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# LEGAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ANTI-CORRUPTION PROGRAM (LPAC)

Monthly Report  
September 2015



LPAC meets with the Liberia National Bar Association



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# MONTHLY REPORT, September 2015

## Legal Professional Development and Anti-Corruption (LPAC) Program

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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Legal Professional Development and Anti-Corruption (LPAC) project is a five-year activity that is USAID/Liberia's primary formal justice sector program. It consists of two components. The first component directs capacity building to the four key Liberian justice sector institutions (the Judicial Institute, the Louis Arthur Grimes Law School (Law School), the Liberian Legal Information Institute (LiberLii), and the Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA)) that educate, regulate and inform legal professionals. The second component supports the Liberian Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) and associated Government of Liberia entities in their efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict perpetrators of corruption related crimes, and to educate the public regarding the fight against corruption in Liberia.

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The information below covers LPAC accomplishments during September, 2015. Where the activity reported relates specifically to an objective set forth in the task order, it is identified in italics following the description of the activity.

### **Project Mobilization and Cross-cutting Activities Affecting all Components**

An initial focus during September included moving into the Project office, after installing basic furniture and internet and signing employment contracts with the following initial local staff: Project Administrator, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, Accountant, Administrative Assistant and IT Specialist. In addition, all four of the long-term advisors were installed in their respective counterpart agencies as they arrived. The Chief of Party (COP) and Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP) team continued its work with the Project Administrator and IT specialist to secure suitable internet for the LPAC office. A temporary internet solution was put into place, pending investigation of a long-term solution by early October.

The COP continued to work with the Project Administrator to establish the office and meet all registration requirements with the GOL, plus securing resident permits for recently arrived long-term advisors.

LPAC continued to conduct interviews with possible LPAC local staff and continued hiring operations and technical staff.

**Logistical Issue:** Both housing rentals and certain local salaries have increased, at least partially as a result of the recent Ebola crisis. This constraint required extra administrative attention before successful resolution. Following resolution of the logistical issue, housing has been secured for four of the five long-term advisors, and the project's initial office staffing needs have been met.

The first general staff meeting of the LPAC team was held on September 16, with the USAID COR and all LPAC long-term advisors attending. The focus of the meeting was to discuss actions toward project objectives and up-coming events at counterpart agencies.

The COP met with former Chief Justice Henry Reed Cooper at his law office, to discuss general Liberia legal issues relating to the five counterpart agencies connected to the LPAC Project. The former Chief Justice remains interested in certain of the institutions and activities within LPAC, most notably the Law School, the training of judges and the LNBA.



LPAC project staff in front of new office

**Logistical Issue:** LPAC has not yet received its duty-free certification by the relevant GOL authorities. A letter from USAID identifying LPAC as USAID Project, and requesting that it be accorded duty-free status on, e.g., the purchase of vehicles, has been requested by LPAC from USAID.

### **Human Institutional Capacity Development Assessment**

During the reporting period, the leader of LPAC's original HICD team suffered a medical emergency and cancelled her team's participation in the HICD assessment. As a result, the LPAC recruited a new team, and secured approval for its travel to Liberia. The LPAC COP and the long-term advisors met with all of the counterparts to inform them of the HICD process and new schedule for the assessment, and distributed initial Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that outlined the responsibilities of LPAC and the counterparts in this participatory diagnostic exercise. The MOUs were signed by four of the five counterpart agencies, with the expectation that the fifth MOU will be signed prior to the arrival of the HICD team. LPAC anticipates the HICD assessment team will begin their work in Liberia by October 3. The assessment period has been accelerated so that it will last approximately 3 weeks, and the HICD team will work with all five LPAC counterpart organizations, with the LPAC long-term advisors available as resources. It is anticipated that, following the HICD assessment process, separate MOUs will be agreed upon by all five counterpart agencies and LPAC that will incorporate the performance solutions package and the commitments of each side to the agreed solutions.

The LPAC long-term advisors and the COP discussed the nature of the HICD process and informed each counterpart agency that the process was not only participatory, but that this would be an opportunity for them to discuss the needs and their hopes for the future development of their institutions.



## Component A: Strengthening Legal Professional Development Institutions

### Sub-Component A.1 James A.A. Pierre Judicial Institute (Judicial Institute)

The LPAC long-term Judicial Training Advisor, Dr. Charles A. Ericksen, was approved by USAID and arrived in Liberia on September 11, 2015. He met the Judicial Institute's Acting Executive Director and Judicial Training Coordinator on September 14. The Judicial Institute provided an office to the Advisor, and he is now embedded at the Institute.

Together with COP and DCOP, the Advisor attended a meeting of the Judicial Institute Board on September 17 regarding initial LPAC activities. During the meeting, it became apparent that several of the representatives of LPAC's counterpart agencies, including the Judicial Institute and the LNBA, wanted to provide their input into the activities that LPAC will undertake during its duration. The COP and the Advisor discussed the role of the HICD assessment process, and said that this was an opportunity for the counterparts to present their views on how best to assure that their agencies could benefit from LPAC resources.

**Issue:** The Judicial Institute has limited ability to access the resources specifically allocated to it by the legislature, owing to the administrative process adopted by the judiciary. It is unclear whether the allocation is an actual legislative line item or a segment of the general judicial budget. Addressing this issue may be a feature of the HICD assessment.

The Advisor met with the acting Executive Director, senior staff and key faculty to discuss the Professional Magistrates Training Program (PMTP) budgetary needs and process for training the new trainers. He has begun mapping past and present donors working with the Judicial Institute in order to assure not only an efficient allocation of resources, but also to develop a sustainable series of courses, with identified materials and instructors who can continue conducting the courses beyond the life of the LPAC project. In this regard, LPAC met with the senior Justice Advisor (Ralph Overholt) and the Justice Advisor (Keith Peterson) of Pacific Architects and Engineers Incorporated (PAE) who have been involved in Institute activities. PAE is funded by the INL and has worked on PMTP, court administration, and public defenders projects, so coordination with LPAC on activities will be important. (*Objective A.1.b: Development of Professional Courses and Reference Materials. Objective A.1.c: Continuation of Trainings for Judicial Actors*)

LPAC met with Court Administrator Ms. Elizabeth G. Nelson to discuss project activities, with a special emphasis on the development of a court management curriculum. The Court Administrator discussed numerous challenges of court administration in the Liberia court system and the need for professionally trained court managers and other court staff.

The Advisor attended a training session organized by UNMIL for court inspectors; and also met with Chief Justice, Hon. Francis S. Korkpor, Sr. to discuss LPAC project.

**Issue:** The ad hoc, fragmented nature of courses presented at the Judicial Institute hinders its efforts to develop a coherent training schedule, with curricula and training materials for the various groups of actors that make up the judicial/magistrate system. The Advisor intends to work with the Institute leadership to plan for a resolution of this issue.

## **Sub-Component A.2 Louis Arthur Grimes Law School (Law School)**

The DCOP/Legal Education Advisor was provided with an office at the Law School. The office has been equipped with basic office furnishings and refurbishment of the office space is underway. The Advisor and the COP have met on several occasions with Dean Jallah to discuss LPAC project start-up activities, including the establishment of six LPAC public service scholarships, the need to resume publication of the law journal, the Monitoring and Evaluation plan and the HICD assessment process. The Dean has also introduced several faculty members to the Advisor in an effort to assist LPAC begin its law school-related activities, and to coordinate them with the commencement of the semester.

The Advisor also worked with the following persons in order to plan LPAC activities:

- The Law School administrative assistant to understand key administrative functions and institution-wide processes that concern the Law School.
- Four attorneys who are currently staffing the office of General Counsel for the University, also headed by the Dean and located within the Law School. (*Objective A.2.f: Legal Department*)
- The student Chairperson of the Law Journal Committee in order to outline action items to be advanced immediately in order to accelerate publication of the next issue of the law journal.
- President of the Law Student Association (LAWSA), Mr. Lester Paye, to discuss LPAC's planned activities which are directed towards law students, including, public interest scholarships, support to the Law Journal and newsletter publications, developing credit-bearing clinical programs, implementing the new curriculum and bolstering student/alumni affairs. (*Objective A.2.b: Fundraising and Outreach*)
- Professor F. Juah Lawson to discuss the concept plan for awarding public service scholarships to in-coming first year students. (*Objective A.2.c: Public Service Scholarships*)
- Professor Johnson to discuss LPAC project start-up activities, including scholarships and law journal.
- Professor Hage, Prof Josiah and the Law School assistant to the Dean, to discuss the Law School's records management system, administrative and financial management and linkages with the university.

**Issue:** The new curriculum will not be implemented this year because of a lack of teachers to cover the new subjects and a lack of teaching materials. Despite the continuation of the old curriculum LPAC will work with the Dean and certain professors to develop teaching materials and texts for several of the courses on the new curriculum, and to discuss the establishment of a scholarship program. (*Objective A.2.d: Curriculum Reform and Clinical Legal Education*)



**Issue:** Of the incoming class, only six of the seventy students are female, this represents a challenge with respect to assuring appropriate gender balance on LPAC programs such as public service scholarships and planned clinical activities.

LPAC met with current editorial board, Mr. Langley Nya Kialain, (outgoing Chair), Mr. Kiawu Van-Faate 3rd year and, Mr. Tiedi Bropleh, 2nd year, to discuss a concept plan for hosting a symposium to reintroduce the journal and preparing existing submissions for publication in the December issue of the Law Journal. The Law Journal Committee members, Mr. Langley, Mr. Bropleh and Mr. Kiawu were assisted by the Advisor to develop an action plan for hosting a pre-publication academic symposium on October 30, 2015.

**Issue:** The last published issue of the Law Journal was in December 2010. It is necessary to reintroduce the journal to its critical audience of students, jurists, practitioners, government and civil society. A symposium has been proposed to be held by end of October under the theme “Rule of Law Challenges Following Departure of UNMIL.” It is expected that current submissions along with papers presented and ideas raised at the symposium will comprise the next issue of the journal to be published in December. LPAC plans to support the symposium as an integral part of re-establishing the law journal. (*Objective A.2.e: Legal Scholarship Enhanced*)

The LPAC IT specialist conducted summary review of the Law School’s immediate IT needs for coming semester. In the case of each counterpart agency reviewed, major action on IT needs will not be undertaken before the IT Assessment that will follow the HICD assessment, but LPAC will support certain minor repairs and improvements in order to assure that the student computer lab is functional as the semester begins.

A first meeting was held with the Administrative Assistant, Ms. Kollie, and Computer Lab Assistant, Mr. Massaquoi, to start an action plan for restarting regular publication of the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law newsletter.

### **Sub-Component A.3 LiberLii**

The LiberLii headquarters is on the same floor in the law school building as the Legal Education Advisor’s office, and both the Legal Education Advisor and the Legal Profession/Legal Information Advisor have good access to LiberLii staff.

The LPAC IT specialist conducted summary review of LiberLii’s immediate IT needs for the coming semester. As noted above, while major action on IT needs will not be undertaken before the IT Assessment that will follow the HICD assessment, LPAC will support certain minor repairs and improvements in order to assure that LiberLii is able to perform essential functions. LPAC took action to restore basic internet service which had been cut off.

LPAC conducted an introductory meeting with the LiberLii Executive Director and Legal Production Specialist and discussed the type of support that LPAC may provide and the need for LiberLii to become a self-sustaining organization. The Advisor continued discussions with the Executive Director of LiberLii regarding year one projects, including funding issues and discussions with LiberLii stakeholder group on future cooperation re: transfer of cases, laws and regulations in digital format. The Advisor worked with the Executive Director to schedule



meetings with government agencies providing materials to LiberLii for publication. (*Objective A.3.c: LiberLii Staff Capacity Building*)

**Issue:** LiberLii was until the LPAC intervention without internet access, and the LiberLii staff will soon be without an operating budget. LPAC will have to accelerate its support even prior to the completion of the HICD assessment.

**Issue:** The LiberLii Executive Director has expressed concerns that, in addition to the general concern regarding its operational budget, the current budget for LiberLii staff as proposed by LPAC is not in line with the current market value for legal professionals; potentially impacting their ability to recruit and keep talented staff.

LiberLii has stated that they will be submitting a grant proposal to LPAC for bridge funding for the next four month period. The grant would fund existing programming through the end of this year and possibly allow LiberLii to develop potential new programming that could help sustainability.

The LPAC COP and the Advisor will meet with the Co-Chair of the National Election Commission (Clr Sarah Toe) regarding possible LPAC activities to 1) inform lawyers, law students and magistrates about amendments to the election law, and 2) publish the amendments on LiberLii as soon as they are available.

**Issue:** While the amendments to the Election law were reportedly adopted by the legislature and signed by the President, the amended law is not yet available (even to an Election Commissioner). Although publication of the handbill containing the amended law was reported to have occurred in late September, it is critical that LPAC addresses the often long delay in making new laws available through LiberLii.

#### **Sub-Component A.4 Liberia National Bar Association (LNBA)**

The Legal Profession/Legal Information Advisor, Mr. Garry Ledbetter, was provided office space at the LNBA soon after his introductory meeting.

The LNBA was successful in resolving the lack of electricity issue, and the LPAC IT specialist conducted a summary review of the office's immediate IT needs. As is the case with all of the LPAC counterpart agencies, LPAC will support certain minor repairs and improvements in order to assure that the embedded Advisor and the LNBA have adequate internet service available.

After the Quarterly Assembly held in late August, the COP was advised by the USAID COR that a portion of his comments at the LNBA Assembly were used in developing certain Assembly resolutions. The comments dealt with lawyer advertising but pointed out that with changing conditions, some traditions may need to change if the Bar is to remain effective in serving the needs of a modern Liberia.

The Advisor had an initial meeting with the President of the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia to discuss potential cooperation. Following the first meeting, the COP and the Advisor met again with the President of AFLL to continue discussions on possible areas of cooperation,



including the possibility of grants for, e.g., efforts to provide legal services in areas beyond Monrovia, AFLL mediation, and domestic violence programs.

**Issue:** The current Executive Committee has expressed concerns that they were not in office and thus were unable to provide input into the creation of activities planned for the LNBA under LPAC. The LPAC LNBA Advisor has communicated to the LNBA that the HICD Assessment is an opportunity to provide their input on developing the assistance to the LNBA. LPAC will be monitoring this situation to ensure proper buy-in for all activities.

**Issue:** The LNBA lacks any permanent staff with decision-making authority that is based in the LNBA offices potentially creating gaps for day-to-day interaction and capacity building. LPAC has proposed to use the funding for the fundraising coordinator position to create a hybrid position of Executive Director/Fundraising Coordinator to close this gap.

LPAC held introductory meetings with the recently appointed members of the standing committees and is working the Executive Committee on reaching a consensus on the Executive Director/Fundraising Coordinator position. LPAC also worked with Executive Committee members on potential LPAC year one projects, including Continuing Legal Education (CLE), Pro Bono legal services, and developing an Attorney Referral Service. (*Objective A.4.c: Mandatory CLE Program. Objective A.4.b: Fundraising, Outreach, and Public Service*)

## **Component B: Strengthening the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission**

LPAC met with the Executive Director and several Commissioners to discuss LPAC activities as well as the upcoming HICD assessment. The LACC agreed to select staff members who will actively participate in the HICD process.

The LPAC long term anti-corruption advisor, Mr. Jose Brito, arrived on September 16 and the LPAC COP introduced him to LACC Chairman Verdier and other Commissioners on September 17. The Advisor was provided with an office and is now embedded at the LACC.

LPAC began an immediate series of meetings with both Commissioners and staff to begin understanding the needs and resources of LACC. We met with the Senior Staff members of LACC for formal introductions and a round table discussion on ongoing LACC working plan and the definition of needs and specific support. For example, the Commissioner in charge of prevention and education discussed the insufficiency of human resources to accomplish the mission. LPAC also met with Mr. Moses Kowo, Acting Program Manager for Education and Prevention, to assess structural organization, human resources and ongoing and future prevention and education plans; we began to provide immediate support to define prevention work targeting health and education sector. In addition, LPAC met with S. Othelo Payman, In-House Counsellor, to assess ongoing activities and challenges for anti-corruption prevention and education support; we proposed immediate training sessions to begin the following week, which were carried out, and initiated training sessions for the six staff members in the prevention and education division. (*Objective B.1: Improved Organizational Structure, Systems and Resources*)

LPAC developed and presented a workshop on the subject “Introduction to Anti-Corruption Prevention”, addressed to 17 LACC officers, 5 of them female officers. One of the



commissioners stated that this was the first time these issues were presented to them. LPAC also presented a Prevention and Education Plan to the Commissioner for Education and Prevention that will be implemented by Education and Prevention officers. In addition, we advised the Commissioner on identifying a target to use as a pilot program in order to introduce staff to the use of prevention tools; collection of information will start upon the arrival of two new researchers to the department, beginning in October.

LPAC also discussed his proposed Prevention and Education Plan and agreed that he will meet on a regular basis with the staff attached to the Education and Prevention Division, and also define the initial steps to work with other government institutions. (*Objective B.4: Effective Public Education and Corruption Prevention*)

As another means of identifying potential areas for education and prevention programs, LPAC collected two assessments developed by outsource consulting firms, targeting the Education Sector and Water Development.

**Issue:** From the workshop, immediate targets were identified for prevention work to start right away, together with the development of a prevention plan that will need to be introduced to the prevention and investigation team. Training needs on prevention and education will go ahead in the incoming weeks.

**Issue:** LPAC has reviewed the Strategic Plan, and finds it quite comprehensive and with good potential for success if systematically implemented; however, human resources do not match the scope of the plan, and steps should be designed to address this concern. Further discussions with existing LACC staff will be necessary to both validate this concern and begin to address immediate needs with respect to both the prevention and investigation roles of the LACC.

**Issue:** LACC is in the process of moving its offices to its new building in Congotown. The move should be completed in three to four weeks. The move, however, may make the HICD assessment more difficult to implement, because the staff and the Commissioners will be moving between the old and the new office.

LPAC met with Mr. Blamo Kofa, Acting Program Manager for Enforcement and Head of Investigation, doing initial assessment of actual status, organization and operation work being developed by Investigation. In addition, LPAC assisted in developing an operational strategic approach for a new investigation case; we will work with LACC on best practices for the development of the investigation, and will assist in developing procedures for ongoing investigations of corruption cases. (*Objective B.2: Improved Investigations*)

LPAC also met with the Senior Justice advisor of (PAE) to coordinate activities relating to agencies with which both projects are involved.

**Issue:** There is a need to collect information relating to the implementation of the LACC Strategic Plan and Work Plan (under development by senior management assisted by UNDP) in order to coordinate LPAC support with that plan.



The Advisor discussed the applicants for the positions for local LPAC specialists with LACC leadership. LPAC is proposing to combine the prosecution and investigation specialist as the responsibility of a single specialist. The LACC leadership approved the candidate for the combined position. (*Objective B.3: Effective Prosecution*)

## **MONITORING & EVALUATION**

M & E specialist, Aimee Rose, arrived in Monrovia on September 23 to work with the LPAC local M & E specialist on the revised M & E Plan. Prior to her arrival, LPAC discussed the purpose of her visit with each of the counterpart agencies, and distributed draft lists of the indicators that the M & E specialists have proposed. Views of the counterparts were actively solicited – including the upcoming HICS assessment process – and the discussions led to a number of revisions in the indicators that had been submitted (except for those that are required by USAID).

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

### **Significant Planned Activities in October**

#### **General**

- Initial MOU between LPAC and one remaining counterpart agency re: HICD assessment process will be signed by October 6.
- HICD Team will arrive on Friday, October 2. The team will be briefed by LPAC COP on Saturday, October 3, and by long term advisors on Monday, October 5, regarding the conditions at each of the five counterpart agencies.
- HICD Team will meet with USAID on October 6 to describe their proposed schedule of activities.
- HICD Team will have introductory meetings with the five counterpart agencies on October 7, and will begin the assessment, completing the field work by October 27, with a draft report anticipated by early November.
- LPAC will continue recruitment for project staff: Financial Systems Specialist, Administration Specialist, Grants Manager and Program Assistants.
- LPAC will make efforts to meet with representatives of the Ministry of Justice to discuss how LPAC activities relate to its mission and potential areas of cooperation.
- LPAC will continue work on Inception Plan, due in October.

#### **LNBA**

- Introduce the HICD team to the LNBA, and assist with the assessment as necessary.



- Continue introductory meetings with the recently appointed members of the standing committees and begin discussing strategies for CLE and Pro Bono activities.
- Continue working with the Executive Committee on reaching a consensus on the Executive Director/Fundraising Coordinator position.
- Initiate search for Liberian LNBA advisor to assist expatriate Legal Profession Advisor (with potential assistance to LiberLii as well).
- Continue to establish connections with the specialty committees of the LNBA: Pro Bono, CLE, and Ethics.
- Initiate actions for survey of attorneys to determine focus of initial CLE courses.
- Continue discussions with Executive Committee on year one projects: CLE, Pro Bono, and Attorney Referral Service.

### **LiberLii**

- Introduce the HICD team to LiberLii and assist with the assessment as necessary.
- Continue discussion with Executive Director of LiberLii regarding year one projects, including bridge grant and work to move the bridge grant through the approval process.
- Initiate discussions with LiberLii stakeholder group on future cooperation re: transfer of cases, laws and regulations in digital format.
- Initiate search for marketing/outreach coordinator for LiberLii.
- Begin to work with LiberLii to develop a job description for the marketing and fundraising coordinator.
- Continue to work with the Executive Director for LiberLii to begin meetings with government agencies providing materials to LiberLii for publication on the website.

### **Law School**

- Introduce the HICD team to the Law School and assist with the assessment as necessary.
- Meet with Judge Ceanah-Clinton Johnson, Chair of the Law School Alumni Committee, to discuss plans for re-constituting and strengthening the committee, recruitment of student support and development of more robust alumni programs and groups.
- Meet with Professor Lawson, to consider successful in-coming first-year law students who have expressed interest in competing for public interest scholarships. Advisor, Professor Lawson and the Dean will set criteria and conditions for selection of scholars.
- Continue to help plan for and support the Law Journal Committee to host its academic symposium.



- Request to accompany Law School participation at Ministry of Justice Rule of Law sector meetings.
- Continue efforts to recruit Legal Education Specialist to assist the Advisor and the Law School in both administrative and educational needs. Continue efforts to recruit a Legal Education Specialist.
- Continue discussions with the Dean concerning the Law School's plan to support faculty research and publications.

### **Judicial Institute**

- Introduce the HICD team to the Judicial Institute, and assist with the assessment as necessary.
- Continued recruitment of Judicial Training Specialist, this was postponed until October to enable the Advisor to make a preliminary assessment of priorities.
- Meet with representatives from UNMIL and UNDP to learn about their previous support for the Judicial Institute and to look for opportunities to collaborate.
- With the INL advisor, conduct a meeting with the Judicial Institute and Court Administration staff to discuss potential court administration activities.
- Continue to work with the Judicial Institute to develop a budget for the PMTP.
- LPAC will print the first deliverable, the Judicial Education Handbook which will serve as a basis for much of the capacity building with Judicial Institute staff.
- Discuss the creation of a program/course catalog and annual calendar.

### **LACC**

- Introduce the HICD team to the LACC and assist with the assessment as necessary.
- Continue to support the strengthening of the Prevention and Education Plan, including research concerning the target for the development of the pilot program.
- Assist with training the new two researchers for the Education and Prevention Units.
- Present a workshop, initiated with a commercial movie projection dealing with how a small group of dedicated reformers can defeat corruption, followed with group comments. The goal is to solicit views concerning strategic work and proper use of resources.
- Develop a training session for investigators and prevention officers dealing with corruption and the legal elements of corruption crimes.
- Complete the LACC portion of the draft Work Plan.



- Request by LACC leadership to review additional LPAC-supported specialists. LPAC will engage the specialists following this review.