnerships around book distribution. By March, it became clear that neither of the two original sources of budget would be available so the project should look to realign funds from other parts of the budget. Emergency materials (such as chalk, teacher lessons plan books and attendance books were procured and the project looked at a low-cost distribution of short stories so that some kind of reading material could be placed in the hands of learners before the year's end. These elements were delivered by the lateness of delivery did affect the quality of learning in the classroom.

CESLY responded to this challenge by proposing a project realignment in which substantial funds were allocated toward reading and learning material procurement and development; consulting with USAID to highlight instructional support materials as a key area for grant distribution; reopening discussions with USAID about the use of Brother's Brother for book distribution, and planning in to the Year 2 work plans for Task 2 and 3 significant time and human resources on the development of Liberian reading materials. In addition, through the

budget realignment, CESLY has hired a Literacy and Numeracy Specialist to place attention that is more concerted on these efforts.

2.4 Development of Distance Education Materials

During year 1, ten modules covering different areas of CESLY programming activities were outlined and earmarked for development. In accordance with the work plan, the latest literature and best practice in distance education was reviewed and examples from several countries was studied.

Distance education programs were developed for teachers in core themes of teacher improvement introduced during the In-service training sessions, with a focus on effective pedagogy for teaching reading, time on task, and critical thinking. Plans have been developed around the following topics:

- teacher time on task
- encouraging critical thinking
- a comprehensive approach to reading instruction
- components of reading: phonemic awareness and phonics
- components of reading: decoding and word recognition
- components of reading: vocabulary knowledge
- components of reading: oral reading fluency
- components of reading: reading comprehension and practice
- promoting a culture of reading
- creating locally produced teaching and learning materials

Interviews were conducted, footage was collected from various field sites and radio production and editing was undertaken during quarter 3 and 4. Model classroom teaching and pedagogical inputs were collected in all of the counties where CESLY operates. By the close of Year 1, seven of the modules had been completed. The remaining three would be completed in the first quarter of Year 2. The first of the modules will be aired at the start of the 2010-2011 academic year.

In addition, Service Learning drama, originally produced by the Talking Drum Studio in collaboration with Creative Associates, were retrieved from Talking Drum Studio and updated for renewed airing.

The CESLY Communications Coordinator encountered challenges with UNMIL radio in negotiation of airtime. While UNMIL was at first willing to air the spots, later in the year reluctance arose regarding CESLY's quasi NGO vs. bilateral government support. By the start of Year 1, CESLY had initiated discussions with the MOE and the Ministry volunteered to spearhead the securing of UNMIL air space since the MOE has no problem in airing material free via UNMIL. CESLY and MOE also delineated plans about how the MOE could add additional minutes into the timing of each program so that MOE current events and educational outreach topics could be profiled through the distance education modules.

2.5 School Community and PTA Engagement

During the fourth quarter, training for PTAs was completed in all counties. The goal of the training was to strengthen the school-community relationship so that communities would take ownership for schools and for the education of their students. Specifically, the training sought to strengthen PTA and community stakeholder capacity in the areas of governance and management, networking and advocacy, tracking and communicating education performance, financial management and planning and project management.



Beyond these core functional areas, the training specifically covered.

- Instructional Materials Management
- Managing Alternative Energy
- Reporting and information sharing
- School Safety & Gender Violence
- Promoting the role of females
- Psycho-social support for students
- Civic Education and Peace Strengthening
- Service Learning and work readiness
- Promotion of community based Reading
- Enrollment and Access to education
- Tutorials
- Resource mobilization and Income Generation
- Budget, Financial Records and Financial reporting
- CESLY Small Grants
- Plan of Action Development

The following types of individuals were invited from each school:

- 4 PTA Officers- (Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasure
- Youth volunteer (CYI or NYVS)
- 1 Student/Youth Representative –50 %Female
- 1 Women’s Representative
- 1 School administrator
- 1 Town Chief /Local Administrator or Law Enforcement Officer

Community stakeholders and PTA members built specific skills to support the immediate goals of the activities at the school level, resulting in more sustained engagement of the community in school activities and in support of education over the long term.

At the end of Year 1, CESLY held consultations with Community Participation Officers in all counties and noted a continuing difficulty with some PTAs not taking ownership of schools, majority of members inactive with just a select few engaged. While the major budget for investing in PTA training was expended in Year 1, the project strategized on how to make redoubled efforts to activate and energize PTAs through Community Participation Officer, Community Youth Intern and technical team presence in communities.

2.6 Tutoring

CESLY instituted tutoring was a direct means of addressing the needs of dropouts to obtain needed information so that they could retake a class that they had failed. Tutorials focused on those retained in Level II, Level II dropouts from the just ended school year, as well as over aged 5th and 6th grade students and dropouts. During Quarter 3 and 4, 1,535 students were enrolled in tutorial classes in six counties.

CESLY developed a curricular framework to guide teachers in implementing the tutorial in the area of language arts and mathematics. The framework consisted of topics, sub-topics, objectives, main lesson activities, and materials to be covered during each week including:

Language Arts:

- Phonological awareness
- Word Recognition Skills
- Written Communication
- Reading Comprehension

Mathematics:

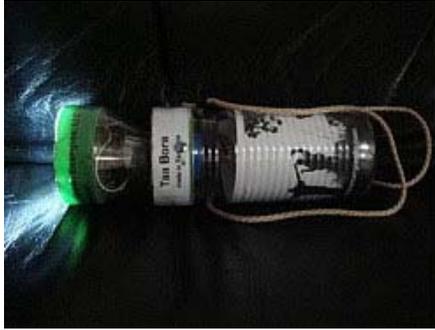
- Sets
- Numeration
- Fraction
- Numeration and measurement
- Geometry

The CESLY original work plan included peer tutoring while the October revised work plan delineated tutoring of 2009 retainees in response to a USAID request. Through experimentation with these types of tutoring activities, CESLY found that peer tutoring was not necessarily effective due to low skills of older learners at sites, lack of higher level students with more education than the ALP students, and need for close monitoring to ensure quality of content being tutored. CYIs were also often not educated enough to provide quality tutoring, whereas UNVS volunteers tended to provide much more consistent and higher level tutoring. Therefore, CESLY has prioritized UNVS volunteer tutoring as the most effective type of peer tutoring.

In terms of teacher-provided tutoring, CESLY found that tutoring conducted in semester 1 and 2 was less effective due to the volunteer nature of the activities and teacher expectations around additional hours. CESLY noted that it was difficult to mobilize all schools to start conducting tutorial classes and some sites began tutorials but did not finish them to their conclusion. CESLY responded to these challenges by informing teachers that the reason their stipend was budgeted for 12 months was to ensure provision of tutorials during summer months. CESLY also revised the memorandum of understanding with schools to delineate tutoring as a responsibility of teachers. This is included in the new memorandum that will be provided in Year 2, to accompany the increase in teacher stipend.

CESLY will continue to promote tutoring as a method of increasing the number of ALP completers during Year 2 programming.

2.7 Night Lighting



The project found that it was particularly difficult to address night school functionality in year 1 due to the high cost of generator fuel and the continuous breakdown of generators. As a result, teachers and students tended to be less consistently present. By quarter 2 and 3 of the 2009-2010 school year, the project had identified massive functionality problems with all schools operating during evening hours.

In order to address night school enrollment, CESLY is constructing and deploying Taa Bora lanterns in all 90 nonformal education schools and 90 accelerated learning classrooms in order to redress night enrollment problems. After customs delays were resolved, 92 boxes of Taa Bora parts were received in July, for assembly of 5,400 lanterns. 19 individuals were trained in constructing the lanterns in August 2010, including 18 staff members and the COTR for the CESLY project. As of September 30, 2705 lights had been constructed for deployment in 177 classrooms.

During 2010-2011 enrollment efforts, the production of Taa Bora lanterns was prioritized as the number 1 factor contributing to increase or decrease in retention. In one nonformal education site, enrollment was 18 before installation of lights and increased to 32 after installation of the lights. For this reason, the human resources of work readiness staff, all LRC staff and community volunteers and hired help were mobilized to speed up the production of Taa Bora lanterns.

Key challenges to quality are:

- Delay in training and production due to customs procedures
- Time required for production of locally made lanterns
- Timing of data collection to assess NFE enrollment (insufficient information to predict accurate number of NFE sites during October 2009 initial order of Taa Bora parts)
- Number of lights available to light the classroom
- High wastage of technical parts “switches”
- Unforeseen additional costs for hanging and suspending lights in classrooms
- Need for training of local stakeholders in ownership, maintenance and monitoring of lanterns.

During the start of Year 2, CESLY has addressed these challenges through:

- Discussion with Daphne Foundation for provision of additional materials to light classrooms.
- Provision of quality enhancement in light production training.

During year 2, CESLY will assess whether the presence of night lighting leads to a dramatic change in the functionality and performance of schools. CESLY is also learning from the Daphne Foundation's experience in using Taa Bora for income generation to guide the income generation pilot in year 2.

2.8 Monthly Salary Payments

CESLY continued payment of stipends to teachers on a regular schedule. During July's NFE Orientation for Education Officers, EOs expressed a desire to be more involved in the process of salary payment for supervision purposes. CESLY took note of this suggestion and plans to involve EOs largely in teacher supervision. CESLY envisions a time when the MOE is directly involved in the provision of salaries, but recognizes that the system is not prepared to undertake this activity.

TASK 3 MOE assisted in designing, piloting and implementing a non-formal literacy and numeracy curriculum for overage and out of school youth as a successor to ALP

Item	Indicator Targets	Current Level
Number of youth of appropriate age enrolled in NFE	4500	Program just launched so figures will be reported in Year 2, quarter 1

Key Accomplishments

- Review and ALP curricular materials based on expert analysis and recommendations made for curriculum
- Planning meetings with Deputy Minister for Planning, Instruction, Adult Education and other relevant MOE individuals
- Establishment of NFE Advisory Committee and Technical Working Group
- Consensus building workshop conducted
- Multi-stakeholder curriculum review conducted
- Basic parameters of the curriculum framework established
- Elaboration of frameworks for literacy, numeracy, life skills and work readiness
- Inputs received for the development of the equivalency frameworks
- Basic parameters of CESLY field testing identified, designed, and agreed upon
- Elaboration of frameworks for literacy, numeracy, life skills and work readiness.
- Development of curricular materials in literacy, numeracy, life skills and work readiness for 54 days of instruction for Level 1
- Piloting of the non formal education curriculum with 12 teachers
- Preregistration of 4019 possible NFE learners
- Creation of initial framework design for NFE Master Training
- Training of trainers in nonformal education content topics
- Training of all participating NFE facilitators, ALP teachers and ALP and NFE principals in nonformal education content
- NFE Literacy Coordinators hired to facilitate field testing during Year 2
- Initial field visits and classroom observations conducted

TASK 3 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

3.1 Nonformal Education Curriculum Development

During the course of year 1, CESLY has working together with the Ministry toward the development of an NFE policy document, agreement on a standards-based framework for

curriculum development and the writing of a Level 1 curriculum for all four content areas, with 54 days of instruction produced.

Through the forum of the Ministry of Education NFE Technical Working Group, stakeholders have developed a non-formal education system with four progressive levels of instruction. They voted to insert the following content areas in the curriculum: literacy, numeracy, work readiness, and life skills. The curriculum aims to help students acquire basic literacy/numeracy skills, enter into the world of work, and prepare for job skills training or transition into the formal school system, all while earning the equivalent of a primary school education.

Curriculum materials were submitted to review teams comprised of Ministry of Education relevant technical persons and staff from a variety of organizations including West African Examination Council, Making Enterprise, community Empowerment Program, World Bank, Concern, Ibis, National Adult education Association of Liberia, Lutheran Church School System, Liberia Entrepreneurial and Economic Development and other partners. Content specialists from EDC, RTI and other organizations, incorporated feedback from the review process into the curriculum. Improved materials were submitted to the Technical Working Group (TWG) for validation. Recommendations were made and materials approved for field testing after suggestions from the TWG were incorporated.

Overall, during Year 1, the project achieved the following in NFE curriculum development:

- Identification of human resources in life skills, work readiness, literacy and numeracy, and curriculum development to guide the curriculum development process
- Development of close working relationships with key MOE staff related to curriculum development and nonformal education issues.
- Creation of a rough draft of 54 lessons in each of the four content areas: literacy, numeracy, life skills, and work readiness
- Drafting of frameworks in each of the four content areas
- Review of all available related curricula in the four content areas.
- Technical persons from the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders engaged in curriculum “write-shop” to developed initial materials used as a basis for developing the curriculum.
- Production of Facilitator’s Manual for each of four content areas
- Workshop with each of the four content areas to calibrate the curriculum with WAEC
- Sharing of the curriculum for input from content area experts in literacy, numeracy, life skills and work readiness
- Development of an assessment/placement tool for literacy
- 14 stories developed by a local author to accompany curriculum
- Selection of sites for NFE curriculum pilot
- Training of 10 teachers in techniques to pilot the curriculum
- Visits to observe sample teachers teaching the curriculum during two week pilot period
- Focus groups with teachers piloting the curriculum
- Engagement of services of a professional story writer
- Commencement of learner workbook

- Production of Master Training Manual for Nonformal Education
- Training Sessions held to orient Master Trainers on the use of curriculum materials
- In-service training for facilitators/teachers on the use of curriculum material
- Collection of initial feedback from facilitators
- Monitoring visits carried out for the first implementation of the NFE curriculum.
- NFE Literacy Coordinators hired to work along with LRCs for monitoring and support to NFE classes and data collection on NFE field test

Finding local experts to develop literacy and numeracy materials for Level 1 was a challenge. Of all the participants involved in the write shop activities only one expressed interest and demonstrated competence for Level One materials development. It took effort and significant reallocation of resources to find the right mix of international and local consultants who could provide the needed expertise and technical input for the curriculum.

CESLY identified a need for greater focus on critical thinking and problem posing within the curriculum. The midterm evaluation and curriculum reviewers echoed this need. In response, CESLY will introduce a problem posing, critical thinking approach into the nonformal education curriculum. Stories have been developed using the character Sonie, and decodable stories are embedded in the curriculum, with text by Liberian authors to provoke critical thinking.

Upcoming Directions in Curriculum Development: CESLY has taken an approach to focus on the four ‘evidence-based’ components of reading instruction: Alphabetic and word analysis (which includes phonics and phonemic awareness), vocabulary, comprehension and fluency. This focus was intended to be in alignment with the assessment of reading skills conducted by RTI using EGRA. CESLY has noted an overemphasis on phonics, detected in the first May versions of the curriculum, reviewed by the evaluator. The curriculum is now under revision for inclusion of an emphasis on problem posing and critical thinking to engage learners in the process and the joy of reading, not just the mechanics.

The curriculum is also designed to help learners bridge from their first language or Liberian English to standard written English. Upcoming training will also help teachers learn how to help students make this transition.

The midterm evaluation speaks of a need for a Liberianization of the curriculum. This was a process already underway as is the process for matching the language level to that of the teachers. The evaluation also mentions that teacher instructions contain “too much text.” The lessons were intentionally written to be very guided and prescriptive, giving teachers specific instructions at the appropriate level. Curriculum developers are currently reexamining content and revising the steps to make them more clear and straightforward for teachers. Specific observation of how teachers carry out instructional directions will be conducted during the first two weeks of school. The next quarter will be a time for significant observation of the curriculum in action by curriculum developers as well as by NFE Coordinators in all counties. This feedback will be directly integrated into the process of curriculum development.

During Year 1, CESLY held meetings with MOE focal persons, WAEC and other organizations to establish equivalency between the NFE curriculum and the national Primary School Curriculum as required by the framework. The intent was to address the needs of learners opting

to take the Liberia Primary School Certificate Examination as an exit option. Achieving clarity and consensus around equivalency will be a major focus of year 2.

Key activities prioritized for year 2 include the following:

- Complete the development, review and validation of 54 lessons for each content area for semester 2 of level 1.
- Develop and produce supplementary instructional materials (learners' workbooks, instructional supplements for each of the 4 content areas).
- Develop and produce reading materials including We-Care stories, Sonie stories, and illustrations.
- Oversee successful implementation of the curriculum.
- Collect, compile data on field test.
- Incorporate feedback from field test and finalize curriculum for Level 1.
- Document lessons learned from field test.
- Finalize frameworks for NFE curriculum.
- Finalize policy for nonformal education (see Task 7 for further discussion).

3.2 NFE Curriculum Pilot

In advance of the larger field test, CESLY piloted the new curriculum for two weeks in three CESLY schools and two non CESLY school in urban and rural Montserrado County. A two-day training session was held on June 2nd and 3rd to prepare facilitators for pilot testing of the NFE curriculum in the library room of the Ministry of Education. Eleven participants (10 teachers and 1 observer) took part in the training.

The NFE team also visited and observed classes during the pilot test. Each teaching session was followed by a debriefing meeting with the facilitator at which time s/he was provided with feedback and requested to offer impressions on the materials.

Learning from the pilot centered on:

- The quantity of training time needed for teachers to grasp new content
- Levels of familiarity around life skills and work readiness content areas
- Understanding level of terminology needed to address learners and teachers
- Time allotted for lesson inadequate to complete lesson
- Need to give facilitators more reading materials on content
- Provide materials for activities
- Provide training on methodology(how to facilitate)
- Provide explanation on how module should be used
- Explain the different headings and what should be done with them
- Vocabulary is challenging-using simple words/or providing explanation for big words in the modules

All of these inputs were incorporated directly into the ongoing curriculum design as well as the teacher training package.

3.3 Non Formal Education Field Testing

Because the introduction of both a new nonformal system and curriculum is a major step for the Ministry, the process of field testing the new curriculum, making revisions based on this field test and feeding recommendations of the Ministry's Technical Working Group, was prioritized. A draft document on NFE Field Testing has been shared with the Ministry and the project is awaiting feedback and further dialogue with the appropriate Ministry officials.

CESLY identified three different venues for conducting the field test:

- In new sites or communities where facilitators and learners students will be recruited by CESLY specifically for NFE Level 1
- In existing CESLY ALP Level 3 classes
- In NGO pilot classes

NFE Field Testing Tools: CESLY also designed the following tools to test the effectiveness of the curriculum:

- NFE Facilitator Interview
- Classroom Observation Form.
- Field Test Agreement Form
- Field Test Learner Group Tool

Identification of NFE Sites: The technical team spent considerable time assessing the results of area surveys and local information before determining sites. The need to conduct a pilot on a select group of learners rather than treating it as a full scale implementation of a program was identified. Remote location and challenges of insufficient population or saturation in existing sites were also investigated. An assessment of the feasibility of reaching 10,000 students was presented to USAID and joint conclusions were reached that the pilot should reach a more targeted audience. A new target of 4500 students was set, established in 90 different NFE sites.

Building on the results of NFE Enrollment survey activity, the technical team conducted a 5 week enrollment campaign in six counties from the end of May through the first week in July.

The main goals of the campaign were to:

- Outline for LRCs the parameters for site selection for new NFE classes
- Finalize lists for new sites from each county
- Advise LRCs on how to engage County Education Officers in discussions around teacher selection after site identification

Mobilization was conducted through radio messaging and large community meetings. The town chief, commissioner, community elders, youth leaders, women leaders, school administrators and a considerable number of community dwellers were present at every meeting. It was apparent to the team during the visits that most communities would prefer NFE classes to be held at night. In communities where targeted NFE participants were present, preregistration was conducted

immediately after the mass meeting. 4019 students were pre-registered in six counties. After identification of sites, CESLY collaborated with CEOs and DEOs in selection of teachers.

Year 2 directions include:

- Monitoring the functional and successful implementation of the new NFE sites.
- Ensuring adequate time and attention to collection of curriculum observations and incorporation of data into curriculum
- Ensuring coordination between the NGO pilot and CESLY/MOE implementers

3.4 Use of Media to Promote NFE enrollment

Please see Task 11 for a discussion of the use of media to promote NFE enrollment

3.5 Training of NFE Facilitators

Please see Task 2 for a fuller description of the training provided to nonformal education facilitators participating in the teacher training pilot.

TASK 4 Quantitative assessments of reading and numeracy skills acquisition

Item	Indicator Targets	Baseline (Current Level)
Average score of participating students on comprehension (story understanding) exercise	<i>Listening Comprehension</i>	72.7%
	<i>Reading Comprehension</i>	14.5%
Average mathematics score of participating students	<i>Average Score Level II</i>	45.3%
	<i>Average Score Level III</i>	55.1%
	<i>Overall Average Score (level II & III)</i>	50.2%
Fluency in connected text, measured as average correct words read per minute	<i>Level II</i>	9.9 Words per minute
	<i>Level III</i>	23.6 Words per minute
	<i>Overall average (Level II & III)</i>	16.7 Words per minute

Key Accomplishments

- Development of CESLY EGRASYS databases
- Conducted two training sessions for assessors for the baseline and midterm
 - 40 assessors trained during the baseline (15 MoE Staff; 30 Non MoE staff)
 - 30 assessors deployed during the baseline assessment (10 MoE; 20 Non MoE)
 - 45 assessors trained during the Midterm assessment (15 MoE Staff; 30 Non MoE staff)
 - 30 assessors deployed during the baseline assessment (3 MoE; 27 Non MoE)
- Conducted two assessments
 - Baseline assessment November 2009 (findings report submitted)
 - Midterm Assessment May – June 2010 (data analysis completed; report writing on-going)
- Oriented 6 MoE EMIS staff (3 key staff and 3 data entry clerks) and 7 contracted data entry clerks for the entry of the EGRA/EGMA assessment for both the baseline and midterm
- Participated in In Service training of CESLY teachers with particular support for numeracy
- Review of ALP curriculum with relation to reading and math.
- Provide preliminary set of inputs into NFE curriculum development

TASK 4 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The subcontractor RTI International is responsible for conducting three quantitative assessments that provide information concerning the extent of CESLY's on improvement of reading and math learning outcomes. The assessments are scheduled as follows:

- Baseline assessment – November 2009
- Mid-term assessment – May/June 2010
- Final assessment – May/June 2011

By the end of year 1, the baseline assessment was conducted and analysis completed, while the results of midline assessment were still being analyzed.

In addition to the value added to the project through reports on EGRA/EGMA outcomes, Task 4 contributions included data entry, the development of the assessment database, orientation of data entry clerks and MoE staff, as well as the analysis and reporting of findings of the assessment. RTI staff during the period under review has also lent technical support to the CESLY Monitoring and Evaluation team, while providing support to the development of the NFE curriculum.

4.1 Baseline assessment

The results of the baseline assessment in early grade reading fluency show that the average score was 16.7 words per minute. This revealed that fluency scores were too low for consistent comprehension, and that comprehension scores were too low for students to be able to read to learn—the basic aim that most educational systems seek to effect by Grades 2 and 3.

For the early grade math assessment, findings show that students were able to identify numbers (77.2%), but that they had a difficult time determining what numbers were missing (29.3%). Computationally, the sampled pupils were not able to solve many problems in a minute (8.9 for easy addition, 7.1 problems per minute for more difficult), and findings were lower for subtraction (6.2 for easy subtraction, 7.5 for more difficult subtraction). The sampled pupils could only answer 29.5% of multiplication problems correctly and only 17.8% of division problems, which showed, in general, a real difficulty in performing basic computations either accurately, quickly or fluently. For shapes, pupils correctly identified only 20.7% of the shape tasks, which is surprising given the relatively advanced age of the sampled students.

In summary, findings in both reading and math show that students had extremely weak skills at the baseline of the project.

Given the length of instruments and complexity of data included combined with the need to field-test and calibrate instruments, the completion of the report writing process was delayed by 6 weeks. This is not a desired situation and in the future, a careful approach to conducting such assessments needs to be discussed. For example, paring down of both reading and math, as well

as other sections, to fewer tasks may be considered. The timeliness of fewer data points can be more valuable than a wealth of information that comes in late.

Travel time and proximity of schools were also a great challenge for the assessors. Most of the schools selected were located in remote areas with deplorable road conditions. This posed a serious challenge in meeting deadlines. Sometimes, the assessors had to stay very late at schools after delays in reaching the sites due to broken bridges, mud holes and other obstacles.

In terms of the utilization of the baseline assessment results, due to timing of receipt of baseline assessment data and the subsequent delay of baseline assessment results, CESLY had to create its reading intervention strategy largely independent of the results of the EGRA and EGMA. The year 1 strategy was formulated by EDC Technical Team and then implemented. The baseline assessment results, however, and the RTI content expert review of ALP math and reading curriculum did feature strongly into the development of the nonformal education curriculum approach to literacy and numeracy. It is toward the new curriculum that real contributions can be made, with the goal of creating a curriculum from scratch that adheres to appropriate and evidence-based technical considerations.

4.2 Mid-term Assessment

The midterm assessment was carried out in all CESLY intervention schools according to sample size. The MOE was engaged for both assessment and data entry, thus building M and E technical expertise within the ministry. RTI data for the midterm assessment is still being consolidated and will be supplied in a forthcoming summary assessment report.

Recognizing the challenge created by the late receipt of midterm assessment results, the RTI staff held a meeting with the CESLY technical team to discuss the way forward in year 2 of the project. As has been learned in other projects and most recently as was the case with USAID's EGRA+ program, Year 2 of any project is usually the time when the most impact is achieved.

With this experience as a backdrop, and in the absence of the mid-term assessment report (to be ready before the end of Oct 2010), the RTI management focal person consulted RTI's Principal Investigator for EGRA projects (Dr. Luis Crouch) and following this discussion, provided a simple advice to the CESLY technical team: To pour all of their efforts in Year 2 of the project as if they made no improvement in year 1. The RTI management focal person also provided an overall description of the EGRA+ approach for improving reading, discussing the ways by which communities can be engaged in creating a reading culture. RTI also reiterated the importance of focused instruction (focused in terms of content and pedagogy), the importance of following scope and sequence, maximizing the time on task, and support to teachers in terms of monthly visits (by the project team). Finally, it was suggested that the M&E team conduct mini reading and math assessments in a sub-sample of schools (15-20) mid-way through each semester in a given academic year. The level of effort needs to be explored to determine whether to implement this last recommendation.

The CESLY team has therefore agreed to continue in the same technical direction as year 1, with the assumption that all impact must be demonstrated in the 2010-2011 academic year, so that this will motivate all staff at every level to work with redoubled effort.

While the EGRA/EGMA data was not received in a timely manner, the external evaluator Patrick Cummins did conduct a significant investigation of reading and math issues and challenges. His contributions were received in early summer and directly fed back into the CESLY reading approach and into the development of the nonformal education curriculum. In addition, the EDC curriculum team conducted intensive monitoring in September of 2010, drawing out fundamental trends in the capacity of students to comprehend and absorb literacy and numeracy materials. These qualitative data sources are being heavily drawn upon and will be supplemented by the receipt of RTI quantitative data during Year 2.

TASK 5 Life skills program expanded, improved and integrated in ALP Regular, ALP Youth and non-formal literacy and numeracy program.

Item	Year One Indicator Targets	Current Level
% of ALP graduates transitioning into post-program options	<i>52% successfully placed in post program option (disaggregating by junior secondary, skills training, employed, self-employed)</i>	Data still being tabulated.
Number of CESLY learning sites where improved and expanded life skills program is implemented	187	356

Key Accomplishments

- Input into life skills curriculum and programming gathered from wide variety of stakeholders, including NGOs and private sector, as well as Ministries of Education, Youth and Sports, Labor, and Gender and Development.
- Production and Distribution of ALP youth Life Skills Manual to Schools Life skills manual to ALP Regular and Youth, levels 2 and 3 during 2009-2010 academic year.
- Expansion, improvement and integration of Life Skills program into the MOE's nonformal education curriculum.
- Development of content for 54 days of instruction in Life Skills instruction.
- Development of content for 54 days of instruction in Work Readiness instruction.
- Training of ALP Teachers and NFE Facilitators in life skills topics.
- Implementation of new Life Skills NFE Curriculum in 356 CESLY sites.
- Reinforcement of usage of instructional materials, particularly the service learning and life skills manual.
- Guidance and counseling strategy defined and reinforced.
- Civic education and peace strengthening activities prioritized for semester 2 of life skills programming in ALP 2009-2010 school year.

TASK 5 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSES TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

5.1 Utilization of Service Learning and Life Skills Manuals in Accelerated Learning Classes

The task order calls for the following objective to be achieved: “Life skills program expanded improved and integrated in ALP Regular, ALP Youth and non formal literacy and numeracy program.” The CESLY program developed a clear strategy for creating a new and modified life skills curriculum and program that would be developed for the nonformal education curriculum and then implemented in both accelerated learning and nonformal education classes in Year 2 of the project. While this endeavor would take significant development time, the project did not want to miss the opportunity to impact the cohort of students participating in the program during the 2009-2010 academic year. Therefore the project decided to utilize life skills materials that had been developed for ALP youth during ALPP, for use with CESLY ALP regular and youth learners.

During Quarter 2, life skills lesson plans were supplied to teachers, drawing on the lessons developed for level two during ALPP. Service learning lessons were also distributed to classrooms for integration across all subjects. In Quarter 3, the project monitored the usage of the life skills and service learning manuals.

Monitoring of usage led the team to determine that the life skills and service learning manuals were not being comprehensively or effectively used in classrooms. Monitoring visits have shown that the books are stored and not distributed and are not tracked and used according to school-level instructional material plans. This problem was particularly evident with service learning and life skills, but the general trend applied for usage of all instructional materials.

CESLY recognized that this challenge could be related to the need for in-depth training in the use of the materials. CESLY responded by providing more in-depth training to LRC staff members on how to utilize instructional materials, with a specific focus on service learning and life skills. This training/orientation on the usage of the life skills and service learning manuals was also incorporated into the Cluster-based Experience Sharing Circles for Teachers.

5.2 Development of Life Skills Curriculum Content for NFE program

The Life Skills Curriculum development process started with the collection of curricular materials with assistance from stakeholders involved in adult literacy programs around the country. Prior to the roll out of this curriculum in classrooms, the life skills curriculum was reviewed to provide inputs from content experts and stakeholders. The project built on the lessons learned through the first year of the program in life skills and engagement with NFE stakeholders continued for production of the Life Skills framework, identifying modules to be taught and the lessons to be prioritized. A total of 5 thematic areas (Psychosocial Wellbeing, Communication, Health and Hygiene, Peace and Civic Education and Environment) were

identified to address issues of self-awareness, self-esteem, violence, conflict, pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, thereby empowering young people to discover their self-worth, develop core values, civic responsibilities to their communities while also taking leadership roles in their families and communities.

Through this iterative process, “life skills” was defined as the combined skills and knowledge that enable an individual to meet the challenges of everyday life. This might include knowledge among youth and adults to communicate accurately, both orally and in writing, about their mental, emotional and physical health, use of appropriate strategies to maintain personal wellbeing, development of a positive self-esteem, rational management of feelings, and the development of positive parental roles that are supportive of their children’s development and that meet the challenges of everyday life.

A framework has been developed that covers standards and competencies for five (5) modules, covering 108 lessons for Year 1 of the program. This instrument has been shared with reviewers from the Technical Working Group and as well as consultants for input and further endorsement. 54 lessons have been generated for Semester 1 using a standard format to be followed by curriculum facilitators. At the end of each lesson, learners are assessed to ascertain their understanding of content. The modules all include notes and a guide for facilitators. The following modules were developed in order to help learners develop the specific competencies mentioned above. Lessons were developed for the first 54 days of instruction during Year 1.

Semester 1

MODULE A: Psychosocial Wellbeing

- Topic 1: Who Am I?
- Topic 2: Self-esteem: I am Important
- Topic 3: Relationships

MODULE B: Health & Hygiene

- Topic 1: Health & You
- Topic 2: Reproductive Health
- Topic 3: Sickneses & Illnesses
- Topic 4: Sexual and Gender Based Violence

MODULE C: Communication

- Topic 1: Relating to Others More Effectively

MODULE D: Peace & Civic Education

- Topic 1: Introduction to Peace & Conflict
- Topic 2: Similarities and Differences
- Topic 3: Listening
- Topic 4: Problem-Solving

MODULE E: Environment

- Topic 1: What is the Natural Environment?

Semester 2

MODULE A: Psychosocial Wellbeing

- Topic 1: Sharing My Thoughts & Feelings With Others
- Topic 2: Coping With Stress
- Topic 3: Improving Family Life
- Topic 4: Parenting

MODULE B: Health & Hygiene

- Topic 1: Health & Nutrition for Mothers
- Topic 2: Sexual Gender Based Violence
- Topic 3: Family Life Education

MODULE C: Communication

- Topic 1: Cooperating With Others
- Topic 2: Problem Solving

MODULE D: Peace & Civic Education

- Topic 1: Conflict Resolution
- Topic 2: Civic Participation
- Topic 3: Governance & Leadership

MODULE E: Environment

- Topic 1: Managing our Natural Resources
- Topic 2: Sanitation at Home and in the Workplace

Due to the limited number of writers involved in the writing process, meeting the deadlines was a challenge. As a result, an international content writer was hired to assist the CESLY Life Skills Specialist. The use of limited number of writers also served to improve diversity and contextualization of issues in each thematic area. In the second year of curriculum writing, CESLY plans to circulate life skills materials not only to local life skills content experts but also to global life skills experts within EDC and the broader international community.

5.3 Content Development in Work Readiness

Through the process of developing the nonformal education curriculum, the project engaged in in-depth dialogues with stakeholders and technical advisors to prioritize modules and lesson topics for inclusion in the work-related learning section of the NFE curriculum. The issue of work readiness was prioritized for Liberia as an area that needed emphasis, such that it should be a full stand alone course parallel to life skills.

Through an iterative process, “work readiness” was defined as the skills and abilities that enable an individual to develop awareness of the world of work. This might include knowledge of the labor market, occupational information, and a host of other areas. Work readiness entails the ability to carry out the following skills and actions:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and manage a small business • Plan and manage a career • Understand employers’ expectations • Understand workplace forms and functions • Use interpersonal skills at work • Develop good work attitudes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a job (including self employment or wage employment) • Prepare for vocational training • Prepare for apprenticeship • Understand work-related rights and responsibilities • Understand work-related health and safety practices |
|--|--|

The following modules were developed to help learners develop these specific competencies. A framework of modules was developed and lessons produced for the first 54 days of instruction in the following topic areas.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>MODULE A: Personal Leadership Development</p> <p>MODULE B: Career Planning</p> <p>MODULE C: Work Attitudes and Conduct</p> <p>MODULE D: Entrepreneurship</p> <p>MODULE E: Formal vs. Self-employment</p> <p>MODULE F: Work-related Money Management</p> | <p>MODULE G: Work-related Health and Safety</p> <p>MODULE H: Work-related Rights and Responsibilities</p> <p>MODULE I: Preparation for Vocational Training</p> <p>MODULE J: Apprenticeship</p> <p>MODULE K: Finding a Job Service Learning</p> |
|--|---|

During the Year 2, lessons for the second 54 instructional periods will be completed for Semester 2, so that a total of 108 days of instruction will have been developed for Level 1 of nonformal education.

The project found that the work readiness curriculum development must be closely coordinated with the development of the work readiness strategy and workforce development opportunities formulated by the program. Much effort was put into the development and clarification of a work readiness strategy. Over the course of the year, this strategy was more intimately linked with Task 10, the development of public private partnerships. During Year 2, energy will be focused on creating coherence between the production of work readiness content in the curriculum and the development of work readiness activities actualized through Task 10.

5.4 Field Testing of Curriculum

Piloting: The life skills curriculum was piloted before the full-scale field test with the Psychosocial Module tested in four schools in Montserrado County. 10 teachers (8 male and 2 female) were trained from June 1 – 2 2010 for the roll out of these modules. The training covered introductions on life and work, methods of facilitation, lesson planning and simulation exercises. 10 psychosocial modules were reproduced and distributed to teachers for use in the classroom. Observations from the field testing helped shape the approach and level of language used for life skills topics.

Production of Materials: To promote quality in the classroom, 1,338 Life Skills manuals were produced and distributed to teachers, school administrators and master trainers for use in In-Service Training of principals and teachers for roll out in 356 sites.

Training of ALP Teachers and NFE Facilitators: As part of efforts to build teachers knowledge of life skills, 356 teachers were trained to lead discussions on relevant topics in the classroom. Facilitators received specialized training on life skills content areas. Attention was focused on challenging topics such as HIV/AIDS and gender that facilitators needed practice to fully understand. Observations of master trainers and facilitators also helped to identify areas where facilitators would need particular support.

Deployment of Curriculum: By the end of year 1, life skills-trained facilitators and teachers were deployed to all CESLY sites. This curriculum is now being piloted in all CESLY classrooms. In NFE classrooms, life skills and work readiness will be taught 3 days a week. In ALP classrooms, the life skills and work readiness components will be taught 2 days out of a 5 day week.

Classroom Observation: Classroom observation was used as a means to collect input. A sampling of the types of inputs gleaned from classroom observation visits in June and September 2010 showed that:

- It was challenge for teachers within the conventional school system to absorb the student-centered approach for lesson groups. Teachers found it difficult to employ methods such as buzz groups, group work and games to generate thoughts from learners.
- The time required for lessons was not sufficient to cover all activities.

- It was common to find that teachers had not prepared lesson plans; some had not read materials before coming to the classroom.
- Teachers could not understand complex words used in the lessons.

This information was fed into Semester 1 material revision, Semester 2 production and teacher training design.

5.5 Service Learning

Through the introduction of the Service Learning ALPP manuals, CESLY observed various challenges:

- Lack of systematic approach to implementation of lessons
- Service learning activities tending to be delayed or not implemented at all

Project staff reinitiated meetings with the focal person for Service Learning at the MOE for better coordination and collaboration. CESLY also took note of the challenges and integrated service learning into the content of the Nonformal Education Curriculum so that teachers would be more likely to implement it systematically. The components and the process of service learning were clearly defined by the project team. CESLY then trained all master trainers, principals and teachers during the August In-service training on service learning activities.

By the close of year 1, CESLY developed a clear and systematic guide on Service Learning and several sample activities for use over the course of the first semester (Hand washing and HIV/AIDS).

5.6 Career Guidance Counseling

ALP graduates and NFE youth are guided in making decisions around careers they would like to engage in that are also supported by the local market. During Year 1, the project developed a career guidance and counseling tool to assist work readiness counselors at the LRC level for working with youth in schools. The tool provides a guide for group counseling sessions, addressing goal setting, self awareness, values, interests and skills and more career specific learning. The project also developed weekly timetables for reaching schools in each county with career guidance counseling.

A student placement form was developed by the Work Readiness team and sent to the LRCs in the six counties (Bong, Nimba, Montserrado, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, and Maryland) as a tool for collecting job placement preferences and profiles of CESLY graduates. The purpose of the student profile form is to gather information about ALP/ALPP beneficiaries that will help CESLY to arrange placement wherever opportunities exist. The team has received 2601 placement forms (1407 male and 1194 females) from the six counties.

The Work Readiness Facilitators used profile forms to conduct career guidance counseling for CESLY graduates in the six counties. Career counseling is conducted through focus group

discussion, followed by individual counseling. A database was developed with the assistance of the M & E Specialist for tabulation of data at the field level. The career choices of students differ from county to county. It has been observed that many students have an interest in Tailoring, Agriculture, Hair Styling, Soap Making and Auto Mechanics as careers.

Over the year, the challenges of reaching a large number of target students have to do with limited counseling resources and transport constraints. CESLY responded by mobilizing motorcycles for greater coverage with assistance provided to Work Readiness Facilitators to plan counseling for a maximum target audience. During year 2, basic information will continue to be provided through the assistance of Career Guidance Facilitators in six counties.

5.7 Year 2 Plans for Completion of Life Skills Curriculum and Program

Teacher Reinforcement: During Year 2, in upcoming teacher training sessions and through the cluster-based teacher experience sharing, emphasis will be placed on strengthening teachers' understanding of life skills and enhancing facilitation techniques in the classroom with older learners.

Collection of reports from pilot testing: During the curriculum roll out process, classrooms will be monitored vigorously to collect information on teachers' understanding of the content, actual time of lessons as well as an assessment of whether the curriculum is at the appropriate level for learners.

Completion of Semester 2 lessons: Second semester lessons are being developed to ensure that all areas are covered and that learners leave the program with the necessary skills and attitudes to deal with challenges they face daily. These will be reviewed and revised by content area experts. CESLY acknowledges the evaluator's suggestion that a much clearer link be drawn between life skills and work readiness. This theme will be undertaken during year 2 of programming.

TASK 6 Six or more LRCs supported and strengthened

Item	Year One Indicator Targets	Current Level
<i># of visits to access LRC Services</i>	3000	10,146

Key Accomplishments

- 72 Learning Resource Center staff stationed and employed
- Comprehensive training and reinforcement for LRC staff conducted on quarterly basis
- LRC and staff work plans developed on a quarterly basis
- All LRCs are operational and functioning on schedule
- Evening/Saturday hours extended in all LRCS to pilot strategy for reaching greater cross section of the public
- Allocation of additional infrastructure resources to support functionality of LRC service provision
- Reading programs operational in 2 Learning Resource Centers

TASK 6 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

6.1 Service Provision to the Public

During Year 1, in all six counties, Learning Resource Centers served as a sites where the public was able to access the Internet, learn computer skills, access books in the library and attend community reading programs. All Learning Resource Centers are currently open for extra hours on Wednesdays and Saturdays, with the exception of Grand Gedeh on Wednesdays.

Reading programs are operational in Maryland and Montserrado LRCs. The programs introduce early grade reading materials from the Macmillan series and target primary school students who live close to the LRC and within neighboring communities. An internet and computer training program is also underway in the same two counties for students who attend reading sessions regularly for two months. This program provides students with a basic introduction to computer usage, general tools for using Microsoft Office, with coverage of internet usage and typing. Currently 165 learners attend reading and computer programs.

Plans were also made to increase reading programs and LRC usage of libraries through posting of Peace Corps volunteers in Zwedru and Gbanga. While Gbanga staff left posting site, Zwedru staff have been enormously successful in initiating reading campaigns and generating interest in use of LRC reading resources.

Donations also helped to strengthen LRC services available for usage. Donations in Year 1 included six sets of encyclopedias, Conservation International resource materials, DSTV devices and other materials.

Demand for LRC service provision was by far most in demand in the area of internet usage. The functionality of internet access was limited by slow internet speed, virus damaging functionality of machines and deteriorating equipment. Several of these concerns were addressed through the TEC funding increase, which allows for inputs to strengthen the quality of service delivery.

Year 2 directions will focus on extending LRC outreach, increasing usage of available resources, moving library resources into the field (through mobile libraries), improving quality of internet access and the functionality of computers through new equipment and virus software while also improving the regularity of LRCs functionality through installation of new generators.

CESLY will also to seek enhance the range services offered through the LRCs and in the counties by engaging Peace Corps, UNDP, IFESH and many other volunteers in the course of project activities.

6.2 Quality of LRC Staff Support to Field Implementation Activities

Significant effort was invested in Year 1 to enhance the quality and effectiveness of LRC staff interventions, including replacement of underperforming team members. The project also employed various strategies to enhance quality of field monitoring. A field visit form was instituted; shadowing of technical specialists and team leaders was common practiced with implementation of guided field visits to demonstrate to staff what needed to be done during field visits. LRC staff members were also instructed to make use of field visitation books at school sites to allow for cross verification of site visits.

CESLY engaged in quarterly Learning Resource Center Experience Sharing to enhance staff understanding of key project matters, to highlight program weaknesses that needed particular support and to build skills in specific content areas. Some of the issues covered include:

- Orientation of all new staff
- Regular skills building and information updating in technical officer specialty areas
- Status update and field information gathering
- Strengthening quality, frequency and robustness of monitoring and evaluation
- Teambuilding between implementing partner staff
- Strengthening relationships between field-based technical officers and centrally-based technical specialists
- Resolution of logistical support issues

- Development of quarterly work plans and coordinated planning
- Clarification of ALP enrollment messages
- Training in Gender Strategy
- Training in enrollment and retention strategy
- Utilization of teacher assessment tool
- Training of trainers for in-service training
- NFE Curriculum field testing tools, methods and plans
- NFE Site selection strategy
- NFE teacher selection strategy
- Strengthening of life skills program
- Detailed planning of instructional materials provision
- Preparation for tutorial provision
- Utilization of teaching and instructional resources.
- Strategies for strengthening culture of reading
- Operationalization of mobile libraries
- LRC reading and computer room service provision
- Work readiness strategy development and skills building
- Delineation and quality enhancement of guidance counseling
- Procedure for student placement and post-program tracking
- MOE technical collaboration and capacity building
- Taa Bora energy implementation
- Global Development Alliance strategy
- Communications and text messaging updates

This regular training, team building and reinforcement greatly enhanced the skills, knowledge, attitudes of LRC staff and led to greater technical coherence, and more unified operations. It also helped to improve the ability of LRC employees to engage with county MOE staff and share latest information and updates.

CESLY identified the need during Year 1, to engage other stakeholders largely in LRC Experience Sharing. This is already beginning in Year 2. At the first Experience Sharing in Year 2, Quarter 1, the project invited county level, central MOE, USAID staff and NFE Pilot Partners. Ibis NGO implementer, county education staff from Maryland and Montserrado counties, MOE central staff from the Communications Unit, Curriculum Unit, LRC Focal Unit, and the Deputy Minister for Planning attended the event.

During Year 2, CESLY will continue to invite key stakeholders to broaden the sense of ownership, engagement and investment in CESLY county level activities beyond those formally employed by the project. The Experience Sharing Circle venue will be used as a forum to prepare for handover of the LRCs to the MOE in the near future.

6.3 Preparation for Sustainable Transition of LRC Management

In year 1, dialogue was initiated with MOE officials, with ECSEL and other key stakeholders concerning the future strategy for transitioning LRCs to government supervision. This area is a key focus for Year 2. Significant decisions need to be made by the MOE around structures for supervision, operations, staffing and budget, with less than one year of time remaining for transition. Despite the MOE's good intentions, there is still no evidence that they have budgeted for the cost of maintaining the LRCs in their FY 2011 budget. During Year 2, this issue must be addressed directly by MOE policymakers and/or other donor stakeholders. Another item to be resolved during Year 2 is the model for coordination with ECSEL. CESLY must facilitate agreement between MOE policymakers and donor stakeholders about whether LRCs in USAID-supported counties will follow the ECSEL vision for LRCs or another arrangement.

One of the key activities under task 6 and 7 is capacity building for county level staff, who may potentially be the individuals involved in running and sustaining LRCs. LRC staff engaged in concerted efforts to strengthen the skill level and management capacity of county level staff. At the end of Year 1, LRC staff enjoyed an improved relationship with county level education officers, with more openness and flexibility between both parties. Mentoring and shadowing as well as pairing and fading are key strategies that have been continually utilized for the day-to-day capacity building of county level MOE staff. Key areas for county level capacity building include running of reading resource rooms, leadership and management of LRCs, and support for district level education and supervision activities. During Year 2, CESLY will implement Intel GDA partnership using the LRC as a base to provide training in basic computer skills to education staff and stakeholders, as well as youth.

TASK 7 Improved policies and strengthened capacity for implementation.

Item	Year One Indicator Targets	Current Level
# of laws, policies, regulations, or guidelines developed or modified to improve equitable access to or the quality of education services	<i>Draft Strategy Developed</i>	Draft NFE policy developed
% of MoE staff showing improvement on individual/unit capacity assessments	<i>20% improvement</i>	46.8%
Number of people trained in monitoring and evaluation with USG assistance	15	90
Number of people trained in strategic information management with USG assistance	15	90
Number of host country institutions with improved management information systems as a result of USG assistance	2	2
Number of host country institutions that have used USG assisted MIS system information to inform administrative and management decisions	2	2

Key Accomplishments:

- Partnerships formally established with Division of Instruction, Division of Planning, Research, and Development, and Division of Administration
- Nonformal education policy dialogue sessions held at the Ministerial level and among stakeholders
- CESLY office opened in the Ministry and CESLY MOE focal person designated
- In-depth dialogues and decisions achieved with MOE representatives in a number of areas: PTA, accelerated learning, life skills, communications, etc.
- Adaptation of tool for PTA capacity assessments
- Joint planning undertaken for capacity building of education officers
- Input into Strategic Planning session
- Provision of technical assistance at Ministry of Education retreat
- Conducting of NFE Orientation Training for Education Officers
- Completion of results-based frameworks with 5 MOE divisions
- 22.8% increase on pre and post-tests around capacity development
- Joint training and joint monitoring field visits undertaken with MOE staff
- Development of draft policy on nonformal education in collaboration with UNESCO and MOE.
- Dialogues and *efforts* resulting in review and revision of teacher stipend policy

TASK 7 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

7.1 Relationships

CESLY made considerable headway in Year 1 in strengthening MOE capacity for implementation. While relationships were not firmly established in the early quarters, CESLY was later able to take part in strong internal networking within the ministry, involving interaction with various departments, bureaus, units and divisions. This was achieved through relocation and frequent usage of office space in the Ministry, improved communications, meetings conducted with various sectors of the ministry and increased collaboration and coordination on project implementation. The project now enjoys a much closer relationship with many units in central level MOE. A sense of cooperation and camaraderie characterizes interactions between MOE mid-level staff and CESLY technical specialists.

CESLY gathered all Education Officers in the country for a three day meeting in Gbarnga. Education Officers were greatly pleased and it was the first time that many of them had met one another. This workshop provided a foundation for improved communication, enabling CESLY to train staff on monitoring practices and tools, and served as a platform for in-depth orientation on the nonformal education curriculum.

One challenge is the maintenance of consistent collaboration. Attending project wide training or conduct field visits sometimes draws a great number of CESLY staff into the field simultaneously. CESLY will seek to maintain a consistent presence within the MOE office during Year 2 of implementation.

CESLY will also continue to work diligently at the national level to strengthen relationships with Deputy Ministers, Assistant Ministers, Directors and particular units who are engaged in activities that CESLY implements. CESLY will invite these individuals to gatherings it holds and will find ways to support them to carry out tasks. In the spirit of a common approach, CESLY has re-termed its “capacity building” activities as “technical collaboration.”

7.2 Education Officer Training

Training and capacity building of Education Officers was a major goal of Year 1 that was affected by new directions taken within the Ministry. During Quarter 2, CESLY invested significant time in dialogue with each Assistant Minister and Deputy Minister on the type of training needed for Education Officers. Because of these discussions, CESLY developed a training plan for implementation. These plans were later postponed because of the arrival of a new Minister of Education.

However, by the end of Quarter 4, CESLY had engaged in dialogue with the MOE, elaborating a plan for training and orientation of all Education Officers and other education stakeholders in the area of nonformal education, as part of the Nonformal Education Orientation.

The goal and objectives of the NFE Orientation are as follows:

- Raise awareness and deepen comprehension of nonformal education
- Provide skills to those who may be involved in management of the NFE system
- Create a technical corps of trainers who can provide training in nonformal education in all counties in the future
- Equip trainers to train teachers in concepts necessary for successful accelerated learning implementation
- Provide Education Officers with skills in use of teacher observation and monitoring tools
- Provide a forum where Education Officers can frankly discuss issues related to support of accelerated learning and nonformal education.

In terms of relationships, recent interactions with MOE staff at central level and with EOs at the Gbarnga orientation have opened up an entirely new era of collaboration. Being able to discuss the issue of incentives for joint monitoring and to lay out the CESLY policy on the matter also eases tensions that have undermined attempts at collaboration. CESLY also directly works with Team Leaders to increase their relationship building skills with CEOS and DEOs. These new approaches were operationalized during the recent In-service training where EOs were present and engaged at all sites. CESLY will continue to move forward to strengthen these relationships.

7.3 Monitoring

LRCs made significant efforts in Year 1 to engage county level EOs in the monitoring of accelerated learning. The project trained all EOs on the use of the SCOPE tool. In September 2010, CESLY invited MOE PTA and ALP unit staff to join in the first nonformal education curriculum pilot field testing visit.

As CESLY plans Year 2 capacity building activities, monitoring and monitoring protocols will be key issues to address, not just for CESLY staff but also particularly for joint CESLY/MOE monitoring. CESLY commits to engagement of EOs in joint monitoring of classrooms and will continue to raise awareness of EOs around accelerated learning and nonformal education. Extraordinary changes, in terms of willingness to accept and engage with CESLY, were witnessed when the Deputy Minister issued the invitation to all EOs to attend the Gbarnga gathering hosted by the project. CESLY will carry forward the positive will generated in this event to strengthen collaboration and to engage EOs in county level monitoring over the course of the year. This process has started through joint recruitment of teachers and selection of NFE sites. Team leaders will continue to build on these collaborative relationships.

CESLY notes that despite bringing the 111 Education Officers together in an event endorsed by the Deputy Minister, and despite active engagement of EOs in all counties in the In-service training, the team still encountered problems in getting EOs to go on monitoring trips. During

recent visits of the entire technical team to all counties, when they tried to engage EOs there was a common response of “I’m busy now”, “next time”. As discussed and debated during the EO training in Gbanga, this is related to the EO desire for per diem or incentives for monitoring. The project has already engaged all EOs in discussion of expectations for incentives around monitoring. This dialogue was healthy and helped EOs to vent their feelings and release tension. The project was also able to respond with encouragement and counsel about the value of monitoring. However, the expectation for incentives still persists and hinders the ability of the MOE to take ownership of accelerated learning and nonformal education. During year 2, this issue may be raised at the central MOE level so that it can be addressed directly by MOE administrators.

CESLY specifically wants to work on helping MOE staff to understand their role in monitoring and support. This could include engagement of MoE counterparts in coaching, mentoring, reinforcement of key concepts and practices, assisting, listening to, talking with teachers, rather than the more formal connotation of monitoring which many understand as judgment, counting, and documentation.

CESLY also has begun to engage CEOs much more closely in teacher supervision issues. Over Year 2, CESLY will pay particular attention to the need to engage CEOs in disciplinary issues (when teachers are drunk, absent, or poorly performing) and will notify EOs before teachers are paid.

The Deputy Minister has recently announced that he wants EOs to be engaged more as supervisors and superintendents, not as master trainers or curriculum developers. CESLY has modified its approach in accordance with this wish and is now interacting with EOs in this new paradigm, seeking other qualified candidates as master trainers.

7.4 Policy Dialogue

Over the course of Year 1, CESLY has worked with the MOE and UNESCO on the development of an NFE policy. CESLY facilitated two full days of a small group session for 20 Ministry of Education staff, representatives from other Ministries, NGOs providing basic education for adults and out-of-school youth, and CESLY staff. CESLY developed critical policy framework questions to which the group responded. The CESLY team member, David Rosen, collected group input and developed a draft NFE policy framework. His draft was presented at an all-day meeting for review and further elaboration. After deliberation, the group present settled on Nonformal Education as the name for both the system and the proposed new Bureau within the Ministry of Education. In July, a joint workshop was held with the MOE and UNESCO to validate the draft policy. By August, a draft NFE policy was in existence.

The challenge of collaboration required much more time than originally envisioned due to the funding delays and challenges of the partnering organization, but it is felt that in the end this collaboration will lead to greater support and ownership of the policy. During Year 2, CESLY will focus on finalization of the policy with the Ministry of Education.

One key issue that was undertaken was the revision of CESLY teacher stipends to match the levels established in the accelerated learning policy manual. Dialogues were initiated between the MOE, CESLY and USAID. USAID was ultimately able to allocate funds so that the implementation of the project adhered to policy guidelines set forth in the accelerated learning policy. It is expected that this policy change will have a major impact on teacher performance and time on task during Year 2. This also sends a clear message to other ALP implementers.

During Year 2, CESLY will explore where policy input and dialogue is needed, taking the opportunity to integrate new vision resulting from new changes in leadership at the MOE. For instance, recent joint CESLY/MOE monitoring identified the commonly held belief that Friday is “no good school day” as an issue that needs policy input at a national level. This is an example of the type of issue that CESLY intends to raise as policy issues to be addressed by the MOE. Policy dialogue will be a focus of year 2 programming.

7.5 Strategic Directions for Technical Collaboration and Capacity Building

Five technical staff from CESLY participated in the Ministry of Education retreat. Their participation led to key outcomes. CESLY came to understand each of the components of Ministry of Education, including their ongoing activities and existing capacity. The event served as a proxy capacity assessment of each unit. The project provided particular support to the Bureaus of Primary Education, Professional and Technical Education, as well as Curriculum and Textbooks. CESLY specialists supported the MOE staff in the development of terms of reference, division objectives, work plan, results-based frameworks and monitoring plans. Following this event, various Ministers and attendees expressed appreciation to CESLY for providing technical assistance in a way that helped MOE staff to take on the tasks themselves. One clear outcome was a much closer relationship between the project and CEOs.

Following the retreat, the CESLY Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Monitoring and Evaluation Analyst, and Teacher Training Specialist continued to provide technical support to each Bureau toward the development of Results Based Frameworks. They supported each bureau during unit meetings so that each division was able to develop divisional objectives as well as plans for monitoring each objective. Each Bureau also developed coherent impact, outcome, output and input statements. This activity is seen as central to building an internally coherent vision at the MOE, which will serve as a building block for sound development. It also serves as a key component to building host country institutions with improved management information systems.

The new Deputy Minister for Instruction invited CESLY to help the Ministry conduct its strategic visioning process for all Bureaus including Vocational and Technical Education, Primary Education, Secondary Education, Curriculum, and Teacher Education. In the end, the strategic planning session was held at a time that conflicted with In-service training and CESLY staff was not available to participate. However, CESLY will engage with the Ministry on new directions for strategic investment and capacity building in Year 2.

TASK 8 Educational supplies distributed

Item	Year One Indicator Targets	Current Level
<i># of books distributed</i>	<i>50% of total</i>	150,914 or 51% of total

Key Accomplishments:

- Assessment of government and government supported community schools, enrollment numbers and road conditions completed
 - Identification of warehouse staff
 - Materials for stock management developed, sent for printing
 - Textbook distribution budget prepared based on data from the assessment
- Preparation for distribution of textbooks underway by YMCA

TASK 8 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In May, the final shipment of text books arrived. Delivery of these items was delayed until the Summer school break to ensure their safe storage. In preparation for this distribution, all books were counted, verified and safely secured. The new school verification and distribution plans were finalized and contracting for required personnel began.

Teach the World to Read decodable books were distributed specifically to CESLY schools, with five resource copies for every school. Task 8 is a larger endeavor that targets non-CESLY supported schools. In Year 2, CESLY will distribute a number of materials that are specifically intended for students and so these will be delivered directly to students. In addition, the project will distribute shelves to schools for safe keeping of materials. Principals and teachers have been trained on how to manage instructional materials in the In-service training and this message will be reinforced through ongoing interactions. It is an ongoing challenge that principals tend to keep books in locked rooms rather than in classrooms.

YMCA received 310,695 text books for distribution. The text books include the following series:

1. English for Elementary and Junior Secondary Schools;
2. Mathematics for Elementary and Junior Secondary Schools;
3. Science for Junior Secondary Schools;
4. Agriculture Junior Secondary Schools;
5. Teachers' guide text books (Math, English, science and Agriculture);

Description of books distribution activities includes:

- Receipt of Delivery of Books by Publishers;
- Spot-Check Verification of School Census;
- Preparation of Books Distribution Plan;
- Launch of the books distribution exercise (was done on August 2, 2010);
- The Picking and Packing process;
- Actual distribution of books to schools;

The actual distribution of books to public schools begun on August 15 and is still in progress. To date, textbooks have been distributed to schools in Nimba, Montserrado, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Grand Bassa, MaryLand and Rivercess Counties. The distribution process is currently ongoing in Grand Kru, Margibi, Lofa, Bong and Sinoe Counties.

Allocation of books per county as per the ratio of 2 students to 1 textbook

County	School	Student	Books
Nimba	431	25692	36622
Montserrado	180	29204	46012
Cape mt	136	4429	5935
Bomi	81	3038	4432
Gbarpolu	112	4480	5184
Margibi	100	11941	17726
Bassa	179	8006	9732
Bong	296	21729	31877
Lofa	270	16000	22104
Rivercess	116	4150	4662
RiverGee	94	3756	4910
Grand Gedeh	105	4464	6468
Grand Kru	119	4555	6188
MaryLand	134	5950	8072
Sinoe	143	4754	6144
Total text books to be distributed			216,068

Picking and packing is near completion for public schools in Grand Capemount, Bomi and Gbarpolu Counties and distribution will be made to these counties in a weeks' time by the first week in October

Based on the ratio of two students to one textbook, there will be a variance of 94, 627 textbooks which will be redistributed to larger schools within larger counties. In view of this, the remaining textbooks are being packed for further distribution to selected public schools in Bong, Nimba, Montserrado, Margibi and Grand Bassa Counties. These schools have higher student population.

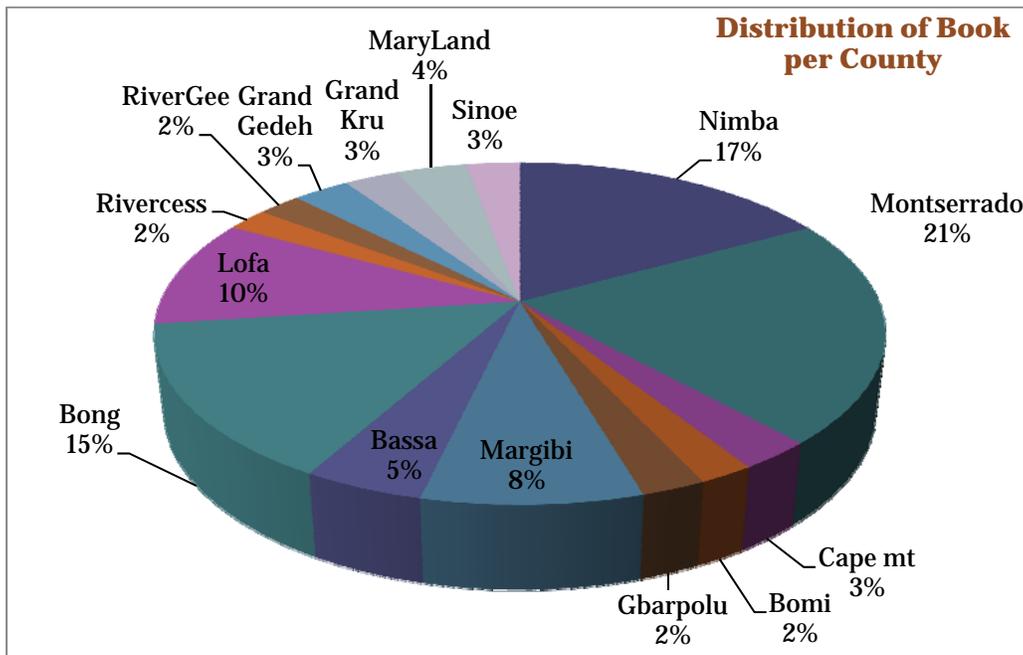
Please see below list for counties covered to date for books distribution.

Update of Books Distributed to Schools to Date (August 15 – September 30, 2010)

No	County	School	Student	Books	Number of cartoons
1	Nimba	431	25692	36622	1065
2	Montserrado	180	29204	46012	1308
3	**Margibi	100	11941	17726	446
4	Bassa	179	8006	9732	295
5	**Bong	296	21729	31877	873
6	**Lofa	270	16000	22104	596
7	Rivercess	116	4150	4662	154
8	RiverGee	94	3756	4910	159
9	Grand Gedeh	105	4464	6468	215
10	**Grand Kru	119	4555	6188	206
12	**MaryLand	134	5950	8072	258
13	**Sinoe	143	4754	6144	212
TOTAL =		2,167	140,201	200,517	5,787

*** Text books distribution process is currently ongoing in these Counties. The text books delivery to Sinoe County is in two phases. The first phase, which is lifting of books to Sinoe by UNMIL Aircraft, is now completed. Distribution to the schools will commence next week.

Upon completion of the exercise, the distribution of text books will cover 15 counties at the percentages sketched in the pie chart below:



The books distribution is expected to be completed by October 30, 2010, in spite of the challenges with the bad road conditions.

CESLY takes responsibility for distribution of books to the county level given the lack of resources within the Ministry to do this. However, at the county level it is important that MOE staff must be engaged. CESLY has communicated this to Ministry staff at the country and county level, and will continue to seek endorsement from the Deputy Minister.

The number of textbooks to distribute through Task 8 was selected through bilateral agreements. As a separate initiative, CESLY will source and acquire books that students can use and take home.

TASK 9 Small grants are issued under contract in support of project objectives

Item	Year One Indicator Targets	Current Level
<i>Number of grants disbursed</i>	<i>TBD</i>	356

Key Accomplishments:

- Implementation strategy developed
- Draft manual drafted
- System for internal grants management conducted
- Various iterations and refinements of concept Note completed
- PTAs and school community actors trained in how to develop action plans for small grants and how to manage instructional materials
- Grants pre-award assessment conducted in six counties
- Grants forms and tools developed
- 356 school start-up packages distributed
- Procurement begun for yearly school package materials

TASK 9 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

9.1 Development of Grants Strategy

The CESLY grants concept note was finalized in July 2010 after various submissions to USAID. The grants strategy markedly changed during the year, away from a local implementer programming vision ultimately to an in-kind grant program that supplies instructional materials to schools.

In the finalized grants strategy, all functioning CESLY schools, either ALP or NFE, will receive instructional materials grants. These will require minimal but necessary oversight on the part of the school management/PTA committees. CESLY will provide in-kind grants of supplies to CESLY schools and communities in support of positive learning outcomes. The package of materials will include basic school supplies, reading materials, learning aids, and NFE curriculum supplements to improve academic performance. School administrators are responsible for receiving and storing materials in collaboration with the PTA/School

Management Committee. The PTA/School Management Committee provides oversight as to the use of the materials for their intended purpose.

While grant activities did not start up during the 2009-2010 academic year, the process of engagement was useful in defining clear parameters for enrollment, gender and culture of reading activities. These discussions were useful for mobilizing communities to focus on these areas, outside of the CESLY grant program.

The lack of clarity/changing direction of the grant program created some difficulties for communication with communities. During school community training sessions, PTAs and other community stakeholders received orientation on how to develop grant action plans. With the final decisions made to focus on instructional materials in the summer, this message was conveyed to communities through teachers and principals at In-service Training. This message was delivered along with school start-up packages so that communities were able to see the results and remain confident in the ability of USAID/CESLY to follow through on its commitments.

9.2 Distribution of Instructional Materials

Pre-award Survey: In an effort to understand instructional material needs at CESLY schools before grants were awarded, The Grants/Finance Officer undertook a grant pre-award assessment trip to five counties, (Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Grand Gedeh, and Maryland) from June 1 to 28, 2010. The trip was made with the objectives of identifying what instructional materials remained from earlier distribution, what items were in need and what schools demonstrated capacity to engage in thematic grants. With this mandate, CESLY technical staff worked alongside county LRCs to assess schools. Methods used to assess the schools were site visitation, verification of accessible facilities and interviews with school authorities, PTA officials, teachers and community leaders. During the course of the grant pre-award assessment exercise, 79 sites, comprising 97 schools/programs in five counties were assessed.

Procurement and Distribution of School Start up Package: To ensure quality in the classroom and to encourage proper use and management of materials, distribution was divided into two tranches: A portion of the School Start up Package at the beginning of the school year and the remainder in Year 2, Quarter 1 conditional on the proper use of the first tranche of materials as verified by the CESLY Grants Officer, the Community Participation Specialist, and youth volunteers.

The first tranche of such instructional materials, the “School Start Up Package” was procured and distributed to 356 CESLY supported ALP schools and NFE sites through their principals during the August 2010 In-Service Training. The purpose was to make available instructional supplies to teachers at the beginning of the 2010/2011 school year to avoid any delay in instruction. In the spring of 2010, CESLY witnessed widespread problems across the counties when teachers did not have basic materials: Attendance books, lesson planning books, and chalk. For this reason, CESLY chose to break the grants into three separate tranches so that teachers could obtain the rudimentary items needed to begin classes. Supplementary items such as cups, clocks and learning aids will be delivered in a later tranche.

The transportation or movement of instructional materials to school sites was presented a significant challenge resulting from bad and dangerous roads from Monrovia to the various counties. Vehicles were often stuck in the mud for hours and took more than the normal driving time required to reach their destination. Teachers and principals were provided with funds to transport school materials to various schools in advance of the start of the school year.

September field monitoring visits revealed that teachers had the tools needed to begin taking attendance, planning and developing lessons from the first day of class. This allowed CESLY to focus on quality improvements, such as how to take accurate attendance and how to improve lesson planning.

9.3 Back to School Campaign

CESLY also supported the Ministry of Education's Back to School Campaign. Before the start of the school year 2010/2011, the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with CESLY, organized the "Back To School Celebration". Its purpose was to create nationwide awareness and to encourage students to return to school during the next school year. On August 28, 2010, CESLY and the MOE jointly participated in the event in the six counties in which it operates. CESLY printed and distributed 3,800 stickers to students attending county ceremonies (through the CESLY grants plan), all bearing 9 different educational messages. The Back to School Celebration also took place on CESLY supported school campuses throughout the six counties; with clean up of school buildings by students followed by distribution of school start-up packages from principals to teachers/facilitators in the presence of parents, PTA officials and community leaders.

By merging a communications and grants activity, CESLY was able to support the efforts of the Ministry of Education and distribute of instructional materials.

9.4 Yearly School Package

By the end of Year 2, procurement activities for the Yearly School Package were in process. This package includes larger items such as clocks, buckets and shelves, reading materials, NFE curriculum supplements, stationery and a host of other supplementary instructional materials.

The main objectives under the small grants program for Year 2 are:

1. Procure the Yearly School Package of instructional materials.
2. Package and distribute instructional materials to ALP schools and NFE sites
3. Document instructional material distribution to counties and to schools
4. Guide communities, schools and PTAs in the utilization and management of grants materials
5. Monitor usage of instructional materials in schools and NFE sites
6. Solicit reports from schools/NFE sites on instructional materials usage
7. Close out grants documentation

TASK 10 Identify, promote and manage implementation of public-private partnerships in support of project objectives and workforce development.

Item	Year One Indicator Targets	Current Level
Amount of money leveraged	<i>25% of the matching funds allocated in budget</i>	<i>377% leveraged</i>

Key Accomplishments:

- Strategy and work plan for Global Development Alliance and Public Partnerships completed.
- Development of work readiness and workforce development strategy.
- Creation of work readiness content standards, framework and curriculum.
- Small Market survey conducted in CESLY implementing counties.
- Collection of work readiness profiles for 2755 CESLY students
- List of organizations/institutions compiled for possible placement opportunities for CESLY beneficiaries in the six counties.
- Conducted TOT Workshop for work readiness facilitators work readiness facilitators and mentors from Bong, Nimba and Lofa
- Provision of work readiness introductory training to 150 CESLY graduates
- Agreements formulated with Open Society and ORT on investment in Traditional Apprenticeships
- Relationship established with LEAD for conducting business appraisals and micro-loans
- Relationship established with BRAC for initiating business loans with CESLY graduates
- Relationship established Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS) for placement of CESLY graduates into apprenticeship program in five of CESLY implementing counties (Bong, Lofa, Nimba, G.Gedeh and Maryland).
- Daphne partnership implemented as a means of strengthening quality implementation of Taa Bora lanterns.
- Commitment made to implement Intel partnership as a way of strengthening technology skills of youth and education stakeholders.

TASK 10 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

In addition to Public Private Partnerships, the broader CESLY activities contributing to work readiness are also discussed under this section, due to the close relationship of the two topics.

10.1 Work Readiness Strategy

During the Year 1, the project clarified its approach to work readiness, delineating three stages: a) development of learning content around work readiness b) provision of career counseling and guidance c) guidance in transitioning into post-program options like apprenticeships, training, employment etc. A and B are discussed in greater depth under Task 5.

The project engaged in in-depth discussion with stakeholders and technical advisors to prioritize modules and lesson topics for inclusion in the Work-related learning section of the NFE curriculum. Work readiness is defined as the skills and abilities that enable an individual to develop awareness of the world of work. This may include knowledge of the labor market, occupational information and a host of other areas. Work readiness involves the ability to carry out the following skills and actions:

- Establish and manage a small business
- Plan and manage a career
- Understand employers' expectations
- Understand workplace forms and functions
- Use interpersonal skills at work
- Develop good work attitudes

- Find a job (including self employment or wage employment)
- Prepare for vocational training
- Prepare for apprenticeship
- Understand work-related rights and responsibilities
- Understand work-related health and safety practices

During Year 1, Work Readiness/Career Guidance Facilitators were hired and placed at county LRCs and subsequently conducted small market surveys in CESLY implementing counties. Through the survey, the team accomplished the following:

- Identified sectors to focus on for youth employment, in areas of job readiness, placement and apprenticeship.
- Location of different concessions/companies within the county for possible placement and networking and for usage of GDA.
- Determined potential links between CESLY and businesses to assist program participants in finding employment and/or apprenticeship placement.

The CESLY Work Readiness team also compiled a list of organizations/institutions for possible placement opportunities for CESLY beneficiaries in each of the six counties. In order to accurately match graduates with opportunities, work readiness facilitators completed a student profile collection of 2755 (Male: 1511 and Female: 1244) CESLY learners in the six implementing counties. The profile is used for placement in post program activities according to career options identified based on career guidance.

After creating a rough draft of the models for the work readiness curriculum for Task 3, CESLY condensed this curriculum into an intensive work readiness introductory training that could be provided for ALP graduates in preparation for apprenticeships. The project conducted a Training

of Trainers Workshop for work readiness facilitators from Bong, Lofa and Nimba and twelve mentors from Bong and Lofa counties. Work readiness introductory training was then provided to 150 CESLY graduates (65 males and 85 females) in Bong and Lofa counties who are now benefiting from the pilot phase of the apprenticeship program.

In many of the rural communities where CESLY schools are located it is difficult to identify viable businesses where graduates can be placed to either receive mentorship or access livelihood opportunities. In addition, when a viable apprenticeship is identified, sending too many learners to one source overwhelms the mentor who accepts apprentices. CESLY has addressed these challenges by identifying and negotiating with potential service providers willing to move to such communities or commute to provide mentorship to CESLY graduates. CESLY has also responded by lowering targets for placement in apprenticeships and by developing clear quality criteria for the identification of workforce development options.

For tracking of CESLY students after completion, it is a challenge when graduates move and relocate to another towns or communities to attend Junior Secondary schools. To address this challenge, CESLY has begun to work with ALP school administrators to compile the names of graduates for tracing and tracking.

10.2 Public Private Partnership Development

After dialogues in the past year, and the recommendations from the external evaluation concerning GDA partnerships, CESLY has chosen to:

- Implement the Daphne partnership as a means of strengthening quality implementation of Taa Bora lanterns.
- Implement Intel as a way of strengthening technology skills of youth and education stakeholders. (Intel is not dependent on fast internet so the LRC technology infrastructure is sufficient to support this training.)
- Implement MYS/ILO activity as a means of fortifying the employment options available for youth beginning with 150 designated youth in Bong and Lofa counties
- Implement the OSI initiative as a way of scaling up the apprenticeships available to youth.
- Designation of 23 National UN volunteers to support CESLY
- Designation of six IFESH education volunteers to support CESLY training functions (as a supplement to their regular volunteer duties)
- Designation of two Peace Corp Librarians to work in the Zwedru and Gbarnga LRCs (the Gbarnga volunteer terminated early due to personal reasons)
- Donations of books and other material to LRCs from Conservation International and Friends of Liberia
- Agreement with Open Society Initiative to provide \$1 million to support the apprenticeship program using NGO World ORT for its implementation. This agreement is to be formalized with a GDA MOU early in year 2.

- While it was decided not to go ahead with a GDA with CELLCOM, we did develop a comprehensive text messaging strategy in support of our program. CESLY will still use many of the elements of this strategy.

Liberia Entrepreneurial and Asset Development (LEAD): LEAD is presently conducting business appraisal for CESLY graduates in Bong, Nimba and Montserrado counties and will be followed by Micro-loan. At present, the team has submitted 217 CESLY graduates (M-88 and F-129) who are involved in small businesses to LEAD in the three counties.

BRAC (Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee): CESLY has established linkages with BRAC for small business loan opportunities for CESLY graduates in three of CESLY implementing counties (Montserrado, Bong and Lofa). BRAC Liberia is a Bangladeshi NGO involved in the provision of agricultural farm implements, agricultural training, and extension services to farmers, poultry supplies, health education and basic intervention and micro credit loans to community members. BRAC is linking CESLY graduates to these services in three implementing counties (Montserrado, Bong and Lofa).

Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS): CESLY has finalized agreement with MYS for the placement of up to 3,000 CESLY graduates into apprenticeship program in five of CESLY implementing counties (Bong, Lofa, Nimba, G.Gedeh and Maryland), subject to the availability of GOL funds . The work readiness team has identified 150 CESLY graduates (M-65 and F-85) to benefit a pilot phase of CESLY/MYS/ILO apprenticeship program under the MYS Youth on the Job Training (YOJT) Program in Bong and Lofa counties. CESLY will provide work-readiness skills training and a modest monthly stipend (\$10/month) to 150 youth graduates who will receive apprenticeship training for 12 months to prepare them for jobs. This is a pilot activity, which if successful will expand to provide the same opportunity for up to 3,000 youth graduates the following year. MYS and ILO funds will provide \$2 for every \$1 CESLY provides. MYS/ILO funds will provide training material for the businesses and students participating in the program.

Open Society Institute/ World ORT: During year 1, the Open Society Institute allocated \$1 million to support and strengthen the partnership with MYS described above. OSI has agreed to grant \$1 million to World ORT to ensure that viable apprenticeships are found, the identified small businesses are strengthened and sustainable jobs or businesses are created. These objectives will be promoted through training and capacity development under the direction of World ORT, which is the premier international NGO in the field of technical training and apprenticeships.

Daphne Foundation: The Daphne Foundation has provided supplementary training to CESLY personnel in fabricating and monitoring the Taa Bora solar lanterns for classroom use. Daphne has pioneered the use of Taa Bora in Liberia. This training has a monetary value of approximately \$15,000 but most importantly, it was crucial in providing the quality training and quality control necessary for the manufacturing of the lights.

We expect the Daphne partnership to continue through year two of the project and are discussing the possibility of Daphne assistance to outfit several CESLY schools as model solar lighting schools.

Intel: In Year 2, CESLY plans to engage in a Global Development Alliance partnership with Intel, Inc. and School Net Nigeria, in order to provide training for Liberian youth and MOE personnel and stakeholders in Technology and Community and Technology and Work at six county-level Learning Resource Centers. These inter-active computer based learning programs are designed for students with basic literacy skills.

By collaborating with Intel to provide courses on Intel® Learn Technology and Work and Technology and Community at Learning Resource Centers, CESLY provides a post-program transition after completion of accelerated learning and enables these youth to gain valuable skills that, combined with a solid basic education, better enable them to get jobs where technology is an integral aspect of their work. These would include some very low-level jobs that nevertheless require computer skills such as inventory, transport management, and record keeping. While the training is being rolled out with the primary intention to benefit the youth's employability skills, the Intel training has broader applicability to the strengthening of MOE educational supports systems. The Intel technology will not only be provided to youth but also to education personnel. This will increase county level MoE personnel's capacity to manage report, communicate, and enable the MoE to continue the program on a sustainable basis, after the CESLY project.

TASK 11 Outreach

Item	Year One Indicator Targets	Current Level
# of communications activities/pieces undertaken by MOE	5	6

Key Accomplishments:

- Baseline assessment for MOE Communications Division conducted
- Two-year Communications Strategy developed
- preparation and planning undertaken for training of trainers in technology capacity building
- preparation undertaken for training of MOE staff in communications seminar
- Communications components of enrollment/retention campaigns strategy developed and executed in six counties
- ALP and NFE learners enrollment and mobilization campaign carried out
- Back to School Campaign successfully conducted in all counties
- Text messaging strategy developed
- Six press releases on various events written and disseminated
- materials developed for website
- data collected on CESLY/MOE activities and successful case studies
- media coverage of CESLY program activities carried out
- photo library developed and quarterly photo galleries published
- success stories written and promoted
- 7 distance education modules made production-ready for broadcast
- Brochure and newsletter developed, published and disseminated.
- Signboards printed and installed

TASK 11 ACCOMPLISHMENTS, RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

11.1 Capacity Building of MOE Communications and Outreach

Task 11 of the CESLY project centers on building capacity within the MOE Communications Division staff by carrying out mentoring, shadowing and collaboration activities.

During quarter 1 of year 1, a baseline needs assessment was carried out at the MOE Communications Division. Based on the assessment a two-year communications strategy was developed, highlighting the communication activities that would enhance MOE communications capacity and forward the progress of CESLY undertakings. The strategy identifies objectives, messages, key audiences, appropriate media and channels of communications while also identifying means of strengthening capacity of MOE Communications Division staff. The plan was drafted, written, vetted by MOE authorities and subsequently submitted to USAID for approval.

Discussions with the MOE Communications Department at the start of year 1 revealed great interest in meaningful technical collaboration. CESLY brought up the need for a shift in the mental models of both CESLY and MOE staff around how technical collaboration or “capacity building” could occur. From these very rich discussions, plans were developed around joint production of radio distance education materials, joint production of newsletter/magazine, joint production and dissemination of press releases and planning for capacity development that includes not only training but also joint side-by-side working together on project activities. CESLY has taken the first steps toward carrying out these joint activities during the start of Year 1.

Targeted efforts to build capacity within the Ministry of Education Communications Unit will be undertaken in the start of Year 1 with a workshop. During this workshop, pre and post tests will be delivered among participants to determine their skill level and understanding of communications. The training workshop will be followed by a period of mentoring for communications staff within the Ministry.

In addition, Intel training in technology will be rolled out in Year 2 strengthening the MOE communications as well as other MOE staff.

11.2 ALP/NFE Enrollment/Retention Campaigns Strategy Developed and Executed

In order to increase enrollment in USAID/CESLY-Supported schools, a communications strategy was developed and executed. The strategy centered on the development and airing of radio spot messages, radio dramas, announcements, printing and distribution of stickers portraying back to school messages, focal group or palaver hut discussions, and engagement with parent teacher associations and other community stakeholders. The CESLY Communications Team engaged in a campaigning effort for accelerated learning and nonformal education

enrollment, retention and pre-registration in all counties. Of particular note, in June 2010 the Communications/Outreach team along with other core members of the CESLY technical team carried out a month long Nonformal Education (NFE) mobilization campaign in counties of Montserrado, Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Grand Gedeh and Maryland, to encourage eligible learners to enroll in the USAID-Supported Non Formal Education program.

Various radio stations were also engaged to promote enrollment in accelerated learning and nonformal education. The use of some of these stations started in November 2009 with the airing of spot messages and short dramas to promote enrollment in both ALP regular and Youth schools. These spots ran for between one to two weeks, two to three times a day. Involved radio stations include:

- ELBC Radio
- STAR RADIO- Montserrado County
- Palala Voice of Reconciliation-Bong County
- Radio Nimba-Nimba County
- Toe Town community radio-Grand Gedeh County
- Radio Zwedru-Grand Gedeh county
- Radio Harper-Maryland County
- Radio Kentoma- Lofa County
- Radio Life-Zorzor, Lofa County
- Radio Gbarnga Bong County
- Radio Saclepea, Nimba County
- Tappita Community Radio
- Radio Kerghemah Ganta Nimba County
- Salala Community Radio-Bong County

In June and September 2010, additional stations were added for holding talk shows with technical team members examining aspects of the NFE curriculum and enrollment. Female enrollment and retention was also encouraged. The talk shows and spot messages on community radios enabled local dwellers to gain a basic understanding of nonformal education before the campaign team reached the community.

11.3 Information on CESLY activities disseminated

In order to highlight USAID investment in Liberia's education sector, six press releases-covering CESLY activities, such as conduct of training of trainers for master trainers, In-Service Training, launching and signing ceremonies, launch of field testing of nonformal education curriculum, textbook turn over and distribution, visitation of guests to CESLY-Supported schools and learning resource centers, among other were disseminated to USAID, partners, target groups and the general public. .

CESLY Communications/Outreach Section carried out a number of media coverage activities, highlighting major events and activities. Media coverage took the form of interviews on UNMIL

Radio, community radio stations, national radio, newspapers, television, and other media outlets. Throughout the year, there was collection of data and communication materials for every given event and activity. Photos were stored in a library and included in newsletters and reports. Newsletters, brochures and a nonformal education fact sheet were designed and disseminated to USAID, partners, the Ministry of Education, project beneficiaries, parent teacher associations, and other education related organizations.

An orientation concerning CESLY's inputs into Liberia's education sector was presented to:

- Minister of Education
- Deputy Minister for Instruction
- Deputy Minister for Planning
- All assistant Ministers
- All Members of the MOE retreat
- LTTP partners
- 111 Education officers
- All LRC staff

CESLY's goal for year 2 is to channel communications efforts through the Ministry of Education, not through CESLY efforts alone.

11.4 CESLY Text Messaging Strategy

The CESLY Communication Strategy was submitted to USAID for review in Quarter II of the program work plan, and included specific mention of the use of text messaging in support of program activities. After receiving inputs from USAID, the text messaging content was modified and resubmitted for approval during the present quarter to address monitoring of usage.

The strategy covers:

- use of text messaging for educational outcomes
- measurement of impact
- target audiences
- method of message dissemination
- delineation of cell phone access
- matrix delineating frequency of messaging
- ~~AAA~~ sample messages
- ~~AAA~~ charging booths locations

Text messaging is thought to be potentially useful for monitoring of teacher attendance, punctuality and time on task, dissemination of key pedagogical and reading focused messages, monitoring and encouraging female participation in schools, school safety, combating gender-based violence in schools, use of alternative energy, information sharing on work readiness, monitoring of progress in small grants, encouragement of communication between MOE central and county –level staff with their constituents at the county level.

The Public Private Partnership segment of the CESLY program has been reworked and will not ultimately include use of text messaging as a part of the strategy. However, the work that has gone into this aspect of the program will likely be useful to future USAID programs in Liberia or within the Ministry of Education.

11.5 MoE Website Development

Though the Government of Liberia contracted a developer for the design and maintenance of all public web sites, the Ministry of Education has specifically requested that CESLY provide technical assistance in this area. Although CESLY's role is limited, the IT and Communications personnel from the project have responded to this request by carrying out a market survey to identify entities that can help maintain the site. During Year 1, the process for continued development of the website was interrupted by the change of the Deputy Minister for Planning who led the process. Since the installation of the new Deputy Minister for Planning, CESLY has begun dialogue with the Department of Communications on how to reinstate this effort. CESLY has clarified that technical assistance can be provided in the area of content development, not the mechanics of hosting the site.

III. CHALLENGES

Problem/Challenge	Key Action
Low level of qualifications of teachers	<p>Refinement of teacher training materials and delivery to address teachers' levels</p> <p>Alignment of NFE curriculum according to teacher needs</p> <p>Petition and acceptance by USAID to allocate additional resources for investing teacher core content strengthening</p> <p>Heightened, ongoing and focused monitoring plan to support teachers at the school level</p> <p>Plan to procure materials and invest in core content strengthening through teacher training and supply of materials</p>
Teacher slow pace to uptake and apply new skills	<p>Intensive and high quality in-service training</p> <p>Huge investment of technical resources to be present at all training sites</p> <p>Teacher follow up composed of continual monitoring, support and oversight by NFE Coordinators and Training Officers</p> <p>Continual community mobilization and ongoing supervision</p>
Lower than Expected Enrollment and Retention of older youth	<p>Intensive multi-pronged enrollment strategy implemented in all six counties</p> <p>Prolonged pre-enrollment lasting 4 months prior to the start of classes</p> <p>Scheduling new nonformal education classes at night</p> <p>Realignment of enrollment targets with more realistic numbers</p> <p>Additional of technical staff and alignment of effort to prioritize retention efforts</p>
Night School Functionality	<p>Mapping of schools accordance to level of functionality</p> <p>Greatly intensified monitoring plan of action</p> <p>Targeted and prioritized support of night schools and at-risk sites</p> <p>heavy investment of human and financial resources in Taa Bora Lantern production completion</p>
Production of 4 areas of nonformal education curriculum and field testing under extraordinarily tight timeline	<p>Development of first draft of materials meeting target deadlines</p> <p>Revision and refinement of curriculum drawing upon international experts to meet needs in specific technical areas.</p> <p>Petition to USAID to realign project resources toward local and international resources in curriculum areas</p> <p>High levels of effort put into training county LRC staff to implement an entirely new program</p>
Engagement of MOE in USAID/CESLY investment in Education Sector	<p>Working more closely with school principals to take responsibilities in the process of teacher supervision and support</p> <p>Engaging Education Officers in monitoring</p> <p>Orientation and Education and of new Ministry staff and MOE staff across divisions, departments and counties</p> <p>Projection of "mental model" of technical collaboration rather than portrayal of one-way capacity building in condescending manner</p> <p>Leading through example- very dedicated technical team mobilizing county implementation staff to perform with same high standards of quality</p> <p>Engaging MOE at all levels to take ownership of program, - creating a team spirit that these are MOE activities supported by CESLY</p>
Rapid Start Up with demand for immediate meeting of targets in multitude of areas	<p>Bringing conceptual coherence and clarity to 11 disparate tasks (accelerated learning, nonformal education, Learning resource center support, MOE capacity building and policy support, textbook delivery, instructional materials, public private partnerships, outreach, etc.</p> <p>Hire, train and capacitate competent team of technical specialists and officers</p> <p>Highlight areas for program focus and reinforcement during each quarter</p> <p>Refocus and align targets and program emphasis</p>

Some of important lessons learned during the first ten months of operation include the following:

- Core reading and numeracy skills of students and teachers are extremely low. Nearly every subject area must be simplified accordingly. Teachers require a great deal of time to grasp core content. They also need considerable follow up and support to ensure that new skills are retained.
- The competency, and in many cases the commitment, of Liberian teachers and officials is extremely low, even in comparison to other developing countries. Consequently, resources must be devoted to training and close follow-up. Trainers need to visit classrooms frequently and community participation specialists must work closely with PTAs and other community members to ensure that education is supported adequately.
- In addition to the establishment of training and quality controls, more effort needs to be placed on working with the Ministry of Education. CESLY is well integrated within the Ministry, but MOE staff also requires focused attention, time and capacity investment to become active employees who take responsibility for the learners in all MOE schools, including those affiliated with the CESLY program.
- Many of the less critical tasks in the contract take up huge amounts of staff time and resources, thus limiting attention available for critical areas. Some of these less essential but time and resource consuming areas include: PTA development, peace and conflict training and psycho-social focus; GDA cultivation; Taa Bora lighting, and the small grants program. Key areas in which CESLY seeks to effect the greatest change require more time, attention and resources than the team has been able to provide.
- Reaching large numbers with high quality programming is not a realistic expectation without sufficient time and resources. CESLY works with more than two hundred functioning ALP schools in dire need of inputs for quality improvement. While the size of the NFE cohort has been tailored, the curriculum field test is still being carried out at large scale implementation rather than a small pilot. This can dissipate the effectiveness of quality control efforts when trying to start up entirely new program sites that have not previously had experience working with youth in alternative or nonformal education programs. The number of sites has been greatly reduced by CESLY and project realignment has focused inputs on areas that increase quality. Therefore, CESLY will continue placing quality as a central and foremost emphasis of Year 2.

IV. PLANS FOR THE COMING QUARTER

The following activities delineated in the work plan will either be initiated or in progress during the period of the October –December 2010 Quarterly Report.

Task Number	Activity
TASK 1	Year 1 gender-disaggregated enrollment figures obtained, analyzed, and plan developed to address any shortfalls, with program adjustments made accordingly
	Community-based recruitment and persistence campaign developed and implemented with PTAs and MOE management units
	Reinforce messages on school safety and reducing gender violence during regular Experience Sharing Circle
	Follow up on the roll-out of the gender strategy within CESLY schools, engaging PTA, CYI, schools and communities
	Encourage MOE to recruit female teachers in NFE, in collaboration with CEOs and DEOs
	Campaign to encourage active engagement of female teachers in ALP and NFE, in collaboration with CEOs and DEOs
	Results of English and math assessments analyzed and plan developed to address learning gaps
	Teachers trained in strengthening core content in Literacy and Numeracy, using the results of EGRA and EGMA assessments
	Encourage pairing and matching of stronger and weaker students by teachers through Experience Sharing Circles and youth volunteers
	Number of learning materials available to students increased
	Support MoE capacity building on comprehension and integration of successful elements of ALP/NFE into primary school system through NFE Orientation training, according to willingness of MOE
	New NFE program developed
	Social marketing campaign planned and implemented, to distinguish NFE from primary school accelerated learning
	TASK 2
Recruitment and persistence campaign developed and implemented by PTAs and NGOs	
Learning sites are more girl-friendly and have more female teachers	
Current salary disbursement and tracking system reviewed and revised	
Report of monthly salary payments submitted to MoE and USAID, quarterly	
Common recruitment, outreach and persistence campaigns developed and implemented	
Strategies implemented to increase female teacher participation	
Alternative sources of electricity identified and installed in selected sites	
Principals, PTAs and MoE units (including LRCs) are trained in monitoring attendance,	

punctuality and local strategies are developed to improve teacher adherence to existing attendance regulations
Core sets of basic teaching and learning materials are developed and distributed
GDA partnerships are established that provide books and other learning materials
Series of training and learning activities for teachers implemented
Current ALP curricula reviewed with Ministry of Education; plans developed for integrating new (developed by Creative) curricula on life skills, civic education, career exploration and work readiness; and content and illustrations revised to be more female-friendly
New NFE curriculum developed that integrates basic education with work readiness skills; provides opportunities for service learning, internships, mentorships; places youth in further education and training and jobs; and uses locally available materials
Community service learning component developed and implemented as part of the curriculum
Results of EGRA and EGMA baseline tests with ALP students (see Task 4) used to determine appropriate instructional levels
Teachers trained in using simple classroom-based assessment to determine levels and learning needs
Assessments conducted to measure the impact of training and capacity building with teachers
Series of professional development/teacher training activities conducted
Teacher capacity assessment tool administered (midterm)
Audio episodes highlighting exemplary teacher practices are developed
Teachers provided support in instructional improvement from trained MOE supervisor
Teacher progress monitored and results promoted
Teachers and PTA members trained and supported in implementing community-based reading activities in selected sites
Strategies implemented to increase girls enrollment and completion; to improve teacher training; to improve instructional methodologies; and to increase number and persistence of female teachers
Policy or strategy guiding accelerated learning is taken up by the Ministry of Education
Public awareness campaign is conducted.
New opportunities are forged with programs, with a focus on engaging the private sector (on-going throughout life of program).
LRC staff are prepared to make the information available and facilitate youth entry into the programs
Establish partnership with Ministry of Youth and Sports internship program
Engage youth volunteers in CESLY tutoring program at selected ALP sites.
Develop service learning opportunities for ALP participants, and implement ALP service learning programs at ALP sites and at the county level through the LRC

	Tracking tools, protocols and database established
	Career guidance counselors trained in tracking a sample of graduates
TASK 3	Design team and senior MOE representatives have agreed upon relationship of the new NFE curriculum to the formal education system
	Beneficiaries have received career counseling and experiential opportunities
	Curriculum feedback collected, from teachers, students, and through classroom observations
	Student performance assessment administered (See Task 4) and consequent feedback and learning incorporated into the curriculum
TASK 4	Strengthen the capacity of Ministry of Education staff to administer and analyze the results of student assessments and use the information to improve instruction
TASK 5	Revised modules regularly fed to design team (Task 3) for integration into new NFE materials
	ALPP Youth Life Skills curriculum implemented at All CESLY ALP regular sites
	New Life skills Curriculum implemented at all CESLY ALP and NFE sites
TASK 6	Detailed individual staff work plans established
	Communication, regularity of contact, with teachers in remote sites strengthened
	Strategic planning workshops conducted with MoE , European Union LRC team, and other key Ministries
	Draft long-term transition plan developed and approved
	County and District MoE staff capacity-building plans developed, in joint MoE-CESLY LRC staff workshops
	Plans are implemented, including mentoring, workshops, and pairing and fading
	Long-term sustainability plans developed in partnership with EU-funded LRCs
TASK 7	Specific capacity building plans developed in the areas of planning, implementing and evaluating
	Policy dialogue sessions held
	Training workshops, mentoring and shadowing, and other plans implemented
	Policies for Learning Resource Centers, taking into account new LRCs in the other nine counties
	Capacity is strengthened through other CESLY activities
TASK 8	Site visits conducted, roads and storage options evaluated, memorandum of understanding signed, and principals informed of policies for distribution
	Audio messaging developed and broadcasted to sensitize public about the books and policy
	Books distributed to DEOs and /or schools as appropriate.
TASK 9	Community level grant signing ceremonies conducted
	Field visits to monitor grant projects conducted

	Regular financial and narrative reporting
TASK 10	Meetings held with high ranking government officials as well as members of the international diplomatic community to provide visible, high level support for GDA partnerships
	GDA partnership signing ceremonies planned and conducted with GDA champions in attendance and as agreement signees.
	Meetings held with private sector GDA partners to develop plans, budgets, and MoUs.
	High profile GDA MoU signing ceremonies held with private sector partners and USG & GOL officials.
TASK 11	Promotion events held to communicate with the public and receive feedback on key issues
	Press releases, radio spots and other media used to deliver key messages to public
	Success stories submitted to USAID Liberia quarterly
	Plans developed and implemented incrementally, to enhance MoE website
	Systems for transmitting information via text message to cell phone users put into place
	Linkages established between MoE and parallel USG partner efforts for journalism development

V. SUCCESS STORIES

Quarter IV Success Stories

“My eyes are open now; I will not stop until I finish high school”

...Declares 33-year-old Accelerated Learning Program graduate.

Ms. Janet Torkolon, a 33-year-old woman recently graduated from the USAID-Supported Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) at the John F. Bakalu School in Gbarnga, Bong County, and Level III-the equivalency of 6th Grade. Ms. Torkolon is not a mere ALP graduate, but someone who can now read, write and serve as a role model in her community. She demonstrated such characteristics when she was chosen from among 3000 ALP graduates to deliver an appreciation speech on behalf of her colleagues for being placed into the USAID/ CESLY Apprenticeship Program implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Sports. She was selected to deliver a keynote speech at the signing of the memorandum of understanding for the establishment of the new apprenticeship initiative.



Ms. Torkolon’s story is a lesson for anyone from modest origins who wants to turn a new page in life- - her story is full of sorrow, but at the same time, it is real. When Janet was five, she lost both of her parents-a situation that kept her from entering school because her guardians did not have the financial capacity to send her to school.

However, as she was growing up, she witnessed how education had changed other people’s lives in her community. She perceived that the only alternative and to make change was to acquire education. With this in mind, though she was engaged in petty trading selling groundnuts, she decided, at age 28, to enroll in the USAID-supported accelerated learning program for overage youth who missed out educational opportunity because of Liberian civil unrest.

“When I got big and my aunty told me that I ain't get ma and pa, I was sorry for myself. Things were even bad when I was not going to school, but only to sell grand pees all around Gbarnga. Then every day, I used to talk in my heart-- so this is how my life will be? No school and nothing to learn and in case I get married, will I be depending on my husband for everything? I think I can go to school and be like the other people who do not have anybody, but because they went to school things now change for them. So, when I was 28 years I started the ALP school at the John F. Bakalu School in Gbarnga from Level I until I finished Level III,” recalls Ms Torkolon. “In fact,” Ms. Torkolon reveals, “My eyes are open now; I will not stop until I finish high school”

Ms. Janet Torkolon hails from Suakoko, Bong County and is currently a resident of Gbarnga, Bong County. Besides being placed into the new apprenticeship program, in keeping with her vow to continue her schooling, she has transitioned into the formal education sector by enrolling at the Bakalu Public School (night section). She is therefore appealing to humanitarians, philanthropic organizations and individuals to assist support her academic journey. She will also join the Apprenticeship Program where she will have access to gain skills leading to training opportunities and jobs. The program will provide apprenticeship training at local businesses and workshops for up to ten months with the trainees remaining on the job as salaried employees after the apprenticeship period is completed.

**“We will use nonformal education to change
illiterate women’s lives,”**
Says Pleebo Women Community members

Many development proponents assert that ‘any country whose citizens lack basic education is bound to lag behind and sometimes fall’. This has proven to be true in Liberia where more than half of the over three million population of the country cannot read and write. Being cognizant of this, the international community has, in collaboration with some Liberian education related organizations, have been exerting system efforts to reverse or at least minimize the situation and make a possible leap forward, following the country’s 14 years of civil upheaval.

One of such organization that is taking a lead in ensuring that education gets priority is a group of women that have organized themselves into a body called, Pleebo Women Community (PWC), based in Pleebo City, Maryland County. The group was established in 2009 with the prime objective of assisting unfortunate women improve their livelihoods through the acquisition of basic education and life skills.

Five female teachers and nonformal education facilitators who are members of this group participated in the USAID-Supported Core Education Skills for Liberian Youth (CESLY) In-Service Training (IST) for Nonformal Education facilitators and Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) teachers held in August of 2010

According to Mrs. Annie Tye, Secretary General of the group, “We resolved to come to this training because of our burning desire to help our fellow women wake up from slumber and do something for themselves.” The group said although the organization was established in 2009, it has been operating at a slow pace due to lack of support to carry out its earmarked activities-specifically in the area of education. “We became over joy when we heard that a USAID-Funded project called CESLY was coming to our county to train teachers so that they would in turn, help Liberians learn how to read, write and learn basic numbers. Therefore, we feel this is a complete success for our community and us because this is the great opportunity we have been searching for and now we are here. CESLY can then rest assured that whatever knowledge we acquire from this training will be used to benefit the target group and see our community and Liberia as a whole moving from darkness to light,” Ms. Tye asserted when speaking on behalf of her group.

Pleebo Women Community group members stated that the most impressive aspect of the training to them was the unfamiliar area of work readiness. Through work readiness training learners, besides literacy, numeracy and life skills, can also learn those basic attitudes needed to obtain and keep a

job. One member reflected on the value of work readiness in her community. “Truly, this is a strange thing in Liberia because a lot of us who even claim to be educated do not value our work because we go to work any time, exhibit unwholesome behaviors to our workmates and bosses and get away with it; so we are getting back to instill these attributes into our learners in addition to reading and writing.

The Pleebo Women’s Community group members left the CESLY In-Service II training fortified with practical solid experience in micro-teaching in the areas of reading, math, literacy, numeracy, life skills and work readiness. They planned to take back their newly acquired knowledge into the classrooms and be agents of change in raising the basic education level of Liberians. They want to reach all learners but to place special emphasis on reaching out to older girls and young women, since they themselves have the power to be role models to inspire these young women to greater heights.



Pleebos Women Community facilitators at the In-Service Training in Pleebo, Maryland County

VI. CONCLUSION

REFLECTIONS ON YEAR 1

Year 1 has been a time of high demand for the project. Two national teacher training sessions, the first versions of the curriculum and the full educational inputs into the academic year demanded almost incessant activity from CESLY. CESLY is pleased that it can look back and say that, for the most part, key deliverables were met on time. Year 2 is a time that allows for greater reflection on how to improve quality and a push to correct some of the problems seen at the field and classroom level during Year 1.

Year 1 afforded CESLY the opportunity to look internally and hold internal discussion to assess weaknesses in implementation, where it could improve and future directions for emphasis. This self-assessment was completed through the following vehicles: a) school mapping exercise and response to monitoring trip findings b) quarterly strategic planning c) LRC Experience sharing d) the CESLY re-budgeting and redesign exercise and d) review of and response to the CESLY mid-term evaluation.

CESLY commits itself to continual focus on quality improvement. In reflection, Year 1 has been a time of great learning, recognition of where weaknesses lay and concerted effort to hone in and target these weaknesses. In response, CESLY has built stronger relationships with MOE, CESLY has changed, replaced or re-shifted key staff, has overhauled monitoring systems, reworked training package, and drafted and significantly revised curriculum materials. CESLY will continue to commit itself to enhancing project quality and educational outcomes over year 2 of the project.

One major achievement that occurred on the eve of Year 1 closure is the completion of the project realignment. This significant level of effort will result in lessons learned from year 1 being embedded in project structure and allowing for:

- enhancing quality of training and reinforcement in the content areas and in instructional practices
- ability to pay teachers according to ALP policy and thus elicit better quality teaching
- ability to significant increase the quality and frequency of field monitoring
- provision of additional teaching and learning resources, particularly reading materials that will significantly contribute to improved student achievement especially in literacy and numeracy
- more intensive field testing of Level 1 curriculum, to ensure relevance and effectiveness, of curricular materials, especially of literacy and numeracy lessons
- ability to align adequate human resources (in terms of staff and consultants) behind the accomplishment of core project activities.

YEAR 2 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

CESLY looks forward to prioritizing the following key activities for completion during Year 2. These activities will be undertaken in consultation and collaboration with the MOE, USAID and other relevant stakeholders.

- Cluster-based Teacher Experience Sharing for over 1100 teachers
- Production of Semester 2 curricular materials in literacy, numeracy, work readiness and life skills
- Production of learner materials to accompany NFE curriculum (learner workbooks in literacy and numeracy, NFE instructional aids for literacy, numeracy, life skills and work readiness)
- Development, illustration, printing, and distribution of Liberian reading materials
- Promotion of a culture of reading
- New approach to service learning piloted in CESLY sites
- Operationalization of Apprenticeships through Ministry of Youth and Sports and Open Society Institute
- Infrastructure and service provision of Learning Resource Centers enhanced
- County level capacity building undertaken in six counties
- LRC transition plan delineated and agreed upon by stakeholders
- Central level MOE capacity building undertaken
- Communications and outreach strategies undertaken by MOE

BEYOND YEAR 2 Beyond Year 2, the donor stakeholders and MOE will be served by beginning to think about the next steps needed to carry nonformal education to completion onwards beyond Year 2 of the CESLY project.

- Helping the Ministry plan for the next steps to build the system in order to be able to implement nonformal education and accelerated learning at full –scale into the future
- Finalizing the development of nonformal education curriculum for levels 2, 3, 4
- Finalizing and operationalizing the nonformal education policy
- Strengthening teacher effectiveness - pre-service and in-service training, more and better supervision (strengthening skills in ALP, in NFE-related issues serves as a foundation for all other areas) and integrating this into the larger picture of teacher training
- Supporting the MOE in its efforts to leverage funding with the legislature and other donors.
- Building system to link graduates of accelerated learning and nonformal education to the World of Work

YEAR 2 New Directions

- Cluster-based Teacher Experience Sharing for over 1100 teachers
- Production of Semester 2 curricular materials in literacy, numeracy, work readiness and life skills
- Production of learner materials to accompany NFE curriculum (learner workbooks in literacy and numeracy, NFE instructional aids for literacy, numeracy, life skills and work readiness)
- Development, illustration, printing, and distribution of Liberian reading materials
- Promotion of a culture of reading
- New approach to service learning piloted in CESLY sites
- Operationalization of Apprenticeships through Ministry of Youth and Sports and Open Society Institute
- Infrastructure and service provision of Learning Resource Centers enhanced
- County level capacity building undertaken in six counties
- LRC transition plan delineated and agreed upon by stakeholders
- Central level MOE capacity building undertaken
- Communications and outreach strategies undertaken by MOE