

## USAID's Advancing Youth Project Quarterly Report 2



**Submitted by Education Development Center, Inc.**

Cooperative Agreement AID-669-A-11-00001

**Year 1, Quarter 2: January to March 2012**

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/Advancing Youth Project, Cooperative Agreement No. AID-669-A-11-00001. 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.

## **Acronyms**

ABE - Alternative Basic Education  
ALP - Accelerated Learning Program  
CEO - County Education Officer  
CESLY – Core Education Skills for Liberia Youth Program  
DEO - District Education Officer  
EO - Education Officer  
GoL – Government of Liberia  
KRTTI - Kakata Regional Teacher Training Institute  
LRC – Learning Resource Center  
LTTP – Liberia Teacher Training Project  
M&E – Monitoring and Evaluation  
MoE – Ministry of Education  
MoGD – Ministry of Gender and Development  
MoHSW – Ministry of Health and Social Welfare  
MoU – Memorandum of Understanding  
MoYS - Ministry of Youth and Sports  
NFE - Nonformal Education  
OSF - Open Society Foundation  
TA – Technical Assistance  
YMCA – Young Men’s Christian Association  
ZRTTI - Zorzor Regional Teacher Training Institute

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## **1. Executive Summary**

During the reporting period, Advancing Youth continued to establish itself in Monrovia and across the four counties in which it is currently operating (Bong, Lofa, Montserrado and Nimba). The 100 day planning period continued with the submission of project design documents to USAID and to the Ministry of Education (MoE).

On February 21, 2012, the project was officially launched by Ambassador Linda Thomas–Greenfield, United States Ambassador to Liberia, Dr. Mator M.F. Kpangbai, MoE Deputy for Instruction and the Protocol Officer of the Vice President of Liberia. Over 200 guests attended the event.

Enrollment and placement testing of students continued so that classes could start in March. Over 2000 students were enrolled across the program.

Partnerships were developed with the Brother’s Brother Foundation and with World ORT to provide additional learning and livelihood opportunities for youth through leveraging USAID funds.

## **2. Administration, Partnerships, Outreach and Monitoring & Evaluation**

### **2.1. Administration**

#### **2.1.1. Staffing**

During the quarter, Advancing Youth continued to staff up with both full-time in-country staff and with technical assistance.

Mathew Ndoté, the Livelihoods Development Team Leader arrived in the country from Kenya at the beginning of February. Mathew completed his orientation including familiarizing himself with the project team, relevant project documents and partners. He has been actively involved in preparation for the Labor Market Assessment (LMA) while contributing to the ABE and Youth Development component of the project during the quarter. Prior to Mathew’s arrival, the Livelihoods Development Coordinator, Varney Gaie, who had previously been Mercy’s Corps’ Program Development Officer was assigned fully to Advancing Youth and started with the team.

Marcus Blamoh and Solomon Kerkula were recruited as the Communication and Technology Team Leader and ICT Specialist respectively. Marcus came from Don Bosco Homes, Liberia where he formally served as ICT Manager and Solomon was previously employed with Annex Technologies, Liberia where he served as Web Master/Graphic Designer and Network Administrator. Both were immediately engaged in developing Level 2 print materials.

Emmanuel Siafa joined Advancing Youth from the Ministry of Gender and Development where he had previously been employed as Regional Officer, Region 1 (Bomi, Grand Cape Mount and Gbarpolu) Tubmanburg, Bomi County. He has been allocated to Montserrado LRC and has been working closely

with Abraham Beargai to understand the management of the LRC, and meet with relevant MoE and other partners.

Monitoring and Evaluation continued to be strengthened with the hiring of LRC M&E Officers for Bong, Lofa and Montserrado. Eric Mitchell was previously employed under the USAID Core Education Skills for Liberian Youth (CESLY) project and returned to Lofa County. Nathan Freeman and Edwinio Bowman were recruited as the LRC Monitoring and Evaluation Officers for Montserrado and Bong Counties respectively. Nathan came from United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization where he was previously employed as a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer and Edwinio was previously employed as Programme Officer for the Liberia National Youth Volunteer service under UNDP.

During the reporting period Advancing Youth recruited eight Youth Development and Livelihoods Coordinators. The staff has been trained as part of their orientation into the project, deployed to their duty station in the four counties and have started their work in their respective counties. As part of training Youth and Livelihoods Coordinators were introduced to the overall program strategy including the livelihoods strategy. In addition, the coordinators were exposed to team building skills purposely in order to facilitate smooth transition after deployment to their duty stations.

The position of M&E Senior Research and Dissemination Specialist remains open due to the lack of a qualified candidate. Recruitment for this position will continue. Other positions that proved difficult to recruit for included the Communication Specialist. Applicants with suitable levels of written English were not identified. Advancing Youth is planning to identify interns who have the capacity to learn on the job with mentoring and training, possibly through a locally hired, part-time expatriate Communications and Public Relations Advisor. This person will develop Advancing Youth's communications strategy, procedures and templates, as well as mentor the communications interns. EDC will be posting this part-time position in April.

See Annex 1 for a table of staff recruitment.

### **2.1.2. Office space**

Office space continued to be at a premium. Due to cramped conditions in the main Monrovia office and due to the fact that the Learning Resource Center lease expires shortly, Advancing Youth continued negotiations on a potential new office. Following the signing of a contract, the office is due to be ready in May 2012. Boukari Conombo, the Deputy Chief of Party for Operations and Finance is managing the move to the new facility.

## **2.2. Partnerships**

During the reporting period, Advancing Youth worked with World ORT to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). World ORT had worked previous with the CESLY project, providing livelihood opportunities to graduates. World ORT has received funding from the Open Society Foundation for a further project and will work with Advancing Youth to provide livelihood opportunities to graduates from CESLY and to Advancing Youth learners. Advancing Youth will leverage approximately \$1.7m through this partnership at a match of approximately 1:1.

Advancing Youth also worked with Brothers Brother Foundation (BBF) to bring in supplementary reading materials for use both within Advancing Youth classes and within the regular school system, as well as within the LRCs. Within Montserrado County the books were distributed at a book fair held in conjunction with the project launch (see below). Facilitators and Administrators were trained on how to use supplementary materials and then had the opportunity to decide which books they were interested in and which would be relevant for their learners.



Presentation of books at Garplay, Nimba

Books were subsequently delivered to the schools by Advancing Youth staff. Books for schools in other counties were selected and delivered by Advancing Youth staff. BBF provided approximately 13,100 books with a value of approximately \$244,000 to the project. Advancing Youth covered the cost of shipping, port fees, sorting and packing and distribution to the schools at an approximate expense of \$7,900. Advancing Youth also coordinated the delivery of BBF books in the same shipment to the warehouse for the USAID Liberia Teacher Training Project (LTTP).

In addition, a MoU to work with the PROSPECTS project, funded by Chevron and implemented by Mercy Corps, was drafted during this quarter and is under review. The MoU will be finalized during the forthcoming quarter.

## 2.3. Outreach

### 2.3.1. Launch of Advancing Youth Project

On February 21, 2012, the Advancing Youth Project was officially launched by representatives of the US and Liberian governments together with project staff. Over 200 guests from various sectors including government ministers and other officials, members of the private sector, education stakeholders as well as Advancing Youth learners and teachers attended the event held at the YMCA Gymnasium in Crown Hill, Monrovia.



US Ambassador to Liberia Linda Thomas-Greenfield addressing audience at Advancing Youth Project Launch

Ambassador Linda Thomas–Greenfield, United States Ambassador to Liberia, urged youth to positively serve the nation and maintain peace and stability and to take advantage of the Advancing Youth Project and learn basic literacy and numeracy skill to better their lives. She lauded the Liberian Government for maintaining sustainable peace in Liberia but cautioned youth not to be used as agents for conflicts. She said to the youth, “Only you can make your own future real - your future is in your hands. Use your time wisely.” She asked whether Liberia wanted to be known as a nation of beggars and encouraged Liberians to “say to the president, Madam President how can I help you meet your goals, I am available to help.”

In separate remarks, Dr. Mator M.F. Kpangbai, Deputy for Instruction, MoE, and the Protocol Officer of the Vice President of Liberia, on behalf of the government of Liberia thanked the U.S. Government for their level of support to Liberia, especially in the education sector. They said that Advancing Youth is a significant project that will help to bridge literacy gaps for youth. Therefore, every effort will be made on the part of government to take ownership.

The launch was concluded with a book fair where 100 teachers, administrators and learners from Montserrado County selected relevant books that had been donated by the Brothers Brother Foundation to support teaching and learning in the classroom.

On March 30, 26 of our learners (13 females and 13 males) participated in the observance of County Contraceptive Day in Gbarnga. The event was organized by the County Health team, USAID/Rebuilding

Basic Health Services (RBHS), other health partners, along with our Bong County team. The event included a march through town, guest speakers and booths with family planning service providers. After attending the event, Advancing Youth learners met to summarize what they had learned and practice what they would share with their classmates. Teachers have been asked to give participating learners 10 minutes at the beginning of the next class to share what they learned at County Contraceptive Day.

## **2.4. Monitoring & Evaluation**

During the 100 day planning period, Advancing Youth submitted the Performance Management Plan to USAID for review. Following comments from USAID, the PMP will be revised and resubmitted.

Advancing Youth continued to coordinate with the USAID/Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program (LMEP). LMEP offered two training courses during the period. M&E Specialists Oscar Goyee and Geanjay Roberts attended a workshop on Data Quality Assessments, map making and LMEP support, along with Simon James, the Chief of Party.

Geanjay also attended LMEP training on Managing for Results, a week-long course, together with USAID staff. The training covered Project Design, Setting Targets and Conducting Baseline Assessments, Building Results Framework and Conducting Data Quality Assessments.

Advancing Youth also continued to coordinate with LMEP on mapping issues.

In January, EDC M&E Advisor Emily Morris, who is providing technical assistance to support M&E needs of the project, visited Liberia. In coordination with Brenda Bell, Curriculum TA, and the Monrovia M&E staff, Emily conducted training on the Out-of-school Literacy Assessment (OLA – see below). OLA was administered to 65 youth/learners within the ABE classes between the ages of 13–39 with little or no education. The results of the OLA trial were used to determine if proposed testing items were suitable for different levels of students.

Following the initial OLA trial, an electronic version of OLA (eOLA) was developed. The M&E Team tested the tablet computers with the eOLA software on 4 students (Grades 1-4) from the YMCA Community School in Monrovia on March 26. This preliminary trial was conducted in preparation for the larger scale trial to be carried out in April. Following the completion of the OLA assessment, planning for the initial baseline assessment of literacy levels via the OLA tool will continue.

M&E staff in coordination with other program staff also reviewed and designed a number of documents including Literacy and Training for Employment Program (LTEP – see below) manuals, Mercy Corp's 'Moving Forward' curriculum and the Livelihood tracking tools. This resulted in the design of a youth club guidelines manual and youth club by-laws, to be useful for youth club formation (see below).

As outlined above, recruitment for the position of the Senior Research and Dissemination Specialist has so far not been successful. Recruitment efforts will continue but in the meantime it will be necessary to add additional TA to support work around the baseline assessments.

See Annex 2 for a most recent draft of the M&E Indicators Table.

### **3. Result 1: Increased institutional capacity to plan, budget, deliver and measure Alternative Basic Education for youth**

#### **3.1. Sub result 1.1. MoE is able to set national ABE policies, prepare annual implementation plans and budgets, and train, support and monitor ABE teachers, based on evidence of best practices**

Advancing Youth met with MoE officials in different divisions to brief them on the project and set up coordination mechanisms for joint strategic and operational decision-making. The following coordination mechanisms have been established:

- General administration and operations: Monthly meeting at MoE
- Curriculum review: periodic Technical Working Group meetings as materials are ready
- Monitoring and evaluation: participation of MoE staff at central and county level in testing of proposed evaluation instruments and regular monitoring visits, as per work plans

During the reporting period, Advancing Youth engaged in a number of coordination meetings with various MoE staff. Meetings included:

- Project Design Workshop;
- Monthly MoE meeting;
- Official Launch of Advancing Youth Project;
- Meeting on the selection of master trainers and ABE facilitators;
- Meeting to align Advancing Youth Project training plans with the Ministry of Education 2011 – 2012 Academic Calendar;
- Introductory meeting with the Center of Excellence on ABE curriculum review and endorsement by the Curriculum Technical Working Group and ABE System and its Implementation Plan.

Technical Assistance (TA) was also provided by Dr. David Rosen to help with ABE System Design and Capacity Building Planning.

#### **3.1.1. Project Design Workshop**

On January 19–20, 2012, Advancing Youth conducted a 2-day Design Workshop aimed at soliciting input and feedback from education stakeholders, partners and the MoE on the structure of the project. The reports of the various assessments carried out by Advancing Youth staff during the previous quarter were discussed, focusing on how they will impact the initial project design. Twelve MoE representatives including Senior Policy Advisor, Dr. Albert Coleman and Assistant Minister for Basic and Secondary Education, Hon. Felicia Doe–Sumah, together with USAID staff, representatives of the curriculum design Technical Working Group and other stakeholders attended the workshop to discuss the overall design and to make any final comments.

During the 100 day assessment period, Advancing Youth staff had conducted a round of consultations with key stakeholders (learners, master trainers, technical working group members) and extracted key lessons and recommendations from the report on field testing Level 1 curriculum materials, the CESLY final project report and the LMEP evaluation of CESLY. The key findings, implications for refining

program strategies, and the decision points were discussed during the program design workshop. Sessions included discussions on ABE Curriculum and Facilitator Training, the Capacity Building Plan, the Livelihoods strategy and on Livelihoods and Youth Clubs.

Details of the Workshop are included in Annex 3.

### **3.1.2. Facilitator Recruitment and Selection Process**

A new facilitator recruitment and selection process was agreed to with the MoE, and implemented in the selection of new facilitators. Teachers at Advancing Youth sites who wish to become ABE facilitators submit a written application form. The application includes information on teacher qualifications and experience, as well as a written essay. Applications are reviewed and scored by the school principal, a MoE representative (most often the CEO) and an Advancing Youth representative (most often the Team Leader or ABE Coordinator). Facilitators are offered the position based on the joint recommendation of reviewers.

A third facilitator for each site was recruited and selected using the new process. During the Level 1 teacher training, January 19-27, Advancing Youth staff and Master Trainers reviewed the teacher applications and observed micro teaching. On the basis of this review, teachers from each site were asked to co-teach Level 1 or teach Level 2 classes.

Advancing Youth has drafted a Statement of Responsibility for teachers and principals outlining the main duties of each position and the terms of payment. It is currently under review by the MoE. Once we receive written approval of the statements, we will distribute it to participating facilitators and administrators.

### **3.1.3. Monthly MoE Meetings**

During the reporting period, Advancing Youth and the MoE held the first and second of monthly meetings to discuss programmatic issues and advance possible solutions for the smooth implementation of the project. Held on the first Wednesday of each month, and chaired by Assistant Minister Doe-Sumah, the February meeting discussed the progress of the project as well as specific issues, including;

- The design of the Out of School Youth Literacy Assessment (OLA) as a reading tool designed to test word reading and comprehension skills.
- The issue of payment to administrators. Field staff reported that school administrators in schools running ABE classes had vowed not to participate in the project due to decision taken by the MoE not to include them on the stipends payment scheme. Principals and administrators serving as ABE administrators have written formal complaints through their respective County Education Officers to the Assistant Minister for Basic and Secondary Education to seek redress from the Minister. However, following several discussions with USAID and Ministry of Education, a Statement of Responsibilities that outlined the roles and duties of ABE administrators was developed and approved by MoE.

The second meeting was convened March 7 with 9 MoE staff, including the Assistant Minister for Bureau of Basic and Secondary Education, the Executive Director for Center of Excellence and Research, Director of ABE, National Focal Persons on Learning Resource Centers and Accelerated Learning Program. Also in

attendance was the USAID Advancing Youth Project AOTR, Mrs. Mardea Nyumah. The meeting included the following key topics:

- The Livelihood team leader from Advancing Youth briefed the group on the planned Labor Market Assessment to identify viable local livelihoods and jobs.
- The proposed teacher training plans for the remainder of the current school year were presented for consideration. The plan included training of 100 facilitators and administrators, 20 Master Trainers, 5 Team Leaders, 5 ABE Coordinators and 4 EOs which primarily focused on strengthening their core content knowledge and skills for the effective use of the Level 2 curriculum in the classroom.

Trainings were subsequently held in Kakata and Gbarnga from March 15 - 17, 2012. The Advancing Youth Project is maximizing holidays and weekends for trainings to minimize the time that teachers are pulled away from classes on instructional days. The next teacher training for level 2 teachers is scheduled for May 24-27, 2012.

#### **3.1.4. ABE System Design and Capacity Building Planning Technical Assistance**

During the reporting period, TA was provided by Dr. David Rosen. David visited Liberia between February 21 and March 7, 2012 to assist in the development of an ABE System to be led by the MoE with a framework to incorporate non-formal, youth and adult focused education programs implemented by other organizations such as Ministry of Gender Development (MoGD), Ministry of Youth and Sports (MoYS), Ministry of Labor (MoL), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MoHSW) and NGOs such as NAEAL. Interviews and group discussions were conducted with MoE, focusing on the Department of Instruction, Bureau of Basic and Secondary Education and Division of ABE at the central level. Interviews and discussions were also held with County School Boards, County Education Officers, District Education Officers, Governors, PTAs, ABE Supervisors and ABE Administrators in Montserrado, Bong and Nimba Counties on establishing ABE System in Liberia. Outside the MoE, MoYS, MoL, and MoA central office staff were all interviewed. This TA resulted in a Draft ABE System Development plan and a refinement of proposed areas for system strengthening support for the development of the ABE system at national, county and district levels. A draft matrix of the current status and proposed milestones to develop an Adult Basic Education System over the next five-years was also developed during these discussions. These documents will be shared and discussed with USAID during the next quarter and subsequently with the MoE and other stakeholders.

#### **3.2. Sub-result 1.2. Selected local institutions have the capacity to partner with the MoE to deliver quality ABE instruction, and/or promote entrance and persistence in ABE**

During the reporting period the main focus of Advancing Youth was on starting Level 2 classes together with a new cohort of Level 1 classes in MoE schools.

We expect to partner with local NGOs for the start of new classes in August/September 2012. In preparation, this quarter we conducted a series of informal meetings with partners currently involved in delivering adult literacy courses including NEALE and Alfalit to get more information on their programs. The next step will be to develop criteria for NGO implementers in collaboration with the MoE.

### 3.3. Sub-result 1.3. Comprehensive ABE curriculum is developed and implemented

Initial drafts of Level 2 Semester 1 curriculum (facilitator’s manual and work book) have been developed in all content areas: Literacy for Work, Numeracy and Life Skills. The materials were reviewed and approved by the Technical Working Group (TWG). The TWG provided the following feedback which has been incorporated into the curriculum.

Content	Feedback	Suggestion
Literacy for Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The level 2 semester 1 curriculum, especially the integrated Literacy for Work content strand, is challenging because there are many teaching steps and a lot of materials to be covered in one lesson.</li> <li>• Some instructions for the facilitators were not clear.</li> <li>• The facilitator’s manual is bulky and not user friendly - the materials are presented in such a way that makes it difficult for teachers to follow; teachers have to flip back and forth from one activity to the instruction which is located in another place. This takes a lot of time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitators will need more training to properly teach the curriculum.</li> <li>• Make the instructions for facilitators simple and clear for facilitators to understand. State specifically what they are supposed to say or do.</li> <li>• Make manual more user friendly by ensuring that the page from the learner’s workbook is shown next to the facilitator instructions</li> </ul>
Life Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some lessons on common sicknesses do not provide information on prevention.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information on prevention of common sicknesses.</li> </ul>

Advancing Youth is collaborating with USAID’s Rebuilding Basic Health Services (RBHS) project to ensure that our health-related curriculum materials, particularly those dealing with maternal health, family planning and HIV/AIDS, are in line with best practices in Behavior Change Communication. RBHS has reviewed the health modules in Levels 1 and 2, and has determined that the messages and teaching approach are consistent with their own advocacy approach. However, they have advised us to meet with the Ministry of Health as well, to make sure that our educational materials are consistent with MoH key messaging. We will pursue this in the next quarter.

#### 3.3.1. Reviewing, revising and pilot testing revised tool for Feedback on Field Test

Two versions of the facilitator’s interview tool were developed along with the M&E Unit for collecting information on the different elements of the Level 2 curriculum such as relevance, utility, and feasibility. The tools were tested by Master Trainers and Advancing Youth staff during the Level 2 teacher training held in February. On the basis of that field test, a final version of the Facilitator Interview form has been drafted. ABE Coordinators will be calling Level 2 teachers on a regular basis to get feedback on lessons as they are taught, and will send data to the Teaching and Learning Team weekly.

In addition to the facilitator interviews, ABE Coordinators will observe a full 3.5 hour lesson at least 4 times per quarter and report on difficulties they observe that have an impact curriculum development and teacher training.

The third method of data collection will be periodic focus group discussions (FDGs) held with Master Trainers, facilitators and learners. The first of these FDGs was held in Gbarnga on Saturday, March 31 where 39 participants from all four counties attended.



Focus Group Discussion in Gbarnga, Bong County

The main findings of the FDG were:

- The level of reading and writing in Level 2 Literacy for Work is appropriate for most learners. The majority were able to read passages from the Semester 1 materials and write simple sentences. Learners enjoyed and appreciated the simple, work-related stories.
- Facilitators were successfully using the 3 Step Reading Approach demonstrated during the Level 2 teacher training.
- Pacing can be difficult—some classes are not finishing the lessons during the allotted time. In these cases, the facilitator continues the lesson on the next class day.
- Reproductive health (including GVB) is an area that presents many difficulties for facilitators and learners. Facilitators suggested bringing in outside experts for these topics, and separating learners by gender for discussion.
- Other controversial/difficult topics in life skills include child rearing and human rights. In some cases, the lessons taught conflict with the values of facilitators themselves. Advancing Youth will have to focus on these lessons in training, so that we model questioning techniques that can lead to re-thinking beliefs.
- Many lessons in life skills build upon and refer to each other. During facilitator training, these lessons should be addressed as a group rather than individually.
- Learners appreciated numeracy in context, ie. learning about money management, but sometimes were not able to express how they use math skills in real life. We will have to reinforce real life uses of mathematics.

The TWG will be convened to review the Literacy for Work Level module C material on April 3. The revisions will be edited and integrated into the curriculum.

### 3.3.2. Curriculum Level 3 Planning

In March 2012, the Advancing Youth Teaching and Learning Team, international Technical Assistants, technical specialists from the MoE, staff from NGOs implementing vocational programs, and teachers from selected primary schools teaching Math, Science, Language Arts and Social Studies met for 2 days to review and finalize the frame work for Level 3 curriculum. Suggestions and inputs from the group were gathered and will be analyzed and incorporated into the development of an academic and vocational tracks framework.

The group also explored various models for implementing a 2 track approach (academic and vocational trends). Several options were proposed, for example, after 8-10 months of general studies in Math, Science, Language Arts and Social Studies, learners in level 3 choose which path to pursue, either academic or business development or vocational studies. The amount of instructional contact time was also discussed. There was a general consensus in the group that the number of instructional contact hours per day which is currently 3.5 for Levels 1 & 2 be increased to about 5 hours per day and learners attend classes at least 4-5 times a week. This would be necessary for material required in Level 3 to be covered within the year. The various models will be carefully analyzed and the most feasible, realistic and sustainable approach will be selected and discussed further with the MoE and USAID.

### Curriculum integration in Level 3

It is proposed that the modules and topics in the curriculum are integrated and cross cutting so that each topic is reinforced in the other content. For example, number line is taught in numeracy and also taught in Life Skills for goal setting. HIV/AIDs, pollution and other environmental issues, etc, are also addressed in both Science and Social Studies. In Literacy for Work, contextually relevant stories, such as starting a small business, that stimulate critical thinking and discussion are used to help learners understand the basic concepts of World of Work and Livelihoods.

### 3.3.3. Material Production

The following materials were produced and printed this quarter:

Title	Quantity
Literacy for Work, Level 2 Semester 1, Facilitator’s Manual *	150
Literacy for Work, Level 2 Semester 1, Learner’s Workbook *	1700
Writer’s Dictionary	1700
Numeracy, Level 2, Semester 1, Facilitator’s Manual	150
Numeracy, Level 2, Semester 1, Learner’s Workbook	1700
Life Skills, Level 2, Semester 1, Facilitator’s Manual	150
Life Skills, Level 2, Semester 1, Learner’s Workbook	1700

Literacy for Work includes Modules A and B; Module C is still being modified as per the results of the TWG and feedback from learners and facilitators. Once finalized, these materials will be printed for piloting.

Discussions were held with USAID and the MoE about other organizations using materials produced under the project to teach other groups of learners. A draft agreement has been forwarded to the MoE for approval.

## **4. Result 2: Increased access to relevant basic education and skills training for out-of-school and overage youth**

During the period, Advancing Youth continued to plan and carry out the enrollment of learners and the establishment of both Level 1 and Level 2 classes.



Advancing Youth Community Outreach and Mobilization Activity

### **4.1. Sub result 2.1. Strategies for recruiting and retaining youth, especially young women, are planned and implemented**

Advancing Youth continued with the both the preparatory courses that had been started in December 2011 and with the enrollment of new learners for classes beginning in March 2012. In February a recruitment campaign across all four counties was conducted. Advancing Youth staff and MoE counterparts held community meetings to raise awareness and recruit learners at the 49 sites where preparatory courses were being conducted.

Following the enrollment, placement tests were administered to both old and new learners with the following results: 1149 qualified for Level 1 while 991 qualified for Level 2. Thus a total of 2140 learners were recruited during the campaign. Of the Level 2 learners, 294 were new learners and 697 (70%) were previous CESLY students. For Level 1 there were 470 new learners and 679 were from CESLY. At the beginning of the next quarter there will be a second round of placement testing for both previous CESLY learners and new learners who were not able to attend the original testing times.

As with CESLY, the breakdown is approximately 70% female, 30% male. See Annex 4 for details of enrollment by school, district, county and gender.

Following this initial round of placement tests, a second round of recruitment activities will follow for sites where there are either a shortfall in the number of learners targeted for recruitment or additional space in the classes. Additional recruitment will take place in April 2012.

#### **4.1.1. School Lighting Improved**

ABE classes are all taking place in the evening as learners are engaged in economic activity during the day. Therefore classrooms must be adequately lit for students to learn. Classrooms were previously lit with the Taa Bora lights in 2010 under the CESLY Project. These lights were made in-country and could therefore potentially provide both a lighting source as well as livelihood opportunities. However the results of this lighting system were not encouraging. There was a high rate of component failure and the lights produced insufficient light to adequately light the classroom.

In order to assess other options, research was carried out on various options. Three different solar solutions will be piloted during this first year. The Barefoot 5Watts and 10Watts and Liberty 2 units have been procured and were delivered in February. DLight also provided a selection of S1, S10 and S250 units for trial, free of charge.

The Barefoot and Liberty 2 solar solutions were installed between March 9 and 26, 2012. During the installation, all of the communities signed a MoU. The MoU obligates the community to maintain and secure the lights provided by the project. However there has already been one theft of light bulbs at the Logan Town school.

Two schools in Lofa, Gbanway and Telemu, had previously received a larger solar system from IRC. However the solar units have been ineffective for at least 18 months and IRC is no longer working with these schools. Rather than installing a supplementary system, Advancing Youth coordinated with IRC to get details of the existing system and obtain a go-head to repair it. Following an assessment of the system, repairs will be carried out in April.

Initial feedback from learners is that the all the different lights are far better than the Taa Bora and provide sufficient light to study under. Advancing Youth will monitor the situation to ensure that the lights are working correctly, and to determine which lighting solution is most appropriate to order for new classes starting in August 2012.

See Annex 5 for details of the solar installation.

Manuals to help with the formation of Advancing Youth Clubs have been developed. These manuals lay out the steps required to establish a club, for instance electing officers. The Youth Development and Livelihoods Coordinators in the four counties have been trained in the use of these materials. Other relevant tools developed to aid in the establishment of youth clubs are: Activity Tracking and Attendance Form, Clubs By-Laws and Constitution, and Youth Profile Forms. Youth clubs will subsequently be formed in quarter three. See Annex 6 for the Youth Development and Livelihoods Coordinator manual.

#### **4.1.2. Strengthening youth networking**

Following the youth summit held in Monrovia in December, two youth summits were held in Voinjama and Gbarnga in January 2012. Participants at the Gbarnga summit came from Bong and Nimba Counties while the Voinjama summit had learners from Lofa County. A total of 45 learners (29 females and 16 males) attended the summits. During the summits, youth provided feedback about possible causes of drop-out. They also suggested strategies for future recruitment and retention. The main reason for youth dropping out of the classes was listed as the inadequate lighting system which did not provide sufficient light to the classrooms. Learners advanced the idea of youth clubs for the purpose of peer support and other retention and recruitment initiatives to be youth driven.

Feedback concerning the structuring of the curriculum gathered from the summits was presented at the Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting for the crafting of Level Two Modules. Also presented during TWG meetings were suggestions of how facilitators can help in recruitment and retention. The Teaching and Learning Team incorporated feedback into the training of teachers.

Various meetings and activities were held to establish youth networking linkages. In order to both establish possible youth development opportunities and investigate youth livelihood opportunities the Youth Development and the Livelihoods Teams visited the Green Center in Monrovia at Nancy B Doe Market. In the same vein, we met with the Liberian Children Schooling Project, a local NGO carrying out educational and agricultural activities in Bong County to discuss possible collaboration.

In order to ensure the smooth operation of the field teams, a series of meetings and discussions were held with World ORT and the Youth Development and Livelihoods Teams. This resulted in the synchronization of the roles and responsibilities of the LRC Field Coordinators who will now be referred to as Youth Development and Livelihoods Coordinators.

### **4.2. Sub-result 2.2. ABE facilitators (both government and non-government) have the capacity to effectively teach all levels of the ABE curriculum.**

#### **4.2.1. Training of Trainers**

During this reporting quarter, Advancing Youth conducted a series of trainings aimed at building the capacity and strengthening the pedagogical skills of master trainers, administrators and facilitators to effectively teach the ABE curriculum.

The Training of Trainers workshop was held for 20 master trainers in level 2 curriculum in Kakata between January 11 and 14. Following this workshop, the master trainers conducted further training of facilitators and school administrators: 260 ABE Level 1 & 2 facilitators and administrators across the four counties attended 8 days of intensive training from January 19–29, 2012, and 8 Central MoE staff and 8 local - district, county MoE staff provided support during the teacher training. This training introduced teachers to the Advancing Youth curriculum content and teaching methods for both Level 1 and Level 2. Participants included both new facilitators recruited from each site, as well as facilitators who had taught the Level 1 course last year. This mix of experiences and knowledge helped enrich the training. Participants did micro-teachings in selected lessons from each content area, and then critiqued each other.

Following this initial training, additional training for Level 2 teachers and principals was conducted in February and March, each for 2 days. The trainings are carefully planned and timed so as not to interfere with teachers’ regular contact and instructional time with students. The trainings conducted in January and February focused on Level 2 facilitation and methodology while the one held in March focused on the mastery of topics and challenging core content areas.

The following chart summarizes the trainings conducted during this quarter:

Date	Participants	Topic	Location(s)
January 11-14, 2012	20 Master Trainers	Training of Trainers	Kakata
January 19-29	149 Facilitators, 44 Administrators	ABE curriculum content and methodology	Kakata, Zorzor, Voinjama, Sanniquellie, Gbarnga
February 16 - 18	63 Facilitators, 32 Administrators; 18 Master Trainers	Introduction to Level 2	Kakata, Foya, Karnplay, Gbarnga
March 16 - 17	23 Facilitators, 9 Administrators, 4 Master Trainers	Level 2 curriculum content and methods	Kakata, Gbarnga

Facilitators provided feedback on the trainings and found the following topics and activities helpful:

- Overview of the ABE curriculum and its components and learning steps
- Introduction to Literacy, especially the components of reading
- Scavenger hunt, familiarizing with contents of the manuals, workbooks, appendixes, etc
- Use of Facilitation skills and Participatory Methodologies and not teaching and lecturing.
- Integration of more micro-teaching and peer feedback sessions in the training
- Effective use adult based classroom management skills
- Use of critical thinking skills – using opened ended questions
- Preparation and use of teaching aids
- Instructing learners to work directly in the workbook
- Self assessment used as pre and post tests
- Teachers planning in school teams
- Creative Service Learning Activity
- Teachers trained in all content areas as opposed to specializing in some

Participants recommended the following actions:

- Increase the number of master trainers for each county to reduce their current workload. This model is being assessed with more regular training at a cluster level planned.
- Identify pedagogically strong and potential master trainers, train and sign a MoU committing them to the project and stipulating their pay and duties. This must be approved by the Ministry of Education.
- Work with MoE to identify, select and train staff for the future ownership and implementation of the ABE Program.

- Prepare an integrated assessment document or book that tracks attendance, lesson tracking, performance tracking – assessment recording, for schools in order to cut down on sending different forms in the field that may confuse teachers.
- Training should continue to focus on mastery of challenging topics and contents.
- Hire a very dynamic and skillful mobile teacher that moves from school to school sharing ideas on best practices and providing on the spot peer to peer support to fellow teachers.

#### **4.2.2. Coordination with Rural Teacher Training Institutes**

The Advancing Youth Project is collaborating with the Rural Teacher Training Institutes (RTTIs) to set up ABE demonstration sites at Zorzor (ZRTTI) and Kakata (KRTTI). The rationale is that teachers who graduate from the RTTIs will be skilled and trained to teach both regular aged school children and older youth. Against this background, 2 teachers from KRTTI Demonstration School participated in trainings conducted by the Advancing Youth Project in January, February and March held in Kakata. The Administrators of the Demonstration School and KRTTI held a meeting with the Advancing Youth Project and both parties agreed on the following next steps:

- Advancing Youth staff will work closely with KRTTI to mobilize learners and explain the aims and objectives of the ABE Program.
- KRTTI will provide a space/room in which the lessons will be conducted.
- The 2 teachers that attended the Advancing Youth training will serve as facilitators for the program.
- Advancing Youth Project will provide facilitator’s manuals and workbooks for teachers and learners.

Learner recruitment for Level 1 classes will begin in April followed by placement testing and start of classes.

#### **4.2.3. Audio, video and SMS support**

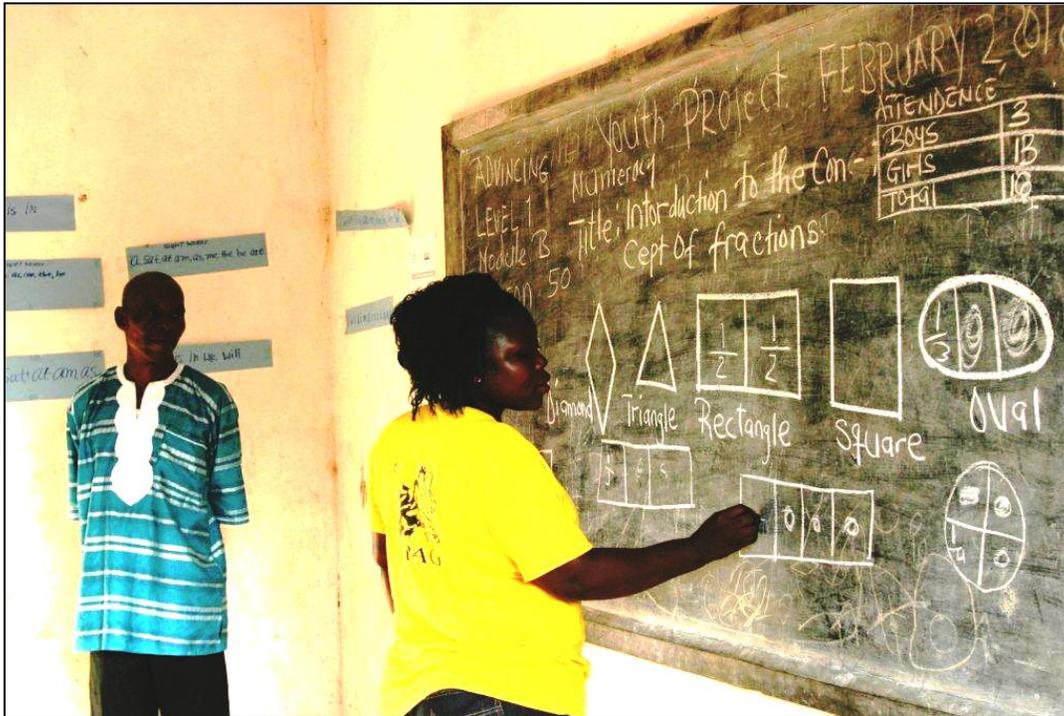
During the first quarter of 2012, the Communication and Technology Team has focused on strategies for using appropriate technologies to expand and advance the goals of the project through using audio and video devices, e-library, and SMS Messaging.

In order to support teachers in a variety of ways, the use of mobile telephones will be piloted. It is planned that SMS messages will be used for announcements, motivational messages, as source of data for project reporting such as enrollment figures and confirmation of teacher attendance or progress through the curriculum.

Mobile Phone Support messages detailing issues around specific lessons, as well as general teaching tips, can be made available via mobile telephone.

During this quarter, an internal pilot of Frontline SMS software was carried out. A meeting with LoneStar GSM was conducted to assess two possibilities: to provide the projects with short codes for the SMS and to consider receiving texts via a reverse –charge number. The first option was implemented and Advancing Youth received 2 short codes 3381 and 3382 for SMS trial. In March 2012, Frontline SMS was

piloted with 32 staff numbers: 25 received and replied through the short code which denotes its workability. The remaining staff received the message but did not reply.



Learner participation in Euphemia Barclay Advancing Youth class

An initial mapping was carried out to determine which Level 1 lessons would require audio support. There will be one 15 minute audio program developed for each literacy lesson, and 30-36 audio programs each for the numeracy, life skills and work readiness topic areas. Next quarter, we will draft a detailed curriculum map, train scriptwriters and producers, and begin production of audio support materials.

#### **4.3. Sub-result 2.3. ABE students improve literacy, numeracy, work readiness, health and life skills**

During this quarter, ABE learners completed a preparatory course that had started in December. This preparatory course gave learners the opportunity to study and reacquaint themselves with Level 1 materials, and allowed classes that had not finished the Level 1 course the opportunity to complete it. At the end of the preparatory course period, both old and new learners were given a placement test to determine whether or not they were ready to progress to level 2. As indicated above, it was noted not all learners who attended the Prep Course sat for the placement test. This is likely due to a combination of scheduling conflicts and fear of testing. Once classes are underway, we will conduct a second round of placement testing in April for those who were not able to take the test in March. This will help ensure that learners are in the appropriate level.

In order to increase the availability of books in the schools, books donated by the Brothers Brother Foundation (BBF) were distributed to all schools prior to the start of lessons.

## **5. Result 3: Increased access to sustainable livelihood pathways for targeted youth**

### **5.1. Sub result 3.1. National and county-level public-private alliances for youth education and employment are established to provide increased work-based learning, skills training and entrepreneurship opportunities for targeted youth**

#### **5.1.1. Labor Market Mapping Exercise**

In January 2012 Advancing Youth conducted a Labor Market Mapping Exercise (Mapping Exercise) in the four counties where Advancing Youth is working and in the county of Grand Bassa, where Advancing Youth potentially plans to work. The mapping exercise provided preliminary data on promising sectors for youth employment and enterprise opportunities in the five counties (from a district perspective); identifying hiring trends and skills that employers are looking for; and identifying barriers to youth employment in the formal and informal economy. The findings were also used to help develop the Advancing Youth Livelihoods Strategy and serve as a precursor to a more in-depth Labor Market Assessment (LMA) scheduled for quarter three. (See Annex 7 for a report of the Labor Market Mapping Exercise and Annex 8 for a 2-page summary of the Mapping Exercise)

TA for the Mapping Exercise was provided by Ale Bonifaz, International Technical Advisor, Mike Tetelman, Principal International Technical Advisor, from EDC and Tara Noronha, Youth Advisor for Economic and Market Development and Rebecca Wolfe, Senior Youth and Peace-building Advisor from Mercy Corps. The staff participated in the mapping exercise debrief and worked with the Advancing Youth team to develop the livelihoods strategy, taking into account youth development and conflict perspectives. The team participated in the design workshop on January 19 and 20 and also worked to harmonize Advancing Youth with Mercy Corp's Chevron-funded PROSPECTS project and the World ORT Open Society Foundation-funded LTEP project. Additionally, initial preparations and planning for the upcoming Labor Market Assessment was initiated after the design workshop.

In preparation for the upcoming Labor Market Assessment (LMA), a draft methodology and scope elaborating on the assessment process was prepared in coordination with World ORT and shared for comments with USAID. The comments have been considered and will be used to fine tune the methodology. The draft will also be shared with other relevant organizations including MoE, MoYS and UNICEF. Based on the findings of the mapping exercise and in consultation with field teams, two value chains in each of the 5 counties have been selected. These will be analyzed in depth during the LMA to identify promising employment opportunities for out of school youth.

The process of preparing draft data collection tools for the LMA was initiated during the quarter. Specific draft tools under development include a business survey questionnaire, youth focus group discussion guide, key informant guide, private sector toolkit and a range of value chain analysis tools. Further, a draft scope of work for the 40 youth who will participate in data collection has been prepared. The draft tools and criteria for selection of districts to be covered are under discussion pending input from the youth and subsequent inputs from other partners.

### **5.1.2. National and County Alliances**

Advancing Youth has started to hold initial discussions with the relevant line ministries in order to establish the basis for formation of national and county alliances. Livelihoods strategy of the project has been discussed with the MoE and MoYS and other partners working in youth education and livelihoods development. The project is part of the technical coordination committee set up by the MoYS and has been engaged in regular coordination meetings with the MoE with a view to share information and familiarize with other actors supporting youth education, leadership and Livelihoods development.

### **5.1.3. Public-Private Partnerships**

Alongside the LMA, Advancing Youth intends to conduct assessment on Private Sector engagement. A proposed methodology and scope has been prepared and circulated as part of the draft LMA Methodology. The development of a Private Sector Toolkit has been initiated during the quarter and is planned to be completed in the next quarter.

### **5.1.4. Strategic Program Links**

During the quarter the Advancing Youth team held meetings with World ORT's Learning and Training for Employment Program (LTEP). Coordination included a presentation of the Advancing Youth strategy during a LTEP staff training and familiarizing ourselves with LTEP's role in skills training and facilitation for job placements. Further the project team held meetings with 13 other NGO programs to share the project strategy, understand their program interventions in relation to youth livelihoods development and possible areas of collaboration. These included Mercy Corp's Chevron PROSPECTs, CHF International-YES program, ILO Tree program, Action Aid Liberia, ACDI VOCA, Child Fund, and the Rotary Club of Liberia, among others.

Advancing Youth attended the Agricultural Trade fair organized in Gbarnga, Bong County on 29– 31 March 2012. This resulted in meeting and establishing contacts with various key actors in youth livelihoods activities, including NGOs, government officials and the private sector. Some of the key projects of relevance to Advancing Youth identified included CARI's cassava value chain technologies and training, ACDI/VOCA's value chains for rice and vegetables, CARE's Village Savings and Loan projects, FED's farmer extension and information management, Lonestar's market information system 'trade at hand', Cuttington University's farmer training and WFPs Purchase for Progress (P4P) project. Follow up discussions will be held with these actors in the following quarter.

## **5.2. Sub-result 3.2. Selected NGOs have the capacity to deliver livelihood training programs, based on locally assessed labor market needs**

Advancing Youth Livelihood and Youth Development staff held meeting with the Resource Centre for Community Empowerment and Integrated Development (RECEIVE), a local NGO involved in research and training activities. Discussions on possible assessment and engagement of RECEIVE and other organizations to deliver entrepreneurship training using ILO modules will be ongoing in the following quarter.

### 5.3. Sub-result 3.3. Youth (especially women) are linked to relevant and realistic livelihoods skills opportunities

In collaboration with the Teaching and Learning Team, the Livelihoods Team participated in curriculum review for level 2 and provided input in laying a foundation for level 3 curriculums. This will inform a curriculum with clearly defined pathways for ABE learners after graduation to join junior secondary school, pursue skills training or engage in self employment in farming or business entrepreneurship.

## 6. Challenges Faced and Lessons Learned

There were multiple challenges and lessons learned during the period.

**Need for more intensive and sustained facilitator training.** Facilitators' understanding and uptake of basic literacy and numeracy is much slower than initially thought as they struggle to understand basic topics such as place value, verbs, number line, etc. Master Trainers themselves have difficulties with many content areas which makes it difficult to support facilitators. In addition, there is limited time available for training as facilitators cannot be taken from the class for training. Advancing Youth will institute a 3-pronged strategy for facilitator and administrator training:

1. Provide audio support to help facilitators teach difficult topics in Level 1.
2. Conduct a combination of longer trainings (ie. 10 days) and short, just-in-time (2 day) trainings on upcoming topics in the curriculum.
3. Provide more regular, cluster-level training and mentoring from Master Trainers. This strategy will require identifying and training a much larger cadre of Master Trainers.

**Facilitator and learner beliefs and practices about testing present challenges to program implementation.** During placement testing, there was an effort by some facilitators and administrators to give learners the answers. As a result, the staff was forced to institute strict test security measures including numbering tests and ensuring that facilitators were not involved in the testing process. Given that cheating is commonplace, any placement or achievement testing will have to be conducted by Advancing Youth staff with little or no support from facilitators. This will be a significant burden, but one that is necessary to ensure reliable data.

We will also work to change attitudes about testing by including more self-assessment in the curriculum, along with standard content knowledge assessments. We hope that this will encourage facilitators and learners to view testing as a useful means of gathering information to help structure learning, rather than a high-stakes measure of achievement.

**Gender disparities in class sometimes impede learning.** Over 70% of Advancing Youth learners are females – however they are being taught predominately by males. This sometimes makes it difficult for male teachers to facilitate lessons such as female reproduction and other culturally and gender-sensitive topics. There are no easy answers to this challenge. We will encourage female teachers at school sites to apply as ABE facilitators in order to increase the number of female facilitators, but this strategy is limited by the number of female teachers who currently work at the school sites.

**Participation from a variety of stakeholders is vital to ensuring appropriate planning for curriculum as well as program implementation.** For the Level 3 curriculum planning, we invited classroom teachers as well as entrepreneurs and business skills trainers from NGOs. Their participation made for a very rich discussion, and ultimately improved the proposed Level 3 curriculum design. We intend to apply this lesson to the TWG, by inviting some new members to TWG meetings to inject and generate creativity and dynamism in the group. We may need to focus more on teachers and trainers from primary schools and the RTTIs as they are in constant contact with students and learners and could better inform the discussion of the TWG. It is also important that ABE facilitators, master trainers and learners be included in the composition of the TWG so as to enrich and widen the scope and diversity of the inputs.

**In some communities, there is a perception that ABE classes are for older people not youth.** During the recruitment exercise, some field staff noted that the program is associated with “night school” for older people. We will have to continue our public information campaigns targeting youth in order to attract young people.

**Participants’ expectations need to be carefully managed to a realistic level when it comes to the livelihoods component.** Youth focus groups revealed that when participants learn about a livelihoods component as part of the project, their expectations rise and they may automatically expect immediate employment, when in reality the project offers participants a range of skills during a long period of time to improve and enhance their livelihoods; but it is not an immediate and guaranteed job opportunity. This was discussed and carefully taken into account in new rounds of recruitment to avoid creating false expectations among new participants.



Flexibility for learners in Karnplay

**The daily schedules of youth are a key consideration in the successful delivery of program interventions.** Although youth engaged in the program may be out of school, they are usually engaged

in other activities for economic subsistence. As a result, their availability for the various interventions of the project is limited. Thus, the Advancing Youth team is constantly trying to optimize the use of time (contact time) with participants by integrating activities rather than offering multiple separate activities that take more time of participants. The livelihood component is also looking into ways to adjust targeted interventions in each location based on participants' schedules and availability, while also supporting flexible learning environments.

**Institutional issues at the national level can impede progress.** The finalization of staffing for the ABE Division and the lack of a dedicated budget for ABE within the MoE has made progress in Result 1 difficult. Additionally, while the 2011 Education Act devolves responsibility and authority to counties and districts, how decentralization will be institutionalized remains unclear with continued lack of clarity on the part of education staff regarding their new roles and responsibilities.

## 7. Operational Issues

### Lighting Issues

Security of the lights continues to be a concern. Some schools, including Gbarta in Bong County, C. D. B. King in Montserrado, and Gbahn in Nimba Count need to move lights on a regular basis, increasing the rate of 'wear and tear' on the solar product. In order to minimize the threat, metal security boxes are being designed. However this will not address the threat of theft of the bulbs unless they are removed each evening, and hence other security needs to be in place.

Initial feedback indicates that the Barefoot 10W model, which includes a fluorescent tube light, provides the best light. This is the most expensive of the three models being trialed. Lifespan and replacement costs of the tube will also need to be taken into account.

### LRCs

The LRCs were reopened in the previous locations in the County Education Officers in Bong and Nimba, in a private building in Lofa and in the Monrovia City Council building in Monrovia. The LRCs are popular with community members but this can lead to challenges including a demand for more computers and pressure on the slow internet connection.

During the next period, Resource Room and Computer Room interns will be assigned to each LRC in order to manage both rooms, develop ideas for increased usage, and provide training to learners.

### Vehicles

The vehicles were transferred from the CESLY project and some are in need of frequent servicing in order to ensure they are suitable for Liberia's roads. Procurement for vehicles is in process and it is hoped that they will arrive in June.

## 8. Major Forth-coming Activities

During the next quarter, there will be a variety of activities carried out in addition to the regular supervisory, monitoring, coaching and administrative duties.

Main activities include:

- Monrovia main office and Montserrado LRC move to Sinkor location
- Round two of recruitment and placement testing
- Continued formation of youth clubs and initiation of club activities
- SMS piloting and development of audio support materials for Level 1
- Labor Market Assessment data collection and analysis
- County level youth summits
- OLA assessment
- Finalization of system strengthening activities to be undertaken under Result 1.
- NGO Organizational Capacity Assessment and Mapping

## 9. Success Stories

### 9.1. Student Motivation – reasons behind enrollment in Advancing Youth classes

Students have a diverse range of reasons for enrolling in USAID/Advancing Youth Alternative Basic Education (ABE) classes. Out-of-school youth face many challenges in their daily lives and finding the time, energy and motivation necessary to achieve success in ABE classes is difficult. However several learners were able to share their stories with staff from the USAID Africa Bureau who visited schools in Greater Monrovia in February 2012.

#### **Basic Literacy**

A core component in the ABE curriculum is literacy, a vital tool for everyone in a country where over 50% of the youth are recognized as illiterate. One ABE student, Regina, stated that she decided to enroll in ABE classes after she had attended an interview for a job as a security guard. She was not anticipating that there would be a literacy requirement for the position. However during the interview she was asked to write down basic information such as date of birth and number of children. She did not have the skills to do this. She said she was “too shamed”; she fled from the interview and cried. This experience motivated her to enroll in the class. She said that although “some of us are hard-headed” the teachers support all the students and they are all learning a lot.

#### **Basic Numeracy**

Class President of Logan Town ABE class, Edwin, is a supervisor at a bakery in the Duala area of Monrovia. Despite being a supervisor of 25 staff and being responsible for payroll issues, he had very limited numeracy skills. For years he had had a friend arrange the payroll on his behalf but the payroll was frequently short and he had to make up the salaries out of his own pocket. Following enrollment in the ABE class in September 2010, Edwin had learned the basic skills that allowed him to complete his payroll on his own. He also discovered that his friend had not been truthful in completing the books and had been taking cash from him. In addition to his improved numeracy skills, Edwin also stated that through the life skills components of the ABE class, he had improved his interaction with his colleagues at work and also learned how to relate better with his family at home.

#### **Respect**

Another learner, Gladys, reported that she was motivated to join the class because of the respect that an education brought within the community. She had been “cursed by an educated woman” and had decided that she would never be subjected to the ridicule again. She enrolled in the class along with a friend who had a higher level of education and since then she has not looked back. She proudly said that “I can now read the notes sent by the teacher of my daughter who is in first grade”. Gladys also recognizes that her new-found skills will also help her support her daughter’s learning, further increasing the impact of the program.

There are many varied and personal reasons for learners to enroll in ABE classes. However the stories above and many others like them, demonstrate that the skills and self-respect gained from attending and continuing classes provide measureable results for learners, their families and their communities.

## **9.2. Success of an ABE Learner - *I got a job because I attended Alternative Basic Education classes***

Jonathan Guah lives in Gbarpa, approximately 15 kilometers from Sanniquellie City in Nimba county. In August 2010 he enrolled in a Non-Formal Education Program run by USAID's Core Education Skills for Liberia Youth (CESLY).

When Jonathan Guah enrolled in the Non-Formal Education Program he did not know how to read or write. However he was intensively motivated due to his experiences during the height of the civil crisis in Liberia.

Jonathan says, "Brother, during the war in 1996, I had an opportunity to travel to the United States of America but because I couldn't read nor write my own name I was left on the way side." He continued "With this sad experience, I returned to my home town of Gbarpa to engage in farming as a way of survival, something I was doing up to the start of this program."

According to Jonathan, when he entered the class for the first time his fingers trembled when he picked up the pencil. But he was eager to write because of his past experiences and he began to practice his writing and reading skills. "With the help of my administrator, Mr. Samuel Blemie, I got encouraged and never missed session one day. I began to say the ABC, write it and started reading small, small, and then the Sonie's Story came. Oh! My interest grew wild and I read the story over and over. Today, I can read the whole story and explain it to you right now," he concluded with a smile.

This persistence paid off. Jonathan now works with the Accelor Mittal Company as a security guard. He explained "When the company came, they were looking for workers. We all rushed there but they said they wanted people who can read and write. We all stood still but I said I can try. The man gave me the paper and the pen. He told me to write my name. I took the paper and wrote my name. The next day they came and called me to be one of the security guards. That is how I got my job."

"At the job site I write my name, sign and put in the time I came to work and the time I leave." Jonathan recognizes that this is just the first step in his education and that he needs to improve so that he can write reports. Juggling his work and life commitments is still a challenge but he intends to continue with his studies and stated "I want to thank you people for this program."

### 9.3. Improvement in My Home

On February 27, 2012, the Advancing Youth Community Outreach Team visited Karnplay Alternative Basic Education (ABE) site. While on the school campus, the staff met the Hon. Bartoa Bartuah, the District Superintendent for Gbehlai-Geh District. Hon. Bartoa Bartuah was accompanying his wife, Esther, to the school so that she could attend the ABE class.

We asked him why he was escorting his wife to the session. He said, “My wife’s life has changed since she entered this Alternative Basic Education site. She can now write me when she stays home and I travel. I can also write her to do some secret things in our home which never used to be the case. I can even send her text messages on the phone; she will read and reply to me. All of this is because of this program!” he concluded.

He continued, “Her writing and speaking skills are improving and now she can sometimes represent me at events or meetings in my absence. Based on the achievement that my wife has made in such a short period of time, I strongly recommend that this program be extended to other communities, including some of my chiefdoms and clans within Gbehlai-Geh Statutory District.”



The Honorable Bartoa Bartuah, Superintendent for Gbehlai-Geh District, escorting his wife, Esther, to the school so that she could attend classes.

## **10. Annexes**

1. Staff Recruitment Table
2. 2012 M&E Indicators Table
3. Advancing Youth Project Design Workshop
4. Enrollment Figures
5. Solar System Installation Plan
6. Youth Development and Livelihoods Coordinators Manual
7. Labor Market Mapping Exercise Report
8. Mapping Exercise Summary
9. LRC Resource Room Usage Statistics

## Annex 1 Recruitment during Reporting Period

#	NAME	POSITION / TITLE	START DATE
1	Geekor Dumu	Lead Driver	01-Jan-12
2	Isaac McCaulley	Office Assistant / Maintenance	01-Jan-12 (previous intern)
3	Mamakor Davies	Logistics Officer	01-Jan-12 (amendment)
4	Paul Logan	Logistics Assistant	01-Jan-12 (amendment)
5	Flomo Menipele	Admin / Fin. Officer (Lofa LRC)	03-Jan-12
6	Geanjay Roberts	Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist	03-Jan-12
7	Marcus Blamoh	Communication & Technology Team Leader	03-Jan-12
8	Mariestella Onabiyi	Admin / Fin. Officer (Nimba LRC)	03-Jan-12
9	Solomon Kerkula	ICT Specialist	03-Jan-12
10	Winnie Tarnue	Admin / Fin. Officer (Mont. LRC)	03-Jan-12
11	Johnny Foyah	Driver	04-Jan-12
12	Konkun Wleh	Admin / Fin. Officer (Bong LRC)	04-Jan-12
13	Anthoinette T. Wiah	Finance Assistant	11-Jan-12
14	Emmanuel Siafa	County Alliance Coordinator Team Leader (Mont. LRC)	19-Jan-12
15	Eric Mitchell	Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Lofa LRC)	19-Jan-12
16	Nathan Freeman	Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Mont. LRC)	26-Jan-12
17	James Kweh	Admin /Fin. Officer (Bong LRC)	06-Feb-12
18	Vivian Nyankun	Office Assistant (Mont. LRC)	06-Feb-12
19	Anthony Karmanoon	Office Assistant (Bong LRC)	08-Feb-12
20	Mamie Gaye	Office Assistant (Nimba LRC)	08-Feb-12
21	Yassah Tennih	Office Assistant (Lofa LRC)	08-Feb-12
22	Edwinio Hne Bowman	Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (Bong LRC)	27-Mar-12

## Annex 2 M&E Indicators Table

Goal: Improved capacity of government institutions and NGOs to provide quality alternative basic education services and social and				
Indicator Type	Indicator Description	LOP	FY12 Target*	Quarter 2 Jan-Mar 2012
<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: Capacity and Sustainability:</b> MoE and CBOs have the <u>capacity</u> to support and manage alternative basic education programs in Liberia with efficiency, effectiveness, and equity				
<b>Intermediate Result 1:</b> Increased institutional capacity to plan, budget, deliver and measure Alternative Basic Education for youth				
<b>Advancing Youth Custom Indicator</b> (Type: Outcome)	<b>1.1 Increased institutional capacity of collaborating MoE units</b>	<b>80% of units</b>	80% of units	Institutional capacity assessment and criteria to be developed. Baseline (2012) is capacity level based on first assessment.
<b>Advancing Youth Custom Indicator</b> (Type: Outcome)	<b>1.2 Increased organizational capacity of collaborating CBOs/NGOS</b>	<b>80% of units</b>	80% of orgs	Institutional capacity assessment and criteria to be developed. Baseline (2012) is capacity level based on first assessment.
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1 38:</b> Number of laws, policies or guidelines developed or modified to improve primary grade reading programs or increase equitable access (Type: Output)	<b>1.3 Revised and updated ABE policy</b>		1	0
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1-3:</b> Number of administrators and officials successfully trained with USG support (Type: Output)	<b>1.4 Number of administrators and officials successfully trained through Advancing Youth activities</b>	TBD	144	54
<b>IIP 3.2.1-18:</b> Number of Parent Teacher Association or similar "school" governance structures supported (Type: Output)	<b>1.5 Number of school governance structures supported by Advancing Youth</b>	TBD	160	0
<b>Advancing Youth Custom Indicator</b> (Type: Output)	<b>1.6 ABE curriculum for all levels is drafted and/or refined in coordination with MoE</b>	<b>3 (levels 2 and 3, revised 1)</b>	0	0
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1-33:</b> Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provided with USG assistance (Type: Output)	<b>1.7 Number of Advancing Youth TLM developed (or procured) and distributed</b>	TBD	24,350	26,611 (13,100 BBF books; 7483 Level 1 materials; 6028 Level 2 materials)

Indicator Type	Indicator Description	LOP	FY12 Target*	Quarter 2 Jan-Mar 2012
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1-34:</b> Number of standardized learning assessments supported by USG (Type: Output)	<b>1.8 Number of standardized learning assessment tools developed in collaboration with the MoE</b>	3	2	0
<b>F-Indicator IIP</b>	<b>1.8.1 Number of Impact Evaluations conducted</b>		0	0
<b>Intermediate Result 2:</b> Increased access to relevant basic education and life, work, and technical skills training for out-of-school youth				
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1-28:</b> The proportion of students who, by the end of the primary cycle, are able to read and demonstrate understanding as defined by a country curriculum, standards, or national experts (Type: outcome)	<b>2.1 Proportion of Advancing Youth students, who by the end of ABE level 3 (primary school equivalent) are able to read and demonstrate understanding as defined by MoE standards</b>	50%	0	0
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1-27:</b> The proportion of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text (Type: Outcome)	<b>2.2 Proportion of Advancing Youth students, who by the end of two levels are able to read and demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade level text</b>	50% of sampled youth	0	0
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1-14:</b> Number of learners enrolled in primary schools or equivalent non-school based settings with USG support (Type: output)	<b>2.3 Number of youth a) enrolled in and b) completed Advancing Youth ABE program (literacy, numeracy, life skills, work readiness) by level</b>	a) b)	a)4000 (cohorts 1-3) b) 0	a) Total Enrollment, 2140 (F1518, M622); Level 1, 1149 (F931, M218); Level 2, 991 (F587, M404); b 0
<b>EQUIP 3.1-2:</b> Number of youth enrolled in/completing work readiness training (Type: output) <b>and EQUIP 4.1-2:</b> Number of youth enrolled in/completing NFE training (Type: output)				0

Indicator Type	Indicator Description	LOP	FY12 Target*	Quarter 2 Jan-Mar 2012
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1-35:</b> Number of learners receiving reading interventions at the primary level (Type: output)	<b>2.3.1 Number of Advancing Youth learners receiving reading interventions at the primary level (levels 1-3)</b>	Same targets and details as above.		
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1-31:</b> Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who successfully completed in-service training or received intensive coaching or mentoring with USG support (Type: Output)	<b>2.4 Number of Advancing Youth facilitators who successfully completed training</b>	TBD	225	149
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1-36:</b> Number of schools using Information and Communication Technology due to USG support (Type: Output)	<b>2.5 Number of Advancing Youth sites using ICT due to the intervention</b>	200	15	0
<b>Advancing Youth Custom Indicator (Type: Outcome)</b>	<b>2.6 Proportion of youth who score at least 70% on work readiness assessment</b>	50% of sampled youth		Work Readiness Assessment to be developed. Baseline (2011) is 0. Level 2 youth
<b>F-Indicator IIP3.1.1-66:</b> Number of targeted population reached with individual and/or small group HIV prevention interventions that are based on evidence and/or meet minimum standards (Type: direct/output)	<b>2.7 Number of youth reached through ABE's life skills (HIV)curriculum and materials</b>	100% of appropriate level	100% of appropriate level	0
<b>Advancing Youth Custom Indicator (Type: Outcome)</b>	<b>2.8 Proportion of Advancing Youth facilitators reporting improved teaching skills</b>			
<b>F-Indicator IIP 3.2.1-44:</b> Number of teachers in USG supported programs trained in how to support learners psychological well-being (Type: output)	<b>2.8.1 Number of Advancing Youth facilitators trained in how to support learners psychological well-being (Type: output)</b>	Same as number of teachers		
<b>Intermediate Result 3:</b> Increased access to sustainable livelihood pathways for targeted youth				

Indicator Type	Indicator Description	LOP	FY12 Target*	Quarter 2 Jan-Mar 2012
<b>F-Indicator EG 4.6.3-2:</b> Number of people gaining employment or better employment as a result of participation in USG-funded workforce development project (Type: outcome)	<b>3.1 Number of youth gaining employment or better employment PIRS define employment as (self, family-based, formal, informal or combination)</b>	20% of sampled youth		
<b>F-Indicator EG 4.6.3-9:</b> Person hours of training completed in workforce development supported by USG assistance (Type: output)			81 hours per youth	0
	<b>3.2 Number of person hours completed in Advancing Youth workforce development activities</b>			0
<b>F-Indicator EG 4.5.2-7:</b> Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training (Type: output)	<b>3.3 Number of AYP youth who have received short-term agricultural sector productivity training</b>	15% of enrolled students	15% of 4,000	0

## Annex 3 Advancing Youth Project Design Workshop

### Summary of consultations and program design workshop discussions About ABE Curriculum and Facilitator Training

During the 100 day assessment period, Advancing Youth staff conducted a round of consultations with key stakeholders (learners, master trainers, technical working group members) and extracted key lessons and recommendations from the report on field testing Level 1 curriculum materials, the CESLY final project report and the LMEP evaluation of CESLY. Following are the key findings, implications for refining program strategies, and the decision points that were discussed during the program design workshop.

**Small Groups Discussion on ABE Curriculum and Facilitation Training** (Facilitated by Brenda with support from Sebastian)

- Many ABE Facilitators have difficulties in teaching Level 1 core content, such as the following topics and content areas per curriculum strand:
  - Literacy -- phonics and phonemic awareness, decoding and word recognition, writing original sentences
  - Numeracy -- place value, fractions, measurement, geometric shapes
  - Life Skills: reproductive health, gender-based violence, and planning and implementing service learning.
  - Work readiness: team work ; money management; decision-making; goal setting
- There may be too much material to be covered in the limited class time (10.5 hours per week).
- While ABE learners showed progress in reading and math skills during the Level 1 Field Test, their skills levels are low.
- Literacy requirements in some Level 1 Work Readiness and Life Skills lessons are too difficult for learners.
- Youth want and need more feedback about their progress, such as a report card, and recognition of their accomplishments, such as a Certificate of Achievement after successfully completing a Level and passing a test.
- Not all learners are interested in entering formal school. Most are engaged in some kind of income-generating activity and they want to improve their livelihoods prospects.
- Liberia needs a sustainable model of Alternative Basic Education that can be delivered in a variety of ways by multiple partners. NGOs could extend the reach of ABE to more youth, assuming that the MoE provides oversight and supervision.

#### Priorities for Level 1

- Literacy and numeracy are the key priorities
- Basic career guidance and an understanding of market realities, so youth can follow profitable opportunities from day 1
- Very important to change the perceptions of youth about their future - let them know what is possible, both at the program level and beyond
- Communication skills are critical

- Community service should also be encouraged from day 1 so that youth can increase their status in the communities
- Life skills PLUS is important, especially for women. what is going in my life? how do i deal with it? how does being a women affect me in my working life? how can i deal with sexual exploitation? Psychosocial needs are important
- Financial literacy and managing money are important
- youth should understand that education can enhance livelihoods, how they are linked

These findings have informed the refinement of the strategies for ABE curriculum development and professional development and support of ABE facilitators. Overall, there are no changes from the basic strategies outlined in the Program Description. The main strategy considerations that emerged during the 100 period include:

#### *Facilitator development and support*

- Strengthen the content knowledge of ABE Facilitators. Provide training in all content areas, to strengthen skills and knowledge and broaden their teaching options.
- Hold regular small (cluster-based) workshops with Facilitators on specific content and teaching strategies)
- Develop audio and video materials to use during these workshops to model good teaching
- Develop interactive radio programs that supplement instruction in the classroom
- Strengthen the Master Trainers at the county level so they can support cluster-based Facilitator Training
- Train public school administrators and staff from NGOs in life skills and work readiness curricula, to work with MoE literacy and numeracy teachers

#### *ABE program and curriculum development*

- Provide certificates of accomplishment at completion of each level and successful passing of basic literacy and numeracy test (so youth could enter primary school after any level)
- Provide a certificate of work readiness for youth who successfully complete the first two Levels of ABE and pass an assessment
- Provide two options for youth at Level 3 (work-related and academic/6<sup>th</sup> grade equivalency)
- Integrate reading and writing and math skills development more fully into Life Skills and Work Readiness materials
- Develop demonstration sites/learning centers where teaching strategies and materials can be refined and ABE facilitators can participate in best practices in action

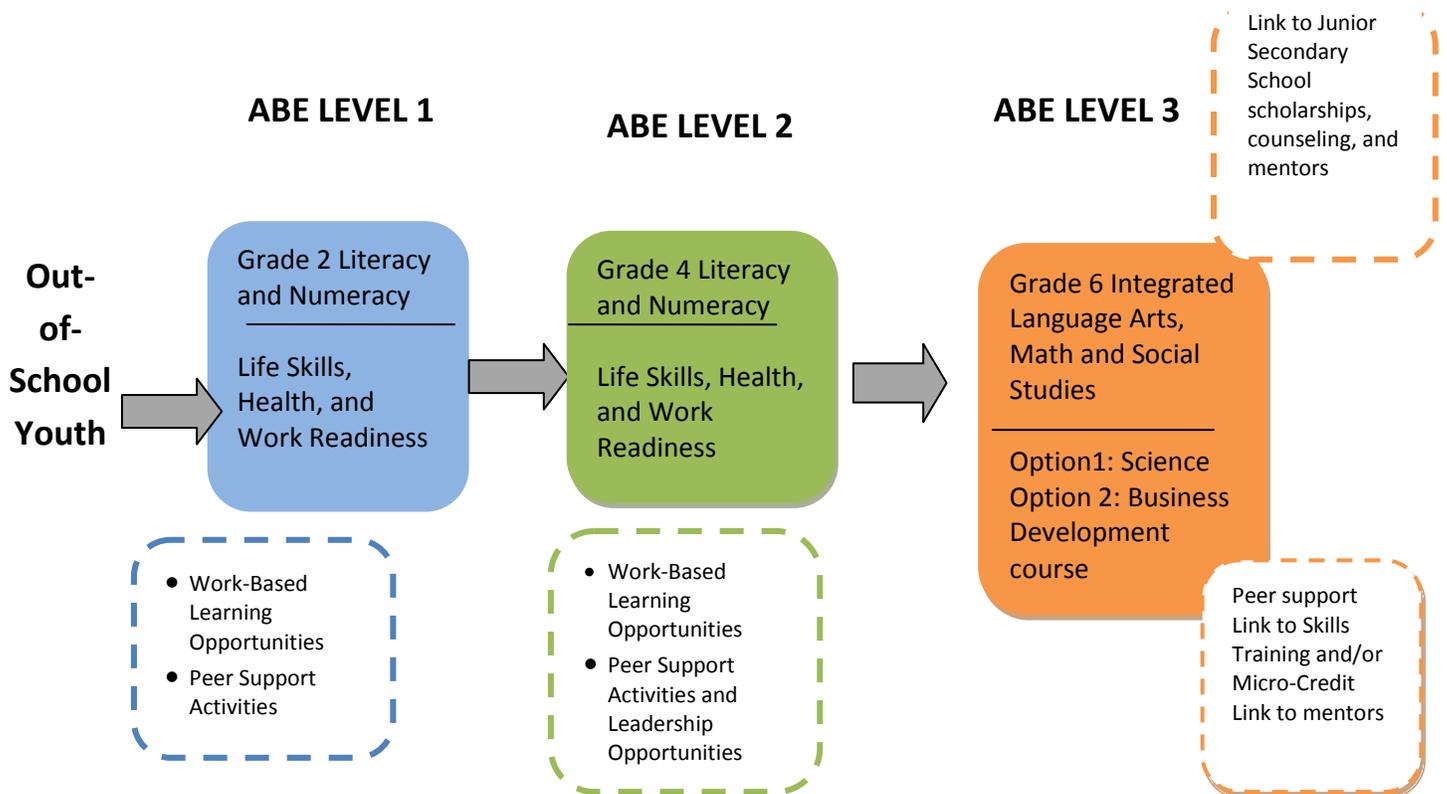
#### *Discussion about Decision Points presented during the design workshop*

**Youth entering ABE Level 3 will have two options:** Academics-oriented path for those hoping to enter JSS; and a work-based learning path for those who do not plan to enter JSS. What is the most effective way to plan and implement?

There was agreement that there should be flexible options for youth, but no consensus on how best to plan and implement for these options. Some of the issues that surfaced during discussions include:

- *Instructional/program time:* If learners are increasingly involved in additional livelihoods activities, and teachers currently feel that they cannot cover the course material within the allotted class time, there will be an issue in Level 3 courses. The instructional time estimated for Level 3 is almost twice that of Levels 1 and 2. Several options were discussed (increase the number of days of class and reduce the hours per class; don't teach every subject during every class meeting; hold Saturday review classes; etc). Suggestion: during first two years, try out two or three different models and document.
- *Content issues:* 1) Youth who are not planning to go to JSS shouldn't have a 'second-class' course; that is, they need to have the opportunity to strengthen reading, writing and math skills to the same level as those going to JSS. 2) More time and resources are needed to develop two different courses. Suggestions: Develop core level 3 course for English language arts and math integrated into life and work issues, with as much social studies and science as possible. Make arrangements for JSS-bound students to take 6<sup>th</sup> grade science course. Make arrangements for serious entrepreneurs to take a business development course.

A revised pathways chart might look like this:



### **Small Groups Discussion on Capacity Building Plan - policies** (Facilitated by Simon with support from Moses)

- review outline and next steps to get to plan
- Milestones
- Longer term sustainability - payment of stipends to teachers
- Certifications
- Will youth receive a certification or diploma after each level? After level 3?
- Will this be an education certificate?
- And who will issue? AYP? MOE?
- Look to see work being done by YES program and TVET association
- Employers may want to see a "work readiness" certificate
- But these should be linked up with the government and other local programs
- Certificates could be a strong incentive for youth to want to graduate through the AYP program

**MoE/ABE will provide certificates of achievement to youth who successfully complete each level.**  
What is the most effective way to plan and implement?

There was general agreement that youth achievements should be recognized at each level, but there was no consensus on how best to plan and implement an ABE assessment and certification system. Some of the issues and options that surfaced during discussions include:

- *What is the measure of success, from the learners' point of view?* "Youth don't want to be told what to do – don't want to be imposed upon – when they decide what they want they will do it." If a learner's goals are met at the end of Level 2 (for example, read, write and calculate well enough to successfully run small family business), then her leaving is not a drop-out but a success. Advancing Youth should have an intake and tracking system that takes into account learners' goals, with periodic checks on progress toward meeting goals. (note: this is built into the curriculum, especially in level 2) Recommendation: collect information about what learners hope to achieve, when they first enter the program. Build awareness within the Bureau of Basic and Secondary Education that the MoE can take credit for multiple successes, not just numbers entering JSS. Adjust Advancing Youth indicator re: numbers of youth entering JSS.
- *Tracking and celebrating progress:* Having consistent documentation of progress and participation that can be shared with others helps with retention. Suggestions include: Issue report cards at the end of each semester. Issue a certificate of achievement at the end of the Level, to those who successfully pass the end of Level assessments; back of certificate would list all the main content covered during the Level. Issue certificates of completion to those who complete the level but don't pass the assessment.
- *Linkages with vocational education and employers:* Is it possible to develop a pathway for ABE Level 3 graduates to enter MoE vocational-technical schools? MoE (and MYS?) would need to assess the curriculum to determine if this is an option that could be pursued. Related to this is the option of developing a certificate of work readiness. See research question #2 below.

### *Learning Agenda/Research Questions for Advancing Youth*

1. What are realistic service delivery models that can be sustained by the Ministry of Education?
2. Is there a demand for certification of learners' work-related skills? Would employers and lending institutions recognize a Certificate of Work Readiness issued by the Ministry of Education?
3. What are the most effective ways to prepare MoE primary school teachers to facilitate learning with older youth/young adults?

### **Small Groups Discussion on Livelihoods** (Facilitated by Ale with support from Rebecca)

#### General Comments on the Strategy

- **Community service component.** Received general support. But it should be youth-driven and it should help reverse the negative perceptions of youth. It should consider packaging the 'cash for work' as 'small grants for community service' or similar to offer money to a group rather than to an individual.
- **Urban and rural sensitive program.** The strategy should be gender and age sensitive, but also urban/rural sensitive. Characteristics and *what works* and what is relevant may vary across urban and rural settings.
- **What does success look like?** For example, if someone completes Levels 1 and 2 and then leaves the program satisfied because he/she has accomplished his/her expectations, do we consider that a success? Or, do we consider that a failure because he/she dropped out before completing Level 3? Ideas mentioned: using certificates that reflect accomplishments at various levels so that whoever leaves after completing Level 1 only has some credential.
- **Importance and challenges of agriculture.** Agriculture should be addressed in the program, but we need to be aware of the challenges (it's labor intensive, risky and fragile). For example, linking the produce to the markets is difficult (bad roads, seasonal cycles so harvest does not last). Agriculture can be successful but we should find ways to address those challenges to have a strong agriculture component.
- **Savings:** The Susu is the simplest and most successful form of capital because it relies on social collateral. It is well established and it follows a clear structure, often with a constitution that states all rules. The Susu mechanism could be enhanced with VLSAs.
- **Need to use a careful selection process for identification of mentors.** While mentorship is a good idea, and youth should identify who can be nominated as a mentor in their community, we need to be careful to avoid selecting a mentor who is a model in the area of business but demonstrates destructive behaviors on other aspects (drinking, use of drugs, recklessness in the community, etc.). Idea: Use a selection process that also accounts for the human side of being a role model (holistic), not only the business side.
- **Negative stereotypes should be addressed in various parts of the strategy:** for example through the information dissemination and county-level alliances as well as through the community service component.

**Question # 1: How can we deliver livelihood interventions considering current youth scheduling realities (work & personal)?**

Some ideas included:

- Adding an extra hour to the 3-hour sessions to each of the three nights. Question: will 4 hours be too long and too late for participants?
- Adding an extra night to the 3 nights to make them 4 nights a week.
- Instead of adding classroom time, integrate livelihood activities into the existing activities that youth are engaged in on a daily basis – as an opportunity to apply the skills they learn in the classroom at nights. And then, when/as needed for targeted trainings, coordinate with the participants of when is the best time.
- Use technology to reinforce what is learned in the classroom and increase the reach. Explore the use of: audio recording, phone messaging service, SMS blast, etc. The challenge would be: technology speed and coverage of that particular technology in remote areas. This needs exploration.

**Question # 2: Peer Groups: In order to reinforce program activities, which model of peer group would you be most effective? Pros & Cons. (youth clubs) (Advancing Youth Project cohorts)**

Two modalities and their advantages and disadvantages were discussed: (1) “youth clubs”, which would be locally existing groups that include youth from the program and outside the program, and (2) “class cohorts”, which would consist of the entire AYP class as one group (cohort).

Comments on “youth clubs”:

- Groups may be homogeneous in terms of age and gender since it would rely on natural groupings that already exist in the community.
- It would allow for an exchange between youth in the program and outside of the program, which can be positive as it can foster a bridge between both groups and could also help pull new participants into the project. However, it could also be negative if youth from outside the program pull AYP youth out of the program.

Comments on “class cohorts”:

- Groups will be less homogenous in terms of age and gender since membership would be dictated by enrollment. Runs the risk of older youth corrupting younger ones. On the other hand, it may help create a supporting network for younger youth to rely on older youth.
- It may be easier to reinforce lessons.
- It may serve as an additional pull into the classrooms (to strengthen retention) through a sense of team built with everyone in the class and a sense of belonging, which would be reinforced by the activities undertaken as a peer group.
- It offers greater ability to influence and reinforce other program activities among participants since every member of the peer group would be in AYP.

**Question # 3: Is this strategy gender-friendly? How can we make it more gender friendly? Is there anything threatening gender-friendliness?**

- The strategy was perceived as gender neutral, without leaning in favor of either males or females.
- Its gender balance will depend on the type of livelihood activities offered; whether they are perceived as more male or female-types of occupations.
- It is important to be clear about the offerings.
- Efforts should be made to involve the partners. Take into account that partners sometimes are affected by 'power issues' – for example, a man may feel threatened (or less powerful) if his female partner learns how to read and write since that means empowerment and independence.
- Should address aspects of security or vulnerability of youth (especially in terms of risks of harassment by teachers and/or peers).

**Small Group Discussion on Livelihoods and Youth Clubs** (Facilitated by Tara with support from Mike)

Youth Clubs: No clear direction on best way to move forward but some good ideas and suggestions.

- Some support for classroom/cohort based youth groups, this could help with livelihoods activities and help retention of students
- Should we organize by gender? Should we mix Advancing Youth Project's youth with in school youth?
- "One size does not fit all" - use different community structures so in communities where there are not strong clubs, we could start them or open them up to other people - to share values and create a spillover effect
- Is it better off to have a peer monitoring network so students can keep track of one another?
- We need to be cognizant that youth may already be involved in youth clubs, susus, etc, and we don't want to burden them with another responsibility.
- Youth may naturally organize themselves into clubs. They may even do so naturally in the classroom.
- We could follow the EPAG model and encourage smaller "teams" of 5 - 7 students.
- The youth clubs- in any form- will likely play an important role during the gap between the academic years. For example, youth can still meet and participate in livelihoods activities, etc, over their break.

**Agriculture as a Business: Youth as Innovation**

- Many youth do not view agriculture work as a viable or "sexy" business, but instead view it as "the work their fathers' did".
- Advancing Youth Project must encourage participation in the agriculture sector as it plays an integral role in Liberia's economy
- Youth need to see agriculture work as a profitable business so they will be encouraged
- We should look for ways to better understand value chains and where youth can fit in
- Good to link up with existing programs such as ORT's Center for Skills' Innovation

- Youth must have a better understanding of what can be locally produced and local demand and then must "think creatively" about how to find a niche in the market (ORT's example: snails)
- Land issues are a concern - must educate youth on these laws/policies
- Youth must increase knowledge of sophisticated farming practices

## Gender

- Are we happy with the 70% female participation rate? (USAID says yes.)
- We should take a family-based approach to recruitment, to attract both men and women AND enable families as a whole to understand the Advancing Youth Project
- We may need female-only youth clubs so that young girls have a safe space to talk about gender dynamic in the workplace - transactional sex as a means of hiring, sexual harassment, sexual abuse - we need to help our women understand how to deal with these issues
- We need to be very careful in finding appropriate livelihoods opportunities for each gender
- Female mentors will be very important
- We need to have a better understanding of the motivations of both men and women for joining Advancing Youth Project and this may help recruitment

Annex 4 Enrollment Figures

Advancing Youth Project

Enrollment as of March 31 2012

County	District	Site	Level-I			Level-II			Total			
			Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	
Bong	Kokoyah	Cammue Donkpoh Public School	9	13	22	2	15	17	11	28	39	
		Gbartá Public School	15	5	20	3	11	14	18	16	34	
		Dolobia Public School-I	22	12	34	12	12	24	34	24	58	
	<b>Kokoyah Total</b>			<b>46</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>131</b>
	Panta-Kpaai	Garmu Public School	21	2	23	13	5	18	34	7	41	
		Dolokelen Paye Elementary School	19	1	20	10	1	11	29	2	31	
		Kpanyah	10	11	21	3	12	15	13	23	36	
		Shankpoway Public School	23	1	24	7	8	15	30	9	39	
		Corporal G. Woah Elementary & Jr. High School	10	5	15	2	6	8	12	11	23	
	<b>Panta-Kpaai Total</b>			<b>83</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>170</b>
	Suakoko	Flomo Wenneh Elementary School	16	6	22	8	6	14	24	12	36	
	<b>Suakoko Total</b>			<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>36</b>
	Fuamah	Lawana Public School	25	2	27	25	14	39	50	16	66	
		Pentecostal Public School	25	3	28	14	10	24	39	13	52	
Dobli Island Community School		26	11	37	10	4	14	36	15	51		
<b>Fuamah Total</b>			<b>76</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>169</b>	
<b>Bong Total</b>			<b>221</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>506</b>	
Montserrado	Right Bank	Arthington Public School	24	2	26	27	4	31	51	6	57	
		Kpallah Elementary School	27	2	29	17	4	21	44	6	50	
	<b>Right Bank Total</b>			<b>51</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>107</b>	
	Careysburg	C. H. Henry Public School	21	1	22	10	3	13	31	4	35	
	<b>Careysburg Total</b>			<b>21</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>35</b>
Greater Monrovia II	Logan Town Central School	23	8	31	18	7	25	41	15	56		

	Point-Four Elementary School		30	2	32	10	0	10	40	2	42	
	C. D. B. King Elementary School		13	0	13	9	1	10	22	1	23	
<b>Greater Monrovia II Total</b>			<b>66</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>121</b>	
Left Bank	Euphemia Barclay Elementary School		12	1	13	14	0	14	26	1	27	
	Harrisburg Public School		9	5	14	12	4	16	21	9	30	
	William G. Kpollah		18	9	27	4	3	7	22	12	34	
<b>Left Bank Total</b>			<b>39</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>91</b>	
Greater Monrovia I	Gaye Town Elementary School		26	0	26	9	2	11	35	2	37	
<b>Greater Monrovia I Total</b>			<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>37</b>	
Todee	Goba Town Elementary School		24	3	27	9	10	19	33	13	46	
<b>Todee Total</b>			<b>24</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>46</b>	
<b>Montserrado Total</b>			<b>227</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>437</b>	
Lofa	Foya	KpaKio Public	46	11	57	23	25	48	69	36	105	
	<b>Foya Total</b>			<b>46</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>105</b>
	Kolahun	Savalahun		22	0	22	38	10	48	60	10	70
		Massabolahun		28	4	32	7	7	14	35	11	46
	<b>Kolahun Total</b>			<b>50</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>116</b>
	Voinjama	Lawalazu		34	3	37	9	10	19	43	13	56
		Luyeama		18	4	22	7	15	22	25	19	44
		Balakpalasu		31	4	35	24	14	38	55	18	73
	<b>Voinjama Total</b>			<b>83</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>173</b>
	Salayea	Sucromu		38	6	44	8	5	13	46	11	57
Gbanway			22	5	27	26	13	39	48	18	66	
Yarpuah			30	4	34	2	4	6	32	8	40	
Telemu			26	6	32	16	21	37	42	27	69	
<b>Salayea Total</b>			<b>116</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>232</b>	
Zorzor	Yeala		17	7	24	16	16	32	33	23	56	
<b>Zorzor Total</b>			<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>56</b>	
<b>Lofa Total</b>			<b>312</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>682</b>	

Nimba	Twah River	Behplay Public School	18	4	22	17	15	32	35	19	54
		Kpairplay Public School	23	7	30	8	13	21	31	20	51
		Garplay Community School	15	5	20	15	7	22	30	12	42
	<b>Twah River Total</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>147</b>
	Saclapea II	Gbannah Boie Public School	7	4	11	16	15	31	23	19	42
	<b>Saclapea II Total</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>42</b>
	Bain-garr	J. W. Pearson Extention	5	1	6	8	3	11	13	4	17
		Tondin Public School	6	1	7	12	13	25	18	14	32
	<b>Bain-garr Total</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>49</b>
	Sanniquellie	Sopea Public School	7	9	16	6	9	15	13	18	31
		Gbarpa Public School	8	4	12	10	19	29	18	23	41
		Gbobayee Public School	30	0	30	12	8	20	42	8	50
	<b>Sanniquellie Total</b>		<b>45</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>122</b>
	Yarpea-Mah	Borsonnor Public School	16	5	21	5	4	9	21	9	30
	<b>Yarpea-Mah Total</b>		<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>30</b>
Gbehlay-Geh	Karn High Extension	17	9	26	38	2	40	55	11	66	
	Kialay Public School	19	10	29	16	14	30	35	24	59	
<b>Gbehlay-Geh Total</b>		<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>125</b>	
<b>Nimba Total</b>		<b>171</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>515</b>	
		<b>Level-I</b>			<b>Level-II</b>			<b>Total</b>			
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>931</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>1149</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>404</b>	<b>991</b>	<b>1518</b>	<b>622</b>	<b>2140</b>	



# Advancing Youth Project



## Annex 5 Solar System Installation Plan – 31 March 2012

County	District	School	Cluster center	Date	Status	Class room	Type	Comment
Montserrado	Left bank # 2	1. C. H. Henry	Euphemia Barclay (cluster I)	03/26/12 AM	Done	2	BF-5w & BF-5w	
Technician  All	Left bank # 2	2. Euphemia Barclay		03/26/12 PM	Done	2	L-2 & BF-5w	
	Left bank # 2	3. Harrisburg		03/25/12 PM	Done	2	BF-10w & BF-5w	
	Greater Monrovia I	1. Gaye Town	C. D. B. King (cluster II)	03/12/12 AM	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
	Greater Monrovia II	2. C. D. B. King		03/9/12 PM	Done	2	BF-5w & L-2	
	Greater Monrovia II	3. Logan Town		03/12/12 PM	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
	Greater Monrovia II	4. Point four		03/12/12 PM	Done	2	L-2, & BF-10w	
	Left Bank # 1	5. William G. Kpollah		03/13/12 AM	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
	Right Bank # 1	1. Kpallah	Kpallah Elem (cluster III)	03/13/12 3-6pm	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
	Right Bank # 2	2. Arthington		03/13/12 PM	Done	2	L-2 & BF-5w	
	Kakata	KRTTI		?	Pending	1	L-2 > ?	Indicated light is at HQ
	Todee	1. Goba Town	Goba Town (cluster IV)	03/27/12 AM	Done	2	BF-5w & BF-5w	
							12L-2, 8BF-5w & 2BF-10w	

TL, please coordinate cluster/ movement plan with the solar installation team. They are to work in at least two communities per day

## Advancing Youth Project (AYP) Solar Distribution Plan

County	District	School	Cluster center	Date	Status	Class room	Type	Comment
Bong	Fuamah	1. Dobli Island	Bong Mines (cluster I)	21/03/'12	Done	2	L-2 & BF-5w	
<b>Technician</b>  <b>Jerry Carter</b>	Fuamah	2. Lawana		21/03/'12	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
	Fuamah	3. Pentecostal		21/03/'12	Pending	2	L-2, L-2 > ?	Lights could not be mounted due to broken switch wires. Indicated lights are at HQ
	Kokoyah	1. Cammue Donkpoh	Dolobia (Cluster II)	20/03/'12	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
	Kokoyah	2. Dolobia Pub.	(Folobia)	20/03/'12	Done	2	BF-5w & L-2	
	Kokoyah	3. Gbarta Pub		19/03/'12	Done	2	BF-5w & L-2	
	Panta-Kpaai	1. Corporal G. Woah	Corporal G. Woah (cluster III)	19/03/'12	Done	2	BF-10w & L-2	
	Panta-Kpaai	2. Garmu Pub		17/03/'12	Done	2	BF-5w & L-2	
	Panta-Kpaai	3. Dolokelen Paye		17/03/'12	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
	Panta-Kpaai	4. Shankpoway		17/03/'12	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
	Suakoko	1. Flomo Wenneh	LRC (cluster IV)	16/03/'12	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
	Zota	2. K. Diabolo		16/03/'12	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
Panta Kpaai	3. Kpanyah		16/03/'12	Done	2	BF-10w & L-2		
						16L-2, 4BF-5w & 2BF-10w		

TL, please coordinate cluster/ movement plan with the solar installation team. They are to work in at least two communities per day

## Advancing Youth Project (AYP) Solar Distribution Plan

County	District	School	Cluster center	Date	Status	Class room	Type	Comment
Lofa	Foya	1. KpaKio Public	Massabolahun (cluster I)	19/03/12 AM	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
Technician David Morris	Kolahun	2.Savalahun		19/03/12 PM	Done	2	L-2 & BF-10w	
	Kolahun	3. Massabolahun		20/03/12 AM	Done	2	BF-5w & BF-10w	
	Salayea	1. Gbanway	ZRTTI (cluster II)	22/03/12 AM	Pending		BF-5w & BF-5w	Assessing existing solar for possible repair. 2 solar units are kept in Lofa for this school as backup. Indicated lights are at LRC
	Salayea	2. Sucromu		23/03/12 PM	Done	2	L-2 & BF-10w	
	Salayea	3. Telemu		24/03/12 AM	Pending	2	BF-5w & L2	Assessing existing solar for possible repair. 2 solar units are kept in Lofa for emergency. Indicated lights are at LRC
	Salayea	4. Yarpuah		23/03/12 AM	Done	2	L-2 & BF-10w	
	Zorzor	5. Yeala		22/03/12 PM	Done	2	L-2 & BF-10w	
	Voinjama	1. Balakpalasu	Voinjama (cluster III)	21/03/12 AM	Done	2	L-2 & BF-5w	
	Voinjama	2. Lawalazu		20/03/12 PM	Done	2	L-2 & BF-10w	
	Voinjama	3. Luyeama		21/03/12 PM	Done	2	L-2, L-2	
	Lofa	ZRTTI		22/03/12 AM	Pending	1	L-2 >	Indicated light is at LRC
							11L-2, 5BF-5w & 6BF-10w	

TL, please coordinate cluster/ movement plan with the solar installation team. They are to work in at least two communities per day



# Advancing Youth Project



## Advancing Youth Project (AYP) Solar Distribution Plan

County	District	School name	Cluster center	Date	Status	Class room	Type	Comment
<b>Nimba</b>	Bain-garr	1. J. W. Pearson	Ganta (cluster I)	3/19/2012	Done	2	BF-5w & L-2	
	Bain-garr	3. Tondin		3/20/2012	Done	1	BF-5w	
<b>Technician</b> <b>Chanco Railey</b>	Saclapea II	4. Gbahn		3/19/2012	Done	2	L-2 & BF-5w	
	Gbehlay-Geh	1. Karnplay	Karnplay (cluster II)	3/24/2012	Done	2	BF-5w & BF-10w	
	Gbehlay-Geh	2. Kialay		3/22/2012	Done	2	L-2 & BF-5w	
	Sanniquellie	1. Gbapa	Sanniquellie (cluster III)	3/21/2012	Done	2	BF-5w & BF-10w	
	Sanniquellie	2. Gbobayee		3/22/2012	Done	2	BF-5w & BF-5W	
	Sanniquellie	3. Sopea		3/21/2012	Done	2	BF-5w & BF-10w	
	Yarpea-Mah	4. Borsonnor		3/20/2012	Done	2	BF-5w & BF-10w	
	Twah River	1. Behplay	Garplay (cluster IV)	3/23/2012	Done	2	L-2 & BF-10w	
	Twah River	2. Garplay		3/23/2012	Done	2	L-2 & BF-5w	
	Twah River	3. Kpairplay		3/24/2012	Done	2	BF-5w & BF-10w	
							5L-2,12BF-5w & 6BF-10w	



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# Youth Development and Livelihoods Coordinator Training Manual



**ADVANCING YOUTH PROJECT**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The goal of the Advancing Youth Project is to enhance the capacity of governmental and nongovernmental institutions to provide increased access to quality alternative basic education services, social and leadership development, and livelihoods for youth and young adults, ages 13-35 who are un-schooled or out of school and have no or marginal literacy and numeracy skills.

In order to achieve this goal, it is vital to involve of youth at every level, including the overall project design and implementation. In addition, youth will provide support to each other to recruit, retain and improve achievement. In line with these concepts, Advancing Youth Clubs will be established in each Advancing Youth Project site.

## **2. YOUTH CLUB FORMATION PROCEDURES**

### **A. Advancing Youth Club ----- What is it?**

Advancing Youth Clubs are organized by and for youth enrolled in Alternative Basic Education (ABE) under the Advancing Youth Project.

### **B. Why do Members Join?**

- Members join the youth club seeking
  - ❖ Peer support
  - ❖ Leadership development
  - ❖ Livelihood opportunities including self employment
  - ❖ Recreation
  - ❖ Peer motivation
  - ❖ Mentoring
- They seek to make living better for themselves, for their friends and for their community.

### **C. How Does it Work?**

Each club will have a mentor whose responsibility will be to guide members to identify realistic goals and activities for positive personal and group development. These goals will be developed in line with Advancing Youth Project objectives.

Every member of the club shares in planning and carrying out all club programs and projects. This way of working together is designed to help members achieve personal growth. In such a setting the members:

- ❖ Establish important friendships - by discussing common interests and sharing important experiences.
- ❖ Develop leadership capacities - by serving on club committees, carrying out club assignments and holding leadership positions.
- ❖ Grow as responsible citizens in the home, school and community - by participating in school and community service projects or celebrating national youth events.

- ❖ Achieve a sense of personal worth - by developing their talents and skills and receiving the commendation of their age mates, friends and community members.

#### **D. What is the Relationship between Advancing Youth Clubs and Other Youth Organizations?**

Advancing Youth Clubs will collaborate with other youth groups and organizations. It is important to the club and to the cooperating mentors that these relationships be clearly understood from the beginning. That is in terms of what each club will expect from the relationship or collaboration. E.g. carries out joint programs/activities or meetings to discuss issues affecting youth.

#### **E. What are the Criteria for Club Membership?**

Advancing Youth Club formation and operation shall be guided by the following criteria:

- The club will be established only in ABE institutions.
- All members will be enrolled in ABE program.
- Each club must have a Club Mentor.
- Each club member shares and participates in the active operation of their club.

#### **Each Club shall:**

1. Develop and adopt their own written by-laws, on the basis of a draft provided by the Advancing Youth Project (see chapter 5).
2. Elect officers on the basis of leadership ability to occupy positions referred to in the bylaws and tenure of office will be in line with the school year. Officers can only be elected two times after which they cannot run for elected office.
3. Hold a formal induction ceremony.
4. Conduct a minimum of two meetings monthly.
5. Encourage high scholarship goals for members and seek to influence the total student body toward higher academic standards and productive livelihoods.

6. Give major attention to program content that has been selected for special emphasis by the club.
7. Conduct good public relations which use all available means to disseminate and promote Advancing Youth goals and activities to community and join forces with other youth groups in support of important issues affecting the community.
8. Organize activities and programs designed to promote Advancing Youth objectives.

### 3. ADVANCING YOUTH CLUB ACTIVITIES

Advancing Youth Clubs will focus on but not be limited to the following activities:

NO	ACTIVITY CATEGORY AND EXAMPLES	SYMBOLS
1	Study Group e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise lessons</li> <li>• Peer tutorial</li> <li>• Study particular lessons together</li> <li>• Visitations</li> </ul> Reading and spelling competitions	
2	Community Service e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town cleaning</li> <li>• Awareness campaigns on key issues</li> <li>• Maintenance of community assets (e.g hand pump, roads)</li> </ul>	
3	Sports & Social Events e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sporting competitions</li> <li>• Event celebration (class, school or community, etc.)</li> </ul>	
4	Employment & Livelihood e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Job placement</li> <li>• Internship</li> <li>• Guest speaker</li> <li>• Exchange activities</li> </ul>	

5	Agriculture/farming e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coo groups</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Guest speaker</li> <li>• Group selling</li> </ul>	
6	Leadership Development e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public speaking</li> <li>• Mentoring</li> <li>• Exchange visits</li> <li>• Life skills development</li> </ul>	
7	<i>Others</i>	

## **4. FACILITATING YOUTH CLUB MEETINGS 1, 2 AND 3**

### **A. First Meeting: Setting up the Club**

*Introduce the material in Section 2 of this manual*

- Explain to learners what the club is.
- Explain to learners why it is important to join.
- Explain to learners how the club will work.
- Explain the relationship of the club to other youth groups or school clubs.
- Explain club criteria to learners.
- Explain categories of club activities to learners using icons, and brainstorm possible activities in each category. E.g during brainstorming exercise learners will split into groups for 2 to 3 minutes and come back to the bigger group to share what was discuss in the smaller groups.

*Review the positions and elections process*

- List the suggested positions to be voted for (see Appendix – Youth Club By-Laws), and explain roles.
- Ask if there are other suggested positions, and vote by raising hands on any additional positions and responsibilities.
- Brainstorm qualities and criteria for candidates of different positions.
- Set date for Elections, when candidates will announce themselves, speak to group and then elections will be held.

### **B. Second Meeting: Election of Club Officers**

Prepare: Small blank pieces of paper as ballots—i.e. Positions (3?) x Number of learners (35?)

- The number ballots must be equal to the number of learners for each position.
- Ask learners who want to run for the different positions to come forward.
- Give each candidate a maximum of two minutes to say why people should vote for him/her
- Write the names and the initials of candidates on the board in alphabetical order, and hand out blank ballots to learners
- Ask all the candidates to leave the hall during elections

- Each learner should write the initials of the person he/she selects on a piece of paper (those unable to write will be helped by YDLs)
- After all have voted for each position, collect the ballots
- Count the ballots for each of the positions.
- Each candidate will have a representative at the table during the counting of the ballots for each position.
- Counting of ballots will be done by the YDLC and facilitators.
- Announce the winners!
- Tell President and officers to collect names for 2 Club Mentors. After this meeting, the Officers should talk to potential Mentors and finalize who will be the Club Mentors by the third meeting.
- During the third meeting, we will discuss our Bylaws during which time we will decide the name of the youth club.

### **C. Training of Advancing Youth Club Officers with Mentors**

- Draft Club by-laws for general review and approval by Members
- How to create an agenda
- How to conduct a meeting
- How to plan and report Club activities

### **D. Third Meeting: Officers Conduct the Meeting**

- Decide the name of club
- Present draft by-laws to Club Members for modification and/or approval
- Decide first activity
- Decide next meeting time

## **Appendix      DRAFT YOUTH CLUB BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I                      OBJECTIVES**

- 1.1 To foster unity and cooperation among young people.
- 1.2 To provide peer support to each other.
- 1.3 To promote community service among young people.
- 1.4 To put ourselves together to help us and our community.

### **ARTICLE II:                  YOUTH CLUB MEMBERS**

Only those we will elect and learners of the Alternative Basic Education (ABE) will be part of the youth club

### **ARTICLE: III OFFICERS OF THE YOUTH CLUB**

1.1 The following officers will run the Youth Club.

1. President
2. Vice President
3. Secretary

#### **1.2 The President:**

The President of the Youth Club shall:

1. Chair meetings.
2. Represent the youth club at Advancing Youth Project meetings.
3. Report on club activities at youth club meetings.

#### **1.3 The Vice President:**

The Vice President of the youth club shall:

1. Take the place of the President if the President is not around.
2. If something happens to the President or the President is removed from office he/she will take over until elections.
3. He/she will work with the President in planning programs.

#### **1.4 The Secretary:**

The Secretary will

1. Keep all records of the club.
2. He/she will take notes during meetings.
3. He/she shall be responsible to write communication for the club.
4. He/she shall perform other task as assigned by the President.

**1.5 Tenure:**

1. New officers of the club will be elected at the end of every school year. Officers of the Advancing Youth Club will be part of the Executive Committee.

**ARTICLE IV: ELECTIONS**

All officers of the club shall be elected by club members at a meeting called for that purpose.

A simple majority of the votes cast in favor of a person shall make that person the winner.

Elections shall be by secret ballot.

**ARTICLE V: REMOVAL FROM OFFICE**

Majority vote of the club members with the knowledge of the Advancing Youth Project Team Leader in the county will remove any officers from office for breaking the club by-laws. Any meeting to move any of the officers from office will be chaired Team Leader or the person he/she will send to represent him/her.

**ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS**

The youth club shall meet \_\_\_\_\_ a month. The President shall call emergency meeting whenever need be.

All the elected officers will meet before the general meeting.

**ARTICLE VII: CHANGE TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Proposed changes to the constitution shall be submitted to the Executive Committee five (5) days before regular club meeting. A two-third vote of members at the meeting shall be required to effect the change.

Signed on this \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ in the year two thousand and twelve AD.  
At the \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ county.

Committee Members:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**REPORTS:**

1. The President will report on activities carried out by the Advancing Youth Club.



This learning material is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development, USAID/Liberia Cooperative Agreement No. AID-669-A-11-00001 to Education Development Center for the Advancing Youth Project. The content and opinions expressed within do not necessarily reflect the view of the United States Government.

USAID ADVANCING YOUTH PROJECT  
REPORT: LABOR MARKET MAPPING EXERCISE

## Background

In January 2012 the Advancing Youth Project (Advancing Youth) conducted a Labor Market Mapping Exercise (Mapping Exercise) in the four counties where Advancing Youth is working (Bong, Lofa, Montserrado, and Nimba) and in the county of Grand Bassa, where Advancing Youth intends to work.<sup>1</sup>

The Mapping Exercise was structured to inform the design process of the Advancing Youth Project and as a precursor to a more in-depth Labor Market Assessment (LMA) that Advancing Youth intends to carry out. As such, the Mapping Exercise was intended to be exploratory, introductory, and a largely qualitative study; it sought to provide preliminary data on promising sectors for youth employment and enterprise opportunities in the five counties (from a district perspective); identify hiring trends and skills that employers are looking for; identify barriers to youth employment in the formal and informal economy; and provide lessons learned from a process standpoint on how best to conduct the LMA. The findings were also used to help inform the development of the Advancing Youth Livelihoods Strategy.

Given the relatively short-time frame for the Mapping Exercise, its focus was primarily on Liberia's formal economy. However, the Mapping Exercise also conducted a very partial overview of the informal economy/small enterprises, with the intention of providing some initial findings for more in-depth exploration by the LMA.<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, the Mapping Exercise sought to build the capacity of Youth Assessors selected by the YMCA to carry out the survey questionnaire work in the five counties. The Mapping Exercise had ten youth assessors, two per county (1 male and 1 female). As detailed below, the Mapping Exercise featured several training and orientation activities to build the capacity of the assessors. This capacity building was carried out to ensure that the Mapping Exercise was implemented successfully as well as because the assessors may serve as resources for the LMA and Advancing Youth as a whole.

The results of the Mapping Exercise were presented at the Advancing Youth Project Design Workshop held in Monrovia on January 19-20, 2012.

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Michael Tetelman and Ms. Alejandra Bonifaz of EDC were the primary implementers of the Mapping Exercise. They worked in close collaboration with Ms. Tara Noronha of Mercy Corps as well as with the staff of Advancing Youth.

<sup>2</sup> Given the intended focus of the Mapping Exercise, it does not include the perspectives of youth in terms of employment and enterprise prospects (this will be more of a focus for the LMA).

## Methodology

The Mapping Exercise entailed two phases of interviews: Phase 1 focused on private sector employers, government agencies and NGOs and Phase 2 focused on the informal economy. During Phase 1 (January 9-11, 2012), a total of 57 respondents were interviewed, including private sector, government entities, and youth-focused NGOs in the five counties where Advancing Youth plans to work. These respondents provided information (via a questionnaire administered through individual interviews) on topics such as what employers are looking for in terms of skills, hiring prospects, the composition of current businesses' staff (e.g. age and gender breakdown), districts with promising livelihood/ employment prospects, challenges faced by youth in terms of employment (based on employers' perspectives), etc. The sample included 23 private sector firms, 23 public sector agencies, and 11 non-governmental organizations.<sup>3</sup>

The questionnaire was developed jointly with the youth assessors, who are from the specific counties covered by the Mapping Exercise, to ensure that the questions were relevant to the local context. The questionnaire featured a mix of structured and open-ended questions with focus on topics such as priority sectors and districts for employment/self-employment opportunities for youth, skills employers consider important for youth, training provided by employers.

While the mapping focused primarily on the formal sector, it also confirmed the importance of the informal sector, which is predominant in the lives of youth in these counties. Thus, a second round of preliminary data collection of small enterprises (27 interviews recorded) was conducted on January 17-18, 2012 in the five counties. During Phase 2, youth assessors used a short questionnaire (also jointly developed) consisting of six basic questions. The findings were not intended to be definitive but more to provide feedback for the LMA in terms of areas of the informal economy that need to be explored in more depth.

Some of the specific features of the methodology include:

- Conducting a two-day Orientation Workshop for the youth assessors that focused on identifying key sectors and stakeholders to interview, as well as such issues as key economic sectors, promising districts relating to youth employment and self-employment, barriers to youth, anticipated challenges to collecting and reporting the data; etc. A list of twelve general questions was sent to the youth assessors prior to the Orientation Workshop in order to start a brainstorming process of labor market characteristics, trends, and opportunities to be discussed during the Orientation Workshop and to serve as baseline information. This workshop also focused on developing the survey questionnaire (where the youth assessors played an important part in formulating the questions); discussing in detail the processes and procedures for collecting and analyzing the data; and providing the assessors with support materials like introductory letters.
- Having the Advancing Youth Team Leads provide close mentoring support as well as serving as focal points for the data collection and reporting.

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<sup>3</sup> During Phase 1, 11 interviews were conducted in Bong, 9 in Grand Bassa, 13 in Lofa, 12 in Montserrado, and 12 in Nimba.

- Developing a detailed Excel-based aggregation tool to compile systematically the data from the questionnaires and which was instrumental in analyzing the findings.
- Conducting a 1.5 day debrief session for the youth assessors that discussed what could have been improved from a process perspective for collecting the data, reviewing the baseline information from the orientation session and validating them based on the findings from the data collection, showing the youth assessors the aggregated preliminary results of the survey and discussing results in more detail and making comparisons across counties, and developing with them a set of questions (for Phase 2) for interviewing stakeholders in the informal economy.

### Key Findings and Lessons Learned

The Mapping Exercise uncovered several interesting lessons learned both in terms of youth employment/self-employment opportunities as well as issues to consider when conducting the LMA. In terms of the youth employment/self-employment opportunities:

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Finding</b>
Employer Hiring Trends	Overall, there is evidence of some emergent employment opportunities in the formal economy. More than half of employers interviewed (large and small) reported planning to hire more than 20 employees in the next 1-2 years.
Promising Sectors	Agriculture, mining, and small enterprises were confirmed as prominent sectors. The LMA will explore in more depth opportunities along value chains pertinent to these sectors.
Priority Occupations and Skills Identified by Employers	All employers interviewed identified at least one occupation for which employees were needed, citing a wide range of occupations across respondents. Some priority occupations identified were in the security industry and as a registrar. The LMA will need to dig deeper to identify positions where little or no literacy is required. The top technical skills mentioned as most important for youth to have were business skills, financial management and agricultural skills. The most important work readiness skills mentioned were punctuality, communication skills, and honesty (sincerity).
Employer-Sponsored Training	The strong majority of interviewed businesses reported offering job skills training, which was described as first-day orientations, job introduction during a probationary period, and very focused skills training (e.g. how to operate machinery / tools), etc.
Perceptions by Employers in Terms of Barriers to Youth Employment and Self-Employment	Based on the perspectives of employers, government agencies, and youth-focused NGOs, the main challenges to youth seeking employment are lack of skills and lack of experience, as well as perceived character attributes such as dishonesty, lack of confidence, and lack of self-esteem.

Some examples of high growth sectors and occupations identified in the Mapping suggested information on district selection that the LMA should explore further:

<b>County</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Sector</b>
Bong	Jorquelleh	Small enterprise, health, education, NGOs
	Kokoyah	Mining
	Fuamah	Mining
	Panta-Kpa	Mining, health, education
	Salala	Agriculture
	Kapaai	Mining
Grand Bassa	Buchanan	Construction, biofuel, logging
	District #1	Mining
	District #2	Agriculture; food production
	District #3	Agriculture
	District #4	Palm oil, agriculture, food production
Lofa	Zorzor	Agriculture, mining, small enterprises, motorcycle transport
	Kolahun	Mining, agriculture
	Voinjama	Agriculture, small enterprises
	Salayea	Logging
	Foya	Agriculture, small enterprises
Montserrado	Greater Monrovia (Districts 1 and 2)	Hotel management; pastry
Nimba	Sanniquelleh-Mahn	Mining, motorcycle transport
	Garr-Bain	Small enterprise, agriculture (vegetable production), sugar cane, transportation
	Gbehlageh	Agriculture
	Zoegeh	Mining
	Wee-Gbehy-Mahn	Agriculture, motorcycle, small enterprise

Discussions with the project’s technical team concluded that these findings had several key implications for the Livelihoods Strategy, namely:

- “One size does not fit all” – Approaches need to be customized and market-driven to particular characteristics of each district. Adjustments need to be made on an ongoing basis.
- Livelihood opportunities will vary among young people because they are a diverse population (in terms of age, literacy level, etc.).

- Livelihood activities should adjust to the daily schedules of youth (work/personal) particularly given the reality that they are already economically active and busy working during part or all of the day.
- There is a strong need for awareness-raising among the private sector towards a more positive perception of youth. Some preliminary ideas include the need to disseminate market information, provide updates to the private sector on how Advancing Youth participants are gaining increasing skills, and conducting awareness raising about the potential and assets of ‘work ready’ youth as part of the workforce and as positive members of society.
- There is need for a systematic public private partnership (PPP) strategy addressing particular strengths and interests of partners and youth realities at local level.
- The program should focus on informal sector opportunities, without ignoring current and emerging opportunities in the formal sector.
- Livelihood opportunities should address the gender composition of AYP participants (which currently is predominantly female)
- Based at least on the results of the Mapping Exercise, Advancing Youth should strengthen the following skills addressed in the Work Readiness and Life Skills curriculum to help youth make clear links to youth livelihood activities outside the class: business skills (financial management); work ethics (honesty, punctuality); and communication skills.
- Advancing Youth should think carefully about how to structure programs that help provide graduates from Level 3 with solid opportunities for employment/self-employment.
- Mentoring, youth clubs and other peer and support networks will be vital both to ensure the success of the livelihood strategy as well as encouraging recruitment and retention.

As mentioned above, the Mapping Exercise did not focus heavily on the informal economy, and the LMA will cover this in depth. However, based on 27 interviews with small enterprises that were undertaken during Phase 2, some preliminary findings can be made, including:

- Susus (savings clubs) and banks play an important role in enabling entrepreneurs to save their assets and grow their business, though many other entrepreneurs interviewed noted they lived on a day-to-day subsistence basis.
- Revenues can be seasonal and affected by weather (e.g. the motorcycle transport business).
- Families pool together proceeds from various businesses to sustain each other.
- Entrepreneurs report that money they would like to invest in their business often instead is used for school fees. High transportation costs also reportedly limit how much profits are made and can be reinvested in the enterprise.

- It is difficult to get customers to pay in full and providing credit to customers can also constrain business growth.
- Saturation of similar types of businesses hurts revenues.
- Many entrepreneurs do not have a clear plan for expanding their business, especially when their revenues are affected by seasonal variation in demand and costs of inputs they need to buy.
- Some entrepreneurs display innovative ways of increasing profits, for example, one entrepreneur expanded his motor bike repairing business by lending money at interest.

In addition to the results identified above, the Mapping Exercise revealed some important process-related information that should be helpful for the LMA and other similar efforts to collect data on the labor market:

- Intensive preparation and execution is required on multiple levels. For example, staff at especially at large well-established companies require extensive advance notice prior to an interview, clearance from headquarters, etc. Advancing Youth will want to contact key decision-makers at the Monrovia HQ and county levels to explain the LMA and ensure that visits are scheduled well in advance.
- MC will want to think closely about the merits of engaging youth assessors in the LMA. Many of the assessors from the Mapping Exercise were quite talented but commitment and capacity varied.<sup>4</sup> It is beneficial to use a youth-led participatory approach, and many of the assessors provided valuable insights during the Orientation and Debrief sessions.
- Advance and extensive planning proved critical for the conduct of this Mapping Exercise. The LMA will need to engage in detailed planning as soon as possible. This includes developing a viable method for receiving data from the different counties given the challenges of email, electricity, and other infrastructure. Logistics like lodging, communications and transport support will also require careful planning for the LMA given the anticipated need to cover a wide range of districts in each county.

### **Suggested Next Steps**

- Development of a short overview to distribute to the interviewees and to the assessors: Several of the interviewees noted that they are asked to do many surveys and do not receive follow-up on how the data is used or for what purpose. It is recommended that a two-page document on the findings of the Mapping Exercise be sent to the interviewees as a courtesy and to ensure that they are receptive to participating in the LMA and other activities with

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<sup>4</sup> One of the youth assessors, who demonstrated considerable talent and initiative, was offered a job at a large multinational company in its Human Resources Department after she conducted the survey interview.

Advancing Youth. The assessors should also receive this overview, both so they can be prepared to speak to its findings if asked as well as affirmation of and recognition for the work they conducted on the activity.

- Data from the Mapping Exercise should be provided as soon as possible to the designers of the LMA.

## Labor Market Mapping Exercise January 2012

### Background

The Advancing Youth Project (Advancing Youth) is a five-year project sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the U.S.-based non-profit organization Education Development Center (EDC) in partnership with YMCA of Liberia and Mercy Corps. Advancing Youth provides increased access to high-quality alternative basic education services, social and leadership development, and livelihoods opportunities for Liberian out-of-school youth aged 13-35 who have marginal or no literacy and numeracy skills.

As an introductory activity, Advancing Youth carried out a Labor Market Mapping Exercise to gather preliminary employment and workforce data in five counties where the project is working: Lofa, Nimba, Montserrado, Grand Bassa and Bong. Implemented over two weeks in January 2012, the Mapping Exercise sought to find out initial information such as opportunities and constraints for employing youth; economic sectors offering the best prospects for employing youth; and the types of skills Liberian youth need to successfully obtain and maintain employment or start and manage their own businesses.

Advancing Youth will use the findings of the Mapping Exercise to carry out a more comprehensive Labor Market Assessment (LMA) in the next few months. As such, the Mapping Exercise also was meant to identify, from a process perspective, the challenges of carrying out a detailed market survey and ways to ensure that the LMA can surmount those challenges.

Finally, the Mapping Exercise sought to build the capacity of youth assessors selected by the YMCA of Liberia to develop professional skills and experience, including learning how to interface with public and private sector representatives and to gather and analyze data. Ten youth assessors conducted the interviews; each county team had two youth assessors, one male and one female.

### Scope and Methodology

Several parameters factored into the methodology:

- Given timing restrictions, the Mapping Exercise focused largely on gathering data from employers in the formal economy, as well as from public officials and representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs). These interviews constituted Phase 1 of the data collection. For Phase 2, youth assessors gathered basic data on the informal economy/small enterprises in their respective counties. This information provides an initial snapshot on the informal economy and sectors, including agriculture, that will need to be more thoroughly explored in the LMA.
- As the Mapping Exercise was an introductory exploration into the Liberian labor markets, there was not sufficient time to gather perceptions from youth on employment / self-employment opportunities. The LMA will be exploring youth perceptions in detail.
- In Phase 1, 57 respondents were interviewed in the five counties. A detailed survey questionnaire, designed with the youth assessors, consisting of structured and open questions was used. The sample included 23 interviews from the private sector, 23 public sector agencies, and 11 non-governmental organizations\*. In Phase 2, 27 small enterprises were interviewed and recorded, where the assessors used a short, open-ended questionnaire, also designed by them, and based on the preliminary results collected during Phase 1.



Joyce, 26, maps out promising sectors and potential employers in Nimba County.

\* Interviews included 11 interviews from Bong; 9 from Grand Bassa; 13 from Lofa; 12 from Montserrado; and 12 from Nimba.

## Key Findings and Lessons Learned

**Employer Hiring Trends:** More than half of employers interviewed (large and small) reported planning to hire more than 20 employees in the next 1-2 years.

**Promising Sectors:** Agriculture, mining, and small enterprises were confirmed as prominent sectors. The LMA will explore in more depth opportunities along value chains pertinent to these sectors.

**Priority Occupations and Skills Identified by Employers:** All employers interviewed identified at least one occupation for which employees were needed, citing a wide range of occupations across respondents. Some priority occupations identified were in the security industry and as a registrar. The LMA will need to dig deeper to identify positions where little or no literacy is required. The top technical skills mentioned as most important for youth to have were business skills, financial management and agricultural skills. The most important work readiness skills mentioned were punctuality, communication skills, and honesty (sincerity).

**Employer-Sponsored Training:** The strong majority of interviewed businesses reported offering job skills training, which was described as first-day orientations, job introduction during a probationary period, and focused skills training (e.g. how to operate machinery / tools).

**Perceptions by Employers in Terms of Barriers to Youth Employment and Self-Employment:** Based on the perspectives of employers, government agencies, and youth-focused NGOs, the main challenges to youth seeking employment are lack of skills and lack of experience, as well as perceived character attributes such as dishonesty, lack of confidence, and lack of self-esteem.

**Initial Findings Related to the Informal Economy:** The predominant number of small enterprise owners interviewed reported using savings clubs (susus) as well as other modes of savings like banks. Further, the small enterprise owners noted in the interviews that their business growth was constrained because customers often did not pay and that their revenues were seasonal and variable.

The Mapping Exercise also revealed some process-related information that should be helpful for the LMA and for other similar efforts to collect data on the labor market. These include the need for (a) flexibility in time and operations to account for logistical challenges (transportation, communication, etc.) and (b) extensive preparation to be able to secure appointments with well-established companies that often require notification to the headquarters long before confirming a meeting.



## Take-Away Messages

These key findings help reveal several “take-away messages” that may help inform this and other youth livelihood initiatives in these areas. Some of those messages include:

- While the informal economy dominates the labor market, there are signs of an emerging formal sector that may open new opportunities for youth.
- There is need for youth and others around them to actively show the potential of youth and demonstrate ways in which youth play a positive role in society.
- Youth with greater chances of succeeding in this labor market environment will need a good combination of skills that balance both technical and hard skills (literacy, numeracy, business, agriculture-related, and other skills.) as well as work readiness skills (work ethics, communications, etc.).

### For more information, contact:

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**Annex 9      Statistics of LRC Resource Room Users**

**Computer Room**

	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Student</b>	789	89	878
<b>Teacher</b>	2	0	2
<b>Others</b>	29	0	29
<b>TOTAL</b>	820	89	<b>909</b>

**Library**

	<b>MALE</b>	<b>FEMALE</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Student</b>	502	107	609
<b>Teacher</b>	1	0	1
<b>Others</b>	12	0	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	515	107	<b>622</b>