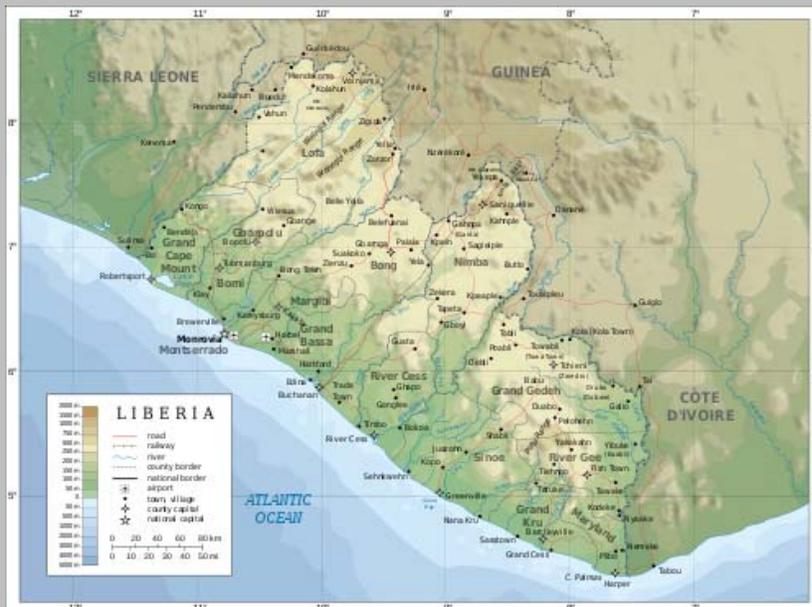




LIBERIA MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROGRAM (L-MEP)

CONTRACT NO. 669-C-10-00-00181-00

YEAR TWO ANNUAL REPORT
(OCTOBER 1, 2011 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2012)



**Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program (L-MEP)
Year Two Annual Report
October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012**



**L-MEP M&E Specialists Conducting a DQA
for the Advancing Youth Project**

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADS	Automated Directives System
AEDE	Agency for Economic Development and Empowerment
AIRD	Associates for International Resources and Development
AOR	Agreement Officer Representative
CDCS	Country Development Cooperative Strategy
CNDRA	Center for National Deeds Registration and Archives
COR	Contracting Officer Representative
DEN-L	Development Education Network of Liberia
DO	Development Objective
DQA	Data Quality Assessment
EMMP	Environmental Management and Monitoring Plan
FtF	Feed the Future
GIS	Geographic Information System
GIS-S	Geographic Information System Specialist
GOAL	Girls' Opportunity to Access Learning Project
GoL	Government of Liberia
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IP	Implementing Partner
ITS	Information Technology Specialist
KM	Knowledge Management
KMS	Knowledge Management Specialist
L-MEP	Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program
L-PIS	Land Policy and Institutional Support Project
LTPC	Liberia Trade Policy and Customs Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MPEA	Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs
MEP	Monitoring and Evaluation Program

M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
NARDA	National Alliance of Rural Development Associations
OM	Operations Manager
PIDS	Performance Information Database System
PIRS	Performance Indicator Reference Sheet
PMP	Performance Management Plan
PO	Program Office
PPR	Program Performance Report
RCE	Request for Categorical Exclusion
SOW	Scope of Work
TBD	To Be Determined
TMG/HQ	The Mitchell Group, Inc. Headquarters
UL-PIRE	University of Liberia Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WMS	Web Mapping System

Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program (L-MEP)
Annual Report
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mitchell Group, Inc. (TMG) is pleased to submit to USAID/Liberia our Year Two Annual Report for the Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program (L-MEP), covering the period from October 1, 2011 to September 30, 2012. On August 27, 2010, TMG entered into a contractual agreement with USAID/Liberia (Contract #669-C-10-00-00181-00) for the Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Project (L-MEP) in order to provide comprehensive monitoring and evaluation support services to the USAID/Liberia Sector Teams, their Implementing Partners (IPs), and the Government of Liberia (GOL). On April 19, 2012, the Contract was formally modified to include the monitoring and evaluation of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Threshold Program consisting of three projects: the Girls' Opportunity to Access Learning (GOAL) Project (November 2010 to September 2013); the Land Policy and Institutional Support (LPIS) Project (September 2010 to March 2013); and the Liberia Trade Policy and Customs (LTPC) Project (June 2011 to August, 2013).

The overall objective of L-MEP is to assist USAID/Liberia in developing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and performance measurement system to document the Mission's performance in achieving its development objectives and intermediate results, in compliance with the Automated Directives System (ADS) and other Agency guidance on performance management. L-MEP complements but does not replace Implementing Partner (IP) reporting and performance management responsibilities. The overall objective of the MCC contract modification is to determine whether the three MCC Threshold Programs are achieving their stated goals and are helping Liberia qualify for status as a MCC Compact country.

During Year Two, L-MEP continued to establish close and confident working relationships with all USAID IPs. They have continued to express appreciation for our support. Our three Managing for Results (MfR) Trainings were highly successful and over-subscribed and IPs have requested follow-up trainings during the third year. TMG Associate, Jerry Harrison-Burns conducted the modified version of the MfR Training that included USAID's new Project Design guidance. His training was primarily targeted to USAID Mission staff. L-MEP M&E Specialists subsequently delivered the MfR course in Gbarnga and Voinjama. L-MEP also held the Evaluation Programming and Management Workshop (EPM) which received very positive feedback from participants. TMG Associate, John Wooten, served as the co-trainer for this course with COP Randal Joy Thompson in the role as lead trainer, while TMG Program Specialist, Bernice Yalley, served as Workshop Facilitator. L-MEP will replicate the EPM course in the field during Year Three.

L-MEP also conducted sixteen project DQAs during Year Two. IPs have continued to seek our help in completing and updating their Performance Management Plans (PMPs) throughout the second year of the project and we will continue to provide this support during Year Three. Following the approval of the Mission Country Development Coordination Strategy (CDCS), IPs will necessarily have to revise their PMPs and L-MEP will assist them in doing so.

Both our Performance Indicator Data Base System (PIDS) and our GIS/Web Mapping System (WMS) are fully operational and integrated. L-MEP staff have worked closely with both IPs and USAID staff to assure that data is entered so that USAID will be able to use the PIDS to prepare their Program Performance Report (PPR) due in December. The L-MEP GIS Specialist has produced over forty maps for IPs and continually receives requests for more. The L-MEP website is up and running and we will continue to make the site a source of important documents and information. We conducted one evaluation during Year Two, in the democracy and governance sector, of the Civil Society and Media Leadership Program (CSML), implemented by IREX.

Our Gbarnga field office has been actively engaging field IPs, has participated in the Bong County Sector Coordination meetings, has participated in DQAs, has mentored IP field staff in M&E, and has hosted the MfR Training. We anticipate that the field office will become even more active during Year Three and will also serve as regional resource center.

During Year Two, we built partnerships with the Agency for Economic Development and Empowerment (AEDE) and the University of Liberia Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (UL-PIRE) which conducted surveys for the MCC Threshold programs. AEDE conducted a customer satisfaction survey to determine the effectiveness of the new customer service center for land deeds registration at the Center for National Deeds Registration and Archives (CNDRA). UL-PIRE conducted two surveys, one on public and business perceptions of land administration and one on the role of the Probate Court in land deeds registration. All three of these surveys were conducted to support the MCC Land Policy and Institutional Support (LPIS) Project. Two Liberian consultants were hired to assist L-MEP conduct a study for the MCC Girls' Opportunity to Access Learning (GOAL) project. In addition, the Associates for International Resources and Development (AIRD), a TMG sub-contractor, fielded two consultants to conduct a trade revenue study to assist the Government of Liberia (GoL) decide whether to join ECOWAS's Trade Liberalization Scheme (ELTS).

Two activities were removed from our Year Two work plan with the agreement of Dr. Laura Arntson, L-MEP COR: the Roster of Liberian Consultants and L-MEP's responsibility to help IPs develop their Environmental Management and Monitoring Plans. In addition, L-MEP's Field Monitoring responsibilities were replaced with Performance Management Field Support, to indicate that L-MEP's field support would be limited to issues related to data management, data quality, and other responsibilities strictly related to monitoring and evaluation. The L-MEP contract was modified accordingly.

I. Progress

L-MEP's Results Framework is comprised of seven results. Progress made toward the accomplishment of these results during Year Two is listed below:

1.1 Component One: Performance Monitoring and Results Reporting

▪ Result 1: Mission Overall M&E System Supported

Action 1.1: Provide recommendations to Mission to strengthen Mission M&E system

L-MEP made significant strides during Year Two in making PIDS fully functional so that the Mission can use the system to generate data for the PPR due in December. L-MEP made two PIDS presentations to USAID'S Mission Management team, Program office, and representatives from the Mission's four technical offices. One of the presentations took place in July during TMG/HQ's home office visit to Liberia for L-MEP's annual monitoring and self-evaluation exercise.

Out of these meetings came a strong resolve to make USAID's IPs more responsible in entering and reporting data. Part of the mechanism to do this involves the Mission, particularly the COR/AORs who manage the projects. The PIDS will certainly become a more practical and efficient system if not only participatory usage is high, but the managing COR/AORs examine the data during the certification process, and communicate more with their respective IPs on M&E issues.

Action 1.2: Conduct Data Quality Assessments (DQAs) on current project portfolio and make recommendations to improve data collection and quality

Beginning with the capacity building workshop in conducting DQAs, L-MEP has developed a standardized DQA format, and DQAs on numerous IPs have been successfully carried out. The DQA process is lengthy and involves a considerable amount of technical and logistical resources. The M&E Specialists have to travel to the field after performing the preliminary analyses at the IPs' central offices. What the experience has provided is the opportunity to closely examine the M&E systems of each IP and their respective sub-partners, and has provided clear roadmaps to refining the systems, which is central to L-MEP's contract.

The schedule for the completion of the first round of DQAs planned during Year One of the project and executed during the first quarter of Year Two of the project is presented in Table 1. After completion of the DQAs, L-MEP M&E Specialists followed-up with IPs to assist them in implementing the recommendations of the DQAs. The second chart includes the schedule for DQAs to be conducted on projects that were too new in Year One to conduct DQAs, as well as projects that changed or added indicators. Some of these DQAs will be completed during the first quarter of Year Three

Table 1: DQAs Planned in Year One and Completed During Year Two Prior to the Submission of the Mission PPR Report in December 2011

Project	IP	Sector	Desk Review	Internal Presentation	Meeting with IPs' HQ Staff	Field Visit/ Meeting with Sub-Partners	Location (Field Visit)
HANDS	OICI	EG	Oct 17-19, 2011	Oct 20, 2011	Oct 21, 2011	Oct 24-26, 2011	Grand Gedeh
LGSM	World Learning	HEALTH	Oct 18 -21, 2011	Oct 25, 2011	Oct 26, 2011	Oct 26-29, 2011	Bong and Margibi
MCC Land	ARD	MCC	Oct 25-28, 2011	Oct 31, 2011	Nov 1, 2011	Nov 2-5, 2011	Montserrado & Bassa
EHELD	RTI	EDU	Oct 25-28, 2011	Oct 28, 2011	Oct 31, 2011	Nov 1-5, 2011	Bong & G. Bassa
LESSP	Winrock	EG	Nov 7-10, 2011	Nov 11, 2011	Nov 14, 2011	Nov 15-30, 2011	Bong & Nimba
SHOPS	Winrock/ ACDI-VOCA	EG	Nov 7-10, 2011	Nov 11, 2011	Nov 15, 2011	Nov 16-30, 2011	TBD
SMDL	NDI	DG	Nov 7-10, 2011	Nov 11, 2011	Nov 14, 2011	Nov 15-18, 2011	TBD
HRCL	ABA	DG	Nov 7-10, 2011	Nov 11, 2011	Nov 22-23, 2011	No field visit	

Table 2: DQAs to be conducted prior to the Submission of the Mission PPR in December 2012

Project	IP	Sector	Desk Review	Internal Presentation	Meeting with IPs' HQ Staff	Field Visit/Meeting with Sub-Partners	Location (Field Visit)
Phase I: DQAs Scheduled For July – September							
AYP	EDC	EDU	Sep 10 – 14, 2012	Sep 20, 2012	Sep 21, 2012	Sep 24 – 28, 2012	Lofa & Bassa
EHELD	RTI	EDU	Oct 8 – 12, 2012	Oct 17, 2012	Oct 18, 2012	Oct 22 – 26, 2012	Bong & Montserrado
CEHLS	HED	EDU	Nov 1 – 5, 2012	Nov 11, 2012	Nov 12, 2012	Nov 22 – 26, 2012	Montserrado
LMWP	Tetra Tech	Health	Done	Sep 17, 2012	Sep 17, 2012	Sep 18-22, 2012	TBD
LGSM	World Learning	Health	Done	Sep 3, 2012	Sep 3, 2012	Sep 4-8, 2012	Bong and Margibi
GEMS	IBI	DG	Done	Oct 23, 2012	Oct 24-26	N/A	Monrovia
LCRP	Tetra Tech	DG	Done	Nov 12, 2012	Nov 13	Nov 14-16	TBD
BSEML	IFES	DG	Done	Oct 9, 2012	Oct 10-12, 2012	N/A	Monrovia
FED	DAI	EG	Aug 13- 20, 2012	Aug 22, 2012	Aug 22-23, 2012	Aug 26-31, 2012	Nimba and Bong

Action 1.3: Organize Forum to share DQA best practices by sector

Action 1.4: Organize Forum to share DQA best practices across all sectors

On February 29, 2012, L-MEP held a combination COP, M&E Specialists, and COR/AOR Meeting at the Mamba Point Hotel in Monrovia to present DQA best practices across all sectors. L-MEP decided that this meeting adequately covered best practices, thus eliminating the need for a sector-specific meeting. Best practices presented included ensuring that all field staff had seen and understood the project PMP so that they would know the context within which they were collecting data; understood and shared a common understanding of the indicators for which they were collecting data; had well-organized field data management systems; had designated M&E staff rather than employing other staff who had not been trained to collect data; and had paper data bases that were easily used for inputting data into the PIDS.

Action 1.5: Provide data for semi-annual portfolio reviews

L-MEP was actively involved in supporting the Mission's completion of its semi-annual portfolio review during Year Two. Because IPs had not yet fully populated the PIDS at the time of the portfolio review, L-MEP M&E Specialists worked closely with IPs to construct excel spread sheets of the required data to be included in the review. The Mission expressed its appreciation for the support L-MEP provided.

Action 1.6: Collate IP data for the USAID/Liberia Development Outreach and Communications Specialist

L-MEP provided the USAID Development Outreach and Communications (DOC) Specialist with several maps that could be used in reports and stories. The L-MEP Knowledge Management Specialist (KMS) also collaborated with the DOC in conducting a one-day Success Story Workshop. Sixty USAID, IP, and L-MEP staff attended the workshop during which the DOC explained step-by-step how to write a good success story. Most IPs are required to submit success stories to USAID and hence the workshop was considered critical to their performance.

▪ **Result 2: Information Management Supported**

Action 2.1: Design and develop L-MEP website

The L-MEP website has been launched and can be seen at www.liberiamep.com. We have been continually updating the website with reports and other resources that IPs in Liberia may find useful.

Action 2.3: Develop Performance Information Database (PIDS)

During Year Two, L-MEP initiated the development of a data upload routine, wherein IPs can use an Excel format compatible with their internal M&E systems to populate the PIDS. There are two advantages to doing this rather than using the traditional PIDS entry mode of interacting with the system online: (1) Liberia's slow internet services sometimes render it difficult to interact with the PIDS online, and (2) projects that have a considerable number of geographic specific activities can efficiently group the data sets for the reporting cycles using their internal systems, then uploading to the PIDS in a short burst of internet activity.

In order to make the data upload routine work efficiently, L-MEP brought in Niyi Fajemidupe, of Hennice, Inc., the software developer of the PIDS. Mr. Fajemidupe worked with the KMS, M&E staff, GIS Specialist, and the Information Technology Specialist (ITS). In addition to smoothing out the glitches of the upload routine, several other minor problematic areas of the PIDS were fixed.

The sector M&E Specialists continue with their normal routine by providing vigorous training sessions on the PIDS with their respective IPs. Currently, all IPs' accounts are opened and are populated with the required information ranging from Results Framework, indicators, baseline values, targets and actual data. The goal is to have the PIDS 100% populated by Thanksgiving 2012.

To complement what the respective M&E Specialists have been doing with their sector projects, Mr. Fajemidupe held several meetings with the L-MEP M&E Specialists to discuss issues and remedies. Mr. Fajemidupe was also able to train more than ten IPs representing the USAID/Liberia focus sectors: Democracy and Governance, Education, Economic Growth, and Health, on framework management, indicators setup, data entry and reporting. The IPs were also trained on how to use the functionalities in the PIDS to easily accomplish these tasks and were advised to work with the M&E Specialists to complete their data entry as soon as possible. The IPs expressed tremendous satisfaction after the training.

In addition to working with L-MEP staff and working with IPs in a teaching/laboratory setting, Mr. Fajemidupe met with Dr. Laura Arntson, to discuss technical issues involving USAID indicators, and in particular, how L-MEP would handle the new indicators slated to appear defined in the Mission' CDCS. Mr. Fajemidupe also met with USAID's IT Specialist, Kelvin Beah to resolve problematic areas of the PIDS-USAID interphase. Mr. Beah subsequently communicated to the USAID/Washington IT specialists to tune the firewall to permit emails sent to COR/AORs advising of critical dates and actions to be taken with regard to the PIDS. A number of USAID staffers were not receiving these emails.

L-MEP is working closely with USAID to engender a real M&E "culture" among its many partners. The USAID Program Office is taking a more decisive role in enabling a more dynamic loop that links IPs with USAID's COR/AORs through the PIDS, at the same time making the system of great utility as a unified M&E framework.

Action 2.4: Develop GIS-based Web-Mapping System

The development of the GIS-based Web-Mapping System has been completed and the system is functional since end of the 3rd Quarter of 2012. Improvements involving the "tools" and "widget" were perfected by Stone Environmental, Inc which can be accessed through the "GIS" tab of the PIDS and permits users to visualize the presence of all USAID/Liberia programs by county (Level 1: National division), and the actuals of all performance indicators reported in the PIDS. In other words, the user can see data representations at a number of different geographical levels—site (town, village, community, school, and health facility), district (Level 2: National division), and county (Level 1: National division). These data can also be represented as graphs through a pop-up window feature, and can be compared across time (e.g., quarter, semi-annual, annual periods). In addition, the system also permits a user to conduct certain types of analyses which is possible to download into conventional database systems, such as Excel some socio-

demographic data that is normally difficult to obtain in Liberia. Users do not necessarily need to have prior GIS knowledge or experience. Figure 1 is an example what appears on a computer screen when the WMS is accessed from the PIDS through the GIS tab.



Figure 1 Example of what appears on a computer screen when the WMS is accessed from the PIDS through the GIS

GIS Assistance to IPs

L-MEP continued to provide extensive assistance to USAID’s implementing partners. These include but are not limited to map production, provision of geographic based data, and other technical assistance relating to GIS. The following are additional services provided:

- In response to a request made by USAID/Liberia (through its Engineer Officer in the EG Sector), more than 15 maps focused on roads in thirteen districts of four counties were generated (Figure 2 shows a sample of one district). The maps are being used to help formulate the RFP USAID is developing for the upcoming infrastructure-focused RISE Project. These maps were also shared with the Governance and Economic Management Support (GEMS) Project as it is focused on fortifying various GoL ministries, including the Ministry of Public Works.
- The USAID/Liberia Feed the Future Coordinator (FtF) requested of L-MEP six maps, displaying the presence of all USAID programs in USAID’s six operational counties in order to facilitate decision making concerning resources and coordination of projects for the FtF program. As a newcomer to USAID, the FtF Coordinator was unaware of the PIDS and the WMS, but indicated that FtF will rely heavily on L-MEP for future map generation. Figure 3 is an example of one of the six county maps showing locations of USAID/Liberia projects.

- Abt Associates Inc., the contractor implementing the Indoor Residual Spraying (IRS) program, received five maps showing the districts where the programs are being implemented in four counties. Figure 4 shows a sample of one county.

As part of the special studies L-MEP is doing on the three MCC projects, four maps representing data from the MCC-GOAL project were generated. Specifically, the thematic maps show changes in net enrollment of the MCC-GOAL Project using weighted factoring based on total number of students, and not simply percentage change in enrollment by school (which, because of the variability of school size, would skew the interpretation of results). Figure 5 is example of the MCC-GOAL schools in Bong County, showing a color ramp of the five percentage change in enrollment categories.

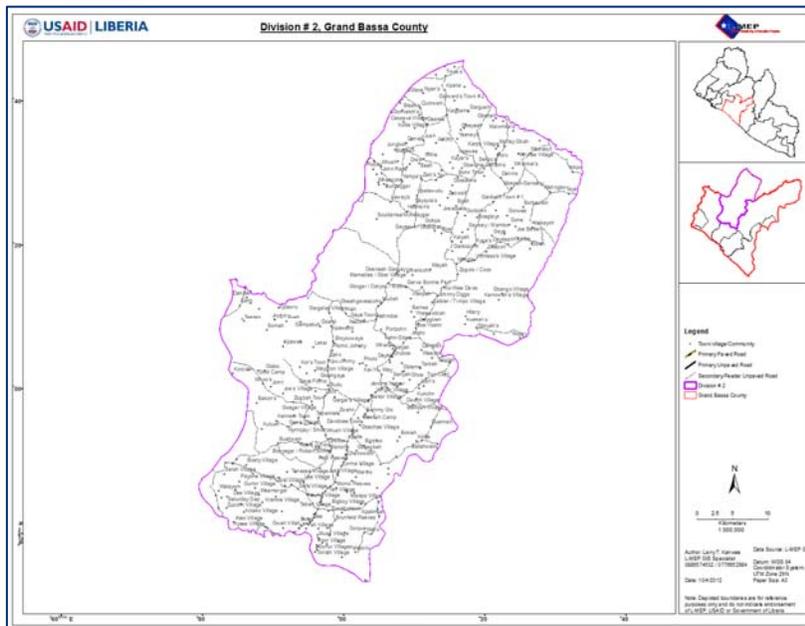


Figure 2 Map illustrating roads in Grand Bassa County

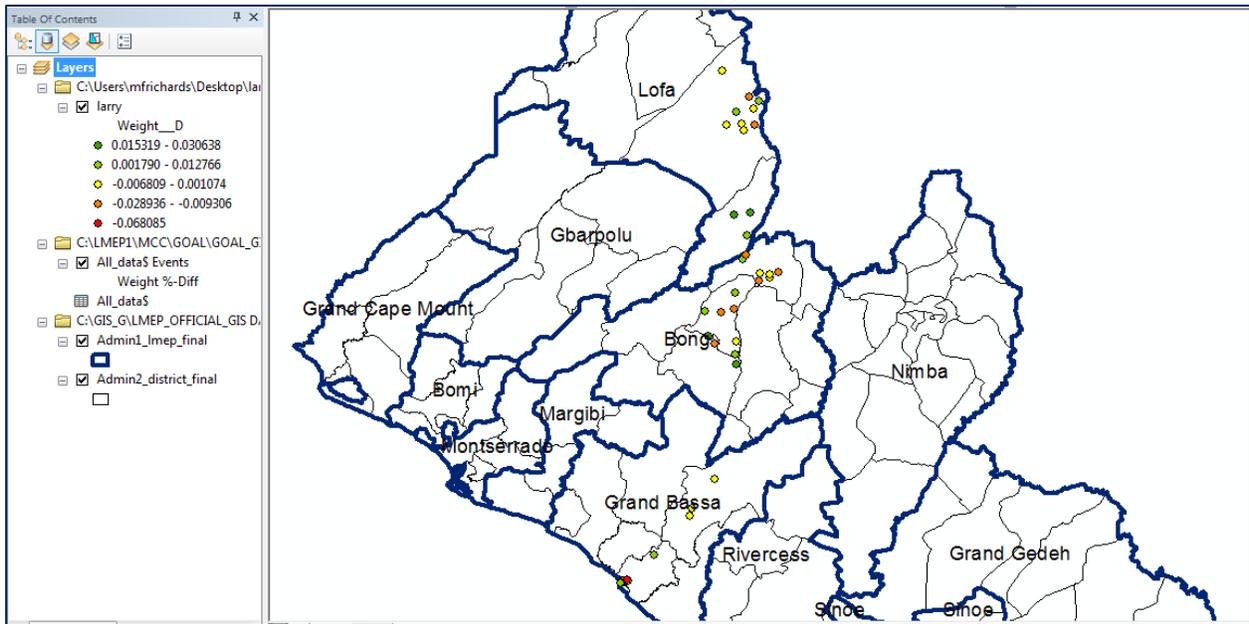


Figure 5 Map showing GOAL target schools in Bong County

Table 3 is a list of datasets that are currently in the L-MEP Web-Mapping Service known as the USAID/Liberia Program Mapper. These datasets allow the L-MEP GIS Specialist to generate maps. They are Based Layers grouped into four categories based on USAID’s four focus program sectors: Democracy and Governance, Economic Growth, Education, and Health. Another dataset, Project by Sector, whose data are not included in the list but are also in the system, are comprised of the USAID activities locations. They do not show actual locations of activities on the ground but activities presence in counties.

Table 3: Datasets Name and Sources

No.	Name	Data Source
BASE Map Layer		
1	Clans	HIC, World Bank, DHS, L-MEP
2	Counties*	HIC, World Bank, DHS, L-MEP
3	County Capitols	HIC, World Bank, DHS, L-MEP
4	Districts*	HIC, World Bank, DHS, L-MEP
5	Hydrography	HIC, World Bank, DHS, L-MEP
6	International Boundaries	World Bank
7	Localities*	LISGIS
8	Liberia Mask	HIC, World Bank, DHS, L-MEP
9	Monrovia	HIC, World Bank, DHS, L-MEP
10	Neighboring Countries	World Bank
11	Ocean Background	World Bank
12	Populated Places	HIC, LISGIS
13	Population	LISGIS
14	Regions	DHS
15	West African Places	LMLME
Democracy and Governance		
16	Government Offices	L-MEP, Sibley International
17	Carter Center Sites	The Carter Center
Economic Growth		
18	Feeder and Developing Corridors	MLME
19	Future Economic Corridors	MLME
20	Mineral Exploration License	MLME
21	Markets	MLME, HIC
22	Main Economic Corridors	MLME
23	Mineral Occurrences	MLME
24	Mining Corridor Buffers	MLME
25	Mining Corridors	MLME
26	Crops	MLME, HIC

No.	Name	Data Source
27	Land Cover	MLME, HIC, World Bank
28	Mineral Land Licenses	MLME
29	National Forest	MLME, HIC
30	National Park	MLME, HIC
31	Airport	MLME
32	Cell Towers	L-MEP
33	Railroad	MLME, HIC
34	Roads (50k)	MLME, HIC
35	West African Roads	MLME, HIC
36	Sea Port	MLME, HIC
Education		
37	All Schools*	LISGIS, MOE, LTTP & AYP
38	Higher Education*	L-MEP
Health		
39	Health Facilities*	MOH & RBHS
<p>Note: * These data are currently being entered into the PIDS as the existing ones were insufficient, some were incorrectly spelled, and with no geocodes. All the data used were verified/cross-checked from the sources above and other sources including World Gazetteer, UNMIL (United Nation Mission in Liberia) GIS, UN OCHA, UN Cartographic Section, and data collected from L-MEP field visits – DQA and Field Monitoring visits.</p> <p>Abbreviations: MLME: Ministry of Lands, Mines, & Energy HIC: Humanitarian Information Center MOE: Ministry of Education LISGIS: Liberia Institution of Statistics & Geo-Information Services AYP: Advancing Youth Program RBHS: Rebuilding Basic Health Services DHS: Demographic and Health Surveys LTTP: Liberia Teacher Training Program</p>		

Action 2.5: Integrate Management Information System (MIS) and GIS

The Web Mapping System (WMS) is linked to the Performance Indicator Database System (PIDS), and as in that case, only authorized users can access the mapping feature through an established account. Access to the WMS is through a tab on the PIDS taskbar. Again, similar to PIDS, WMS incorporates a hierarchical turnkey access protocol, and users at the level of a specific project will only be able to have access and manipulate information at that project level. Sector chiefs of USAID, for example, will be able to access and manipulate the WMS across all projects in the corresponding sector. Maps that are finalized and certified for wider access can be displayed for viewing and for carrying out limited querying by the wider array of users of authorized PIDS users.

1.2 Component Two: Performance Management Plan (PMP) Development and Update

- **Result 3: Mission and IP PMPs Updated and Coordinated**

Action 3.1: Review IP Performance Management Plans (PMPs) and issue recommendations

Action 3.3: Assist IPs to develop new PMPs

During Year Two, L-MEP staff reviewed the PMPs of six projects, and made recommendations to the IPs regarding indicator selection and PMP format. The projects included: the Land Conflict Resolution Program (LCRP); Building Sustainable Elections Management in Liberia (BSEML); Sustainable Market Initiatives (SMI); the Food and Enterprise Development (FED) program; the Liberia Energy Support Program (LESSP); and the PROSPER project. Additionally, L-MEP provided technical assistance to the GEMS program and the Advancing Youth Program (AYP) in remodelling their indicators.

Action 3.2: Assist the Mission in developing new PMPs for Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS)

Because the Mission CDCS was not approved during Year Two, L-MEP did not accomplish this action. As soon as the CDCS is approved, if requested, L-MEP will work with the Mission to facilitate the development of a new PMP.

1.3 Component Three: Performance Management Field Support (formerly Field Monitoring and Data Collection)

- **Result 4: Field Data Management Activities Supported**

During Year Two, L-MEP initiated its Field Monitoring Strategy and provided support to a number of projects. During Quarter Three, this component was changed to Performance Management Field Support and L-MEP's role was redefined to provide support to projects related to data management and data quality and other strictly M&E functions. All Field Support is to be provided only based upon the requests of USAID/Liberia's CORs/AORs, not of IPs.

L-MEP staff provided performance management field support to four projects during Year Two. These projects are presented in the table below.

Table 4: Performance Management Field Support Provided in 2011/2012 Fiscal Year

Sector	IP/Project	Type of support	Date
Education	EHELD	Observing their Summer school activities and providing recommendations	March 5-10, 2012
Education	LTTP	Performance Management Field Support	June 3-8, 2012
Education	AYP	Performance Management Field Support	June 9-16, 2012
EG	LESSP	Performance Management Field Support	May 2012
EG	SHOPS	Performance Management Field Support	Sept 17-21, 2012

Performance Management Field Support to the Economic Growth Sector:

In May and September 2012, L-MEP provided performance management field support to Winrock SHOPS and Winrock LESSP. Under Winrock LESSP in Lofa County, L-MEP participated in the elections leading to the formation of the board of directors of the Sorlumba Community Electric Cooperative Society (SCECS). The SCECS is the management team that will manage the biomass equipment to be constructed in Sorlumba through LESSP. L-MEP monitored the elections and held a M&e capacity building meeting with the LESSP Community Mobilizers based in Sorlumba, and the newly elected board of directors of the SCECS. The objective of the meeting was to assess the capacity of the SCECS, and to determine the level of support L-MEP could provide in strengthening the M&E capacity of the SCECS to be able to effectively management the biomass plant that would be constructed. At the meeting, L-MEP established that the SCECS as a newly established organization needed capacity building support to be able to manage the biomass plant that would be constructed in Sorlumba.



Figure 4: L-MEP providing Performance Management Field Support to the SHOPS Project.

Also in Gbarnway, L-MEP held a meeting with the Gbarnway Electric Cooperative Society board of directors. According to the chairman of the board of directors of the Gbarnway Electric Cooperative Society, they had not held their first meeting due to a number of challenges. The L-MEP M&E Specialist however held an orientation session with the new leadership of the Gbarnway Electric Cooperative Society.

At the two meetings in Sorlumba and Gbarnway, the L-MEP M&E Specialist outlined to the cooperative members ten simple steps that they could adapt to monitor their project activities:

- Determine what to monitor, and at what intervals;
- Determine how to monitor;
- Develop a checklist or data collection tool;
- Monitor the activity as planned;
- State any problem identified;
- Describe each problem;
- Identify possible causes of each problem;
- Identify and implement the solutions;
- Monitor the solutions; and
- Provide feedback to the members of the cooperatives.

In September 2011, L-MEP provided performance management field support to Winrock SHOPS in Nimba and Bong Counties. This served as a follow-up to the DQA findings and recommendations from the DQA exercise conducted in November 2011, support to field staff

with data collection approaches and methodology, review of data collection instruments, and response to basic M&E needs. During the field visit, the L-MEP team reviewed actions that had been taken on the DQA findings and recommendations. Based on document review and observations at the project sites and field offices, it was observed that the DQA findings and recommendations have been largely implemented. For example, data collection instruments and record books have been adequately disseminated among field staff and project beneficiaries including nursery operators. Moreover, source documents used for data collection, analysis and reporting are being properly managed at the field level and at the central office in Monrovia. The L-MEP team worked with SHOPS M&E team emphasizing steps required to enhance data collection and reporting into PIDS.

Education Sector Performance Management Field Support:

In March, 2012, the Excellence in Higher Education for Liberian Development (EHELD) invited L-MEP to participate in one of their community outreach awareness raising campaigns. The activity was designed to increase the awareness among senior secondary students interested in studying Agriculture and Engineering as a career at Cuttington or University of Liberia. The L-MEP M&E Specialist role was to observe the unfolding activities at the various high schools in both Voinjama and Zorzor districts respectively and to provide recommendations as a way forward. During this mobilization effort in Lofa, the team distributed posters, fact sheets, brochures, banners, information on EHELD fast Start and Summer Start program to over 1000 students, school administrators and district education authorities. Books and other reading materials were also provided to participating schools. The target beneficiaries from the selected eight schools in the two districts were 80 senior secondary students who upheld high moral standards and maintained a minimum GPA) of 90% and above.

The following findings resulted from the campaign:

- The timing of the project launch event coincided with the schools' fourth marking period test, and therefore students did not have adequate time to ask questions as many questions as they wanted because they had to return to their classes.
- The eight beneficiary/intervention schools were selected by the District Education Officers with no transparent selection criteria established.

By the conclusion of the activities launched in Lofa, the L-MEP M&E Specialists made recommendations to the role assigned to him prior to the inception of the awareness raising campaign in order to better improve a similar activity in the nearby future:

- The Fast Smart Program needs to inform the successful candidates during the school year rather than during the school break because students live far from the schools and have difficulty traveling back to find out if they have been selected or not.
- The mobilization messages should be aired on community radio stations in order to amplify the Smart messages, not only to the selected high schools, but to the entire nation.

On June 3 – 8, 2012, L-MEP provided a week long Performance Management Field Support to the Liberia Teacher Training Program (LTTP) in Lofa and Nimba Counties. The L-MEP M&E Specialist conducted spot checks on project sites, conducted several individual interviews and held focus group discussions with project staff and several beneficiaries to confirm whether activities have been carried out as planned. L-MEP also provided hands-on training for the field staff on how to collect, record and verify data into an excel spreadsheet. Findings of the support visit included:

- Students were able to read and comprehend what they read. There are various inter-school reading competitions organized among students of the EGRA classes from time to time. Reading clubs are organized to prepare the students for the inter-school competition.
- Radio Talk Shows are held by coaches and Reading/Math Specialists on community radio stations. Parents use the radio talk show to seek clarifications from LTTP staff on program issues.

Recommendations included:

- Regular experience sharing meetings of all EGRA teachers at least once every year will be helpful in strengthening weaker students.
- The LTTP staff was advised on how they could get involve with the Pre and In-Service trainees at all levels including the recruitment and placement of trainees in these program activities. LTTP should put mechanisms in place to track the Pre-Service teachers nationwide.

On June 19, 2012, field support was provided for the Advancing Youth Project. This support targeted two of its operational counties (Nimba and Bong). The L-MEP monitoring team arranged and held meetings with the different layers of Advancing Youth Project staff both at the various Learning Resource Centers and the central level. A total of eight schools in Bong and Nimba were visited. L-MEP made the following recommendations to the project:

- That classes that are conducted outside a normal school building need additional support in the form of benches, chairs and blackboards.
- That lighting needs to be installed in classrooms to facilitate a positive learning environment.

1.4 Component Four: Capacity Building

- **Result 5: Capacity of L-MEP, USAID, and IP Staff to Undertake M&E Improved**

Action 5.1: Train L-MEP staff

Action 5.2: Train USAID Mission staff

Action 5.3: Train IP, local partner, and Government of Liberia (GoL) staff

L-MEP was very actively involved in Capacity Building of USAID, IP, and GoL staff during Year Two. Below is a chart illustrating all the training courses and workshops that L-MEP implemented. In addition to formal courses and workshops, L-MEP provided one-on-one mentoring of IP M&E Specialists in various aspects of M&E. Training Courses and workshops are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Training Courses and Workshops Provided by L-MEP During Year Two:

#	Name of Training	Training Location	Number of Participants					Date
			IPs	AID	GOL	LMEP	Total	
1	Managing for Results training	Monrovia						Mar 19-23, 2012
			3	15	0	3	21	
2	Managing for Results training	Gbarnga	30	0	3	0	33	Apr 30 May 4, 2012
3	Managing for Results training	Voinjama	28	0	7	0	35	June 25-29, 2012
4	Evaluation Planning and Management	Monrovia	23	6	1	0	30	August 6-10, 2012
5	Ethics Training	Monrovia				18		July 26, 2012
6	Financial Management Training	Monrovia				4		July 24 – Aug 1, 2012
Grand Total of Participants			84	21	11	25	135	

Capacity building was very successful during Year Two and our courses and workshops have been described in great detail in our Quarterly Reports.

The Managing for Results Training Course implemented during Year Two was revised from the one delivered in Year One to include USAID’s new programming and project design guidance. Given the fact that USAID also published a new Evaluation Policy, L-MEP designed an evaluation workshop, titled Evaluation Planning and Management (EPM), which emphasized how to plan and manage an evaluation.

The purpose of the five-day EPM workshop was to build core competencies in USAID’s approach to evaluation planning and management process and content. Participants included six USAID/Liberia staff, 23 IPs and one GoL official from the Ministry of Agriculture. The workshop, conducted August 6 -10, 2012, had the following objectives:

- Understand what evaluation is, why it is important, & how it differs from monitoring;
- Become familiar with USAID’s Evaluation Policy;
- Understand and apply USAID’s iterative approach to Evaluation Planning & Management (EPM);
- Understand different evaluation methodologies;
- Be able to draft evaluation statements of work;
- Be able to elect and manage evaluation teams;

- Be able to critique evaluation reports & implement recommendations;
- Recognize common pitfalls in EPM; and
- Be able to use evaluation findings and recommendations appropriately.

Overall, during Year Two, L-MEP achieved its target that 80% of course and workshop participants would score 70% or above on the post-tests for all courses and workshops. In the EPM workshop, the average test score improved from 20% on the pre-test to 80% on the post-test.

In addition to courses and workshops offered to USAID, IPs, and the GoL, TMG/HQ staff Jenkins Cooper, Operations Manager, and Abi Fasosin, Controller, provided Ethics and Financial Management Training during their Annual Visit from July 23 to August 3, 2012. Mr. Fasosin worked with L-MEP's Operations Department to review required financial and administrative procedures to assure that staff were closely following USAID rules and regulations. Mr. Cooper provided ethics training to the entire L-MEP staff to assure that all staff understood USAID's rules and regulations. Staff signed statements acknowledging the training and committing themselves to following USAID requirements.

1.5 Component Five: Evaluation Assistance

▪ Result 6: Evaluations Conducted

L-MEP conducted a mid-term evaluation of the Civil Society and Media Leadership Program (CSML), implemented by the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX) from August 27 through September 30. The overall purpose of the evaluation was to assess progress toward the project's expected results. The findings of the evaluation will help inform USAID, IREX and its partners on how well the project's planned activities and strategy are contributing to the achievement of its expected results. The findings will also help provide further guidance on the effective operation of the project over the remaining period to help ensure the achievement of the project results and the sustainability of those results.

L-MEP hired three international consultants and a Liberian Civil Society Consultant to conduct the evaluation. L-MEP's COP managed the evaluation, and L-MEP's M&E Specialist for Democracy and Governance assisted with coordinating the activities of the evaluation. The Evaluation Team employed various evaluation methods including desk review of relevant project documents, and key informant interviews with USAID, IREX and its partners, and the project beneficiaries. The Team also conducted three focus group discussions, a listener call-in program, and field observations of sub-grantees and partner radio stations, offices and sites. The Team submitted a draft report and orally presented its findings.

The preliminary findings of the evaluation show that the project design is sound. The findings also reveal that the CSML has brought about positive change, and that the project is on track to achieving its stated results.

Result 7: MCC Threshold Programs Effectively Monitored and Evaluated

During Year Two, L-MEP staff continued to support the three MCC Threshold Programs, GOAL, LPIS, and LTPC. L-MEP provided support to all three project M&E Specialists to populate their data into the PIDS, worked with them to review and update their PMPs, and conducted several studies.

Girls' Opportunity to Access Education (GOAL) Project

The L-MEP M&E Specialist for MCC conducted four field monitoring visits to GOAL target schools during Year Two. Together with the GOAL M&E Specialist, they developed a standard field monitoring form that highlighted observations in regard to girls' attendance, their attitudes toward the in-kind scholarships they had received, the distance they needed to travel to attend school, sanitary conditions, the role of the Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), and how schools were using their grant funds to improve the teaching environment and tools.



Figure 5: Girls at one of the GOAL target schools preparing for graduation.

In addition, L-MEP hired two teams during Year Two to conduct key informant interviews, surveys, and observations of the target schools in order to collect data for GOAL case studies, as well as to gather data regarding the in- and out-of school conditions under which girls study that influence their attendance and completion rates. The data gathered in these two studies will be used in the final evaluation of the project, in addition to being reported following the studies.

Land Policy and Institutional Support Project (L-PIS)

L-MEP conducted three studies relating to the LPIS project, a survey of public and business perceptions of land administration; a survey on the role and impact of the Probate Court involvement in land transactions in Liberia; and an assessment of the quality of service provided by the new customer service center at the CNDRA.

The land administration study focused on the public knowledge about the role of the Land Commission, the survey profession and Deed Registration process. L-MEP hired Robin Nielsen, Land Tenure Attorney, to design and lead the study. Data collection was conducted by the University of Liberia Pacific Institute of Research and Evaluation (UL-PIRE). The data collected will assist L-MEP in developing a baseline to measure progress in the achievement of the three results LPIS has committed to: (1) an increased understanding of property rights issues; (2) a rebuilt land administration system; and (3) more efficient deed registry process. This study will help L-MEP answer the following questions at the conclusion of the LPIS project:

- Has the LPIS Project been successful in increasing the public's confidence in the land system in Liberia and if yes, is there evidence that such confidence is well-placed?
- Has the average Liberian citizen's and business owner's perceptions of the administration of land in Liberia as well as their perception of the role and professionalism of the land surveyors changed as a result of implementation of the LPIS Project?

L-MEP hired UL-PIRE to design and implement a survey on the public knowledge and perception of the Probate Court's role in land registration. This study will serve as a baseline to help LPIS determine how important the Probate Court is perceived to be in the land registration process as well as how much time is added to this process by the involvement of the court. One of the goals of LPIS is to reduce the time it takes to register land deeds and titles. The study sought answers to the following questions:

- To what extent does the public understand how the Probate Court functions?
- What proportion of the public is able to provide a description of the probation process?
- What services does the Probate Court itself provide to the public in regard to property rights issues?
- Does the Probate Court understand land survey plans in order to certify that they are legitimate?

In order to help reduce the time it takes to register land deeds and titles, LPIS installed a Customer Service Center in the CNDRA. L-MEP conducted a study to determine if this Service Center in fact reduced the required time and whether the Center was providing satisfactory service. The center includes an electronic deed scanning technology that will provide Liberians the opportunity to have an electronic version of their property titles, thus making the retrieval of lost deeds easy and convenient. Preliminary results will be submitted to L-MEP during the first quarter of Year Three.

Liberia Trade Policy and Customs Project (L-TPC)

L-MEP contracted with a US-based firm, Associates for International Resources and Development (AIRD), to conduct a study to determine Liberia's current revenue intake from tariffs on imported goods mainly from ECOWAS member countries in order to predict how much revenue loss GOL will sustain over the next 5 to 10 years by implementing the ECOWAS Trade Liberalization System (ETLS) that requires all participating countries to remove tariff barriers to trade. The GOL requested that L-MEP conduct this study in order to ascertain the tariff lost by joining the scheme and to determine whether the country should join and the amount of the incentive payment they should request from ECOWAS in order to join. The study concluded that the lost revenue was less than the value of the increased trade to be obtained by joining ETLS.

L-MEP Project Management Structure and Processes

▪ Result 8: L-MEP Efficiently Managed

Action 7.2: Manage the project

L-MEP continued its efforts during Year Two, initiated during Year One, to establish a very strong management system, to manage procurement according to USAID regulations, and to control costs.

Thomas Kanneh was recruited as the L-MEP long-term M&E Specialist for Economic Growth based in Monrovia. He started with L-MEP on September 24, 2012.

L-MEP experienced an attempted break-in on September 2. In response, more security measures were put in place to ensure maximum safety for the COP, consultants, and L-MEP's property. The barbed wire on the fence was reinforced, the security cameras were activated, and a television monitor was installed in the security booth for 24-hour monitoring. All of the windows, gates and doors locks were also reinforced, and an additional security guard was added to the four night guards for two months, until after the raining season ends.

Additionally, during the months of July and August, TMG Operations Manager, Financial Manager and the Logistics Coordinator from TMG/HQ made their year-end visit. During this time, enhancement of the financial and administrative processes and procedures were put in place by TMG Controller and Logistics Coordinator along with the Operations Manager (OM), Procurement Associate, and Project Accountant. Actions included the elimination of bottlenecks in procurement through the adoption of recognized vendor lists, turning over approval of expenditure of \$50.00 and below to the OM and having the OM approve some administrative actions. Also during this time, TMG Operations Manager worked with both the technical and administrative teams to complete the year three work plan.

The L-MEP Regional Office in Gbarnga, Bong County implemented a wide-range of program activities during Year Two. The office received administrative and management support from both the L-MEP and TMG/HQ team in July 2012. The team reviewed procurement, expenditures and internal control and assessed audit-worthiness of the sub-office with the aim of guiding against fraud, waste and abuse of US government funds and other project resources.

The team visited Gbarnga, and convened a meeting of 11 USAID IPs with sub-offices in Gbarnga as well as six GoL line ministries. The meeting focused on the ways L-MEP can effectively engage and support IPs and GoL agencies.

The L-MEP provided support and participated in the DQA and performance management support of three projects. The field office staff played supportive roles during the DQA exercise of the Advancing Youth Project and performance management supports of the SHOPS and FED project during this reporting period.

Other support services undertaken by the office included the availability of internet services for USAID and M&E related research through the use of the VSAT at the field office. As a result, a total of 98 persons (82 from IP and 16 from GoL) utilized the different services at the office.

The regional office also participated in two County Coordination Meetings of the various pillars of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS). At these meetings, we highlighted the services L-MEP provides as well as gathered information on the activities of other development actors in the county.

Implementing Partners' Chiefs- of- Party Meetings

L-MEP continued quarterly COP meetings during Year Two. The COPs continued to appreciate these meetings as it allows them to remain informed about L-MEP's planned activities and also provides a forum for them to give feedback on how L-MEP could provide services to better support them. During these meetings, the DQA process is discussed including measures to improve it, the DQA schedule is provided, and the PIDs and GIS is presented including custom maps that GIS Specialist prepared for CESLY.

L-MEP Team-Building

L-MEP held two team building retreats during Year Two to continue the process of building a strong and high-performing high-performing team.

II. Challenges Encountered

No major challenges were encountered during Year Two. The USAID/Liberia CDCS has not yet been completed so the L-MEP could not perform the actions in its Work Plan related to developing a Mission PMP and helping the IPs align their PMPs with the new CDCS.



Figure 6: Jenkins Cooper, TMG Director of Operations and Comfort Traub, L-MEP Operations Manager make contingency plans during a Team Retreat.

III. Proposed Solutions

The USAID/Liberia CDCS will be completed within the next few months and so if requested, L-MEP will be able to assist the Mission develop its new PMP as well as help IPs adjust their PMPs to the new strategy. In addition, USAID has reduced the number of its F indicators. L-MEP will work both with the Mission and with IPs to include the new indicators in their PMPs.

IV. Success Stories

L-MEP's capacity building activities during Year Two were success stories. The MFR training was replicated three times. For many participants, it was the first time they had ever received

training in the basic principles of M&e and performance management. The accolades received from participants continue coming and even recruiters on new projects are selecting M&E Specialists who have undergone the MFR training in order to assure that their new hires have the requisite skills to perform. Furthermore, connecting the PIDS and the WMS was a success story as well as the generation of over 40 maps that will help IPs visualize their projects and results.

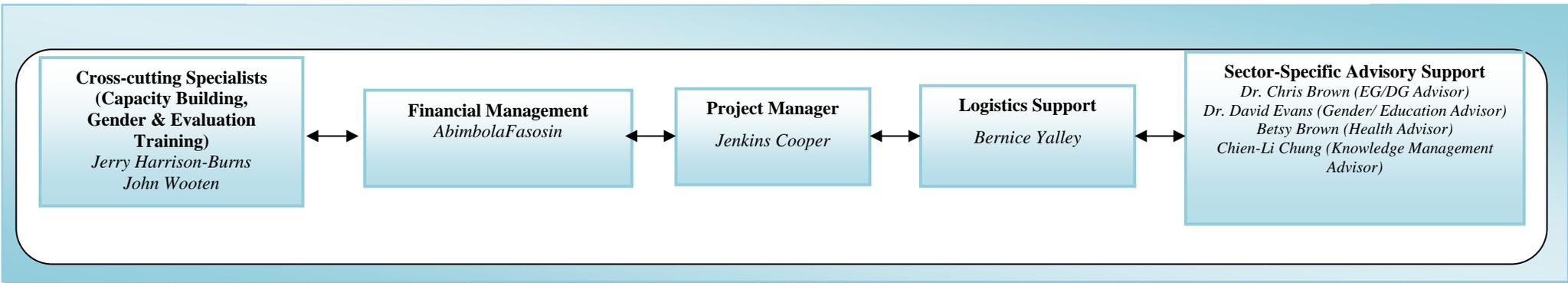
V. Best Practices

Two best practices continued during Year Two. First the standardization of PMPs was continued by L-MEP to help the Mission establish a consistent performance management framework which would also be reflected in the PIDS. Second, the DQA methodology that L-MEP employed is a best practice because it is a comprehensive approach that traces the indicators from their “birth to their death,” examines the IP’s M&E System in depth, and assesses indicators according to the five quality standards.

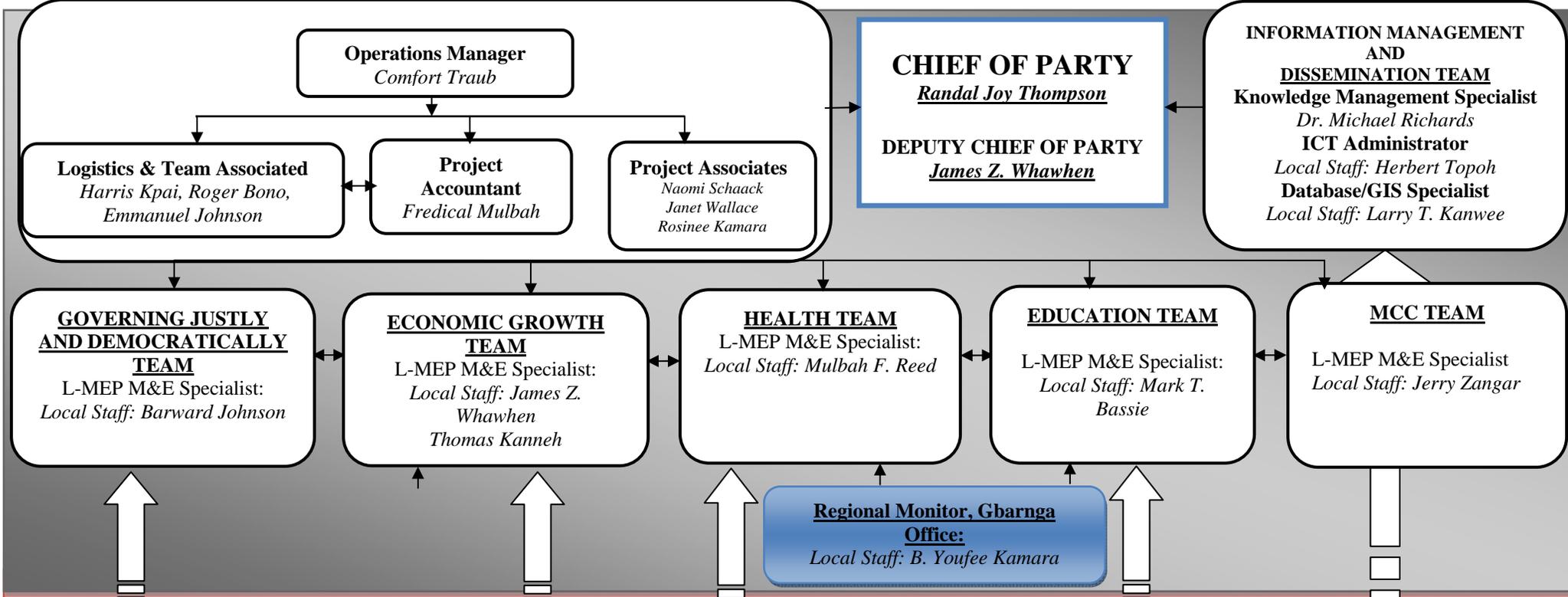
VI. Environmental Status Report Per IEE

L-MEP has a Categorical Exclusion which is currently being reviewed by Stone Environment, Inc. who wrote the initial request for this exclusion.

Annex 1: L-MEP Management and Organizational Structure/Framework



Long-Term Resident Team: Monrovia and Gbarnga Offices



Short-Term M&E Specialists and Specialized Subcontractors

ANNEX 2: L-MEP Implementation Staff/USAID/Liberia COTR and TMG/HQ - Support Staff

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