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# Liberia Girls' Opportunities to Access Learning (GOAL) Plus Project

## Quarterly Report - REVISED

### Q2 - 1 January, 2014 – 31 March, 2014



April 2014

A partnership with the:

American Institutes for Research and Forum for African Women Educationalists

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# **Liberia Girls' Opportunities to Access Learning (GOAL) Plus Project**

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Prepared by:

American Institutes for Research

20 April, 2014

The author's views expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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## Acronyms

AIR	American Institutes for Research
AYP	Advancing Youth Project
CEO	County Education Officer
CSE	Conflict Sensitive Education
DEO	District Education Officer
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
GED	Girls' Education Division
GFD	Gender Focal Persons
GOAL	Girls' Opportunities to Access Learning
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
IBB	International Book Bank
INEE	International Network for Education in Emergencies
IR	Intermediate Result
KG	Pre-Primary Teachers – ABC through Kindergarten
L-MEP	Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program
LD	Liberian Dollar
LTTP	Liberia Teacher Training Program
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCA	Organization Capacity Assessment
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
S/IP	Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence
SIP	School Improvement Plan
STTA	Short Term Technical Assistance
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar

## I. Executive Summary

The Girls' Opportunities to Access Learning (GOAL) Plus project is a two-year United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-supported activity implemented by a partnership comprised of the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) Liberia. The aim of the GOAL Plus project is to build on the success of the previous GOAL project to improve primary school girls' retention, attendance, and enrollment in 60 schools in Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa counties. To this end, GOAL Plus is offering: (1) a scholarship program; (2) Parent Teacher Association (PTA) capacity building and community grants to improve the learning environments of schools; (3) an outreach awareness campaign to create support among parents and communities for girls' education and appropriate age enrollment; (4) whole-school health interventions; (5) support to the Ministry of Education (MOE) on topics related to girls' education; and (6) capacity building support to FAWE to strengthen their finance, administration, logistics, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities. Research and evaluation activities are being carried out to provide evidence concerning the performance key interventions and issues than impact girls' success in education to inform the policy dialogue and programming related to girls' education.

The second quarter of the GOAL Plus project was engaging and productive. As noted below, the project focused on procurement and distribution of Semester II scholarship packages and teachers' kits and Semester I fees reimbursement. During this report period, GOAL Plus distributed scholarship packages to 6,073 girls in Grades 1-6 at 60 schools in Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa counties with 613 teacher support kits delivered to their teachers. GOAL Plus reimbursed the school-related fees for the first semester in February 2014, following the confirmation of enrollment and regular attendance. Payment was made for 5,973 students confirmed as attending, amounting to USD36,465. Fees for Semester II are expected to be paid in April 2014.

GOAL Plus provided recognition certificate awards during this quarter. Three hundred and twenty three girls were awarded certificates of recognition as "Best Performance" for scoring 85 percent or above in their grade point average. Additionally, 75 girls' and 35 boys' parents were awarded certificates for enrolling their children in school at the appropriate age (age 6 or 7 in grade 1).

Girls' Clubs have been established in all three counties as of this quarter. The girls have already elected their leaders in some schools while others are still in the election process. GOAL Plus also completed the training and signing of contracts for 68 Girls' Club Mentors in the three project counties. The establishment of the GOAL Plus tutoring program was begun during this quarter by hiring tutoring teachers to work with girls with low academic performance.

Awareness meetings in school communities in Lofa, Bong and Grand Bassa have been conducted where enrollments and/or attendance rates were less than expected. Several of the schools new to GOAL Plus (among the 20 comparison schools under GOAL) also were visited to reinforce the detailed information about participation in the GOAL Plus program, including what to expect from the project and what is expected of the school community to support their girls' schooling.

The project also conducted School Progress Card trainings for PTAs in GOAL Plus schools. The School Progress Card is one of GOAL Plus project's PTA capacity development tools that is used by parents, community members, teachers, and students to measure and monitor what they value in their schools. The GOAL Plus Community Mobilization and Grants Team provided a two-day refresher training for 29 GOAL Plus-supported PTA leaders from Lofa, Bong and Grand Bassa. Trainings for the 31 new PTAs proposal development and grants management also were provided.

Through a partnership with the International Book Bank (IBB), GOAL Plus received a donation of 27,777 books. They are intended for primary students and teachers in the GOAL Plus-supported schools and junior secondary students and teachers in co-located Upper Basic schools. The selection of the books was completed by GOAL Plus staff with review and approval by the Assistant Minister for Basic and Primary Education. The books are currently in storage with distribution planned to begin this semester.

GOAL Plus is continuing its close support relationship with the MOE, including the Girls' Education Division (GED). GOAL Plus was represented in numerous meetings at the MOE that included the senior leadership, USAID, UNICEF, the Education NGO Forum, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and the European Union. The principal result of these working meetings is a costed 1 and 3 Year Operational Plan for the MOE that has been reviewed and approved by the President.

The GOAL Plus staff, with support from the AIR leadership, consulted with the MOE and USAID to determine areas of research that are of highest priority and more likely to be actionable when results are forthcoming. The three topics that were of most interest to the three groups of stakeholders were:

1. Girls' transition rates and trends from Grade 6 to Grade 7;
2. PTA strengthening and sustainability – what makes a successful and productive PTA; and
3. The extent to which support for access (GOAL Plus intervention) is associated with learning achievement (to be conducted in collaboration with USAID-Liberia Teacher Training Program (LTTP)).

AIR also submitted a request to an external funding source to conduct a participatory action research (PAR) study on the societal beliefs and gender norms contributing to the prevalence of sexual and intimate partner (S/IP) violence in Liberian school communities. This research is expected to inform and empower gender support and responses at the school level.

GOAL Plus is working with its partner, FAWE, to build capacities that are relevant to its scope of work under GOAL Plus. Joint planning and implementation between AIR and FAWE for GOAL Plus field activities has been intensified under the current project in the past two quarters and includes the Field Assistants on a regular basis. FAWE also has hired an M&E Specialist who is now working closely with the AIR/GOAL Plus M&E Officer and program staff for implementation of schedules, activities, and routine monitoring and collection of school community level data.

GOAL Plus continues to use its rigorous M&E system to track girls' enrollment, attendance, completion, and retention at an individual level for use in decision-making at the program and school levels.

## II. Description of Activities during the Quarter (January – March 2014)

### Introduction

The USAID-GOAL Plus project implemented by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) Liberia began operations in September 2013 with a two year period of performance through October 2015. In this second quarter of implementation, GOAL Plus has solidified its support relationship with all 60 schools in Grand Bassa, Bong, and Lofa, increased its engagement with the MOE at each level, confirmed its research agenda, and worked more closely with FAWE, on operational capacity development.

**Overall Objective: Improved Education Opportunities for Girls in Selected Communities of Lofa, Bong, and Grand Bassa Counties**

**Activity 1: Expand the most promising model (scholarships and community mobilization) to all 60 GOAL schools**

**IR 1: Increased Access to School for Girls in Targeted Communities of Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties**

**IR 1.1: Improved Academic Performance for Girls in Targeted Grades in Targeted Schools**

GOAL Plus continued to develop its relationships with the 40 GOAL-supported schools and sensitized and provided services the GOAL Plus support program to the 20 GOAL comparison schools since the launch of the project in September in Lofa, Bong, and Grand Bassa counties. The 40 original GOAL schools that received the separate intervention models under GOAL, have begun to receive to the whole package of interventions provided under GOAL Plus.

### *Scholarship Packages*

Girls enrolled in grades 1 through 6 continued to receive in-kind scholarships at the 60 schools in Bong, Grand Bassa and Lofa counties. GOAL Plus reimbursed the school-related fees for Semester I in February 2014 (up to USD5.00 at a public school and USD15.00 at a community schools as prescribed by the MOE), following the confirmation of enrollment and regular attendance. Payment was made for 5,973 students amounting to USD36,465. In March 2014, the team distributed scholarship packages for the Semester II to 6,073 girls which included uniforms for 6,037 girls whose measurements previously taken, school supplies, and basic hygiene items. Parents, Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members, and community leaders assisted in the packaging and distribution of the scholarship packages for the girl students. Principals were advised of the distribution of school fees and uniforms and agreed not to turn any girl students away in the absence of these before the GOAL Plus distribution.



*2nd Round Scholarship Distribution, Goapu Dolo School, Bong County*

Similar to Semester I, GOAL Plus also provided a basic teachers' kit to all teachers in the primary school grades as well as pre-primary teachers (KGs) for the second semester in March 2014.<sup>1</sup> A total of 613 teachers received these kits with 488 going to male teachers and 125 to female teachers. The teachers' kit includes such items as a lantern<sup>2</sup>, planning books, students' registrar books batteries, and blue and red pens.

Fees for Semester II will be paid in April 2014. The amount for reimbursement of fees remains the same for public school at USD5.00 and USD15.00 for community schools.

**Figure 1: Number of students and teachers receiving scholarship packages and teachers' kits for Semester II, USG Supported Schools, March 2014**

County	Students' Supplies			Teachers' Supplies (grades 1-6)		Teachers' Supplies (KGs) <sup>3</sup>		No. Teachers Receiving Kits
	No. Grade 1 Girls Receiving Packages	No. Grade 2 to 6 Girls Receiving Packages	Total No. of Students Receiving Packages	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Bassa	566	1,865	2,431	136	35	9	29	209
Bong	470	890	1,360	148	9	29	21	207
Lofa	554	1,728	2,282	141	10	25	21	197
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,590</b>	<b>4,478</b>	<b>6,073</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>613</b>

**Figure 2: Description of assorted scholarship items for girls attending USG supported schools Semester II, March 2014**

County	Copy books (doz)	Pens (doz)	Pencils (doz)	Body lotion (doz)	Hair grease (doz)	Laundry Soap (doz)	Bath Soap	Tooth brush	Tooth paste	Packaging bags
Bassa	809	404	404	202	202	607	607	202	202	202
Bong	453	227	227	113	113	340	340	113	113	113
Lofa	9128	380	380	190	190	570	570	190	190	190
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,390</b>	<b>1,011</b>	<b>1,011</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>1,517</b>	<b>1,517</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>505</b>

**Figure 3: Supplies distributed to 613 teachers in 60 USG supported schools - Semester II, March 2014**

County	Plan Books (pcs)	Pens (pcs)	Packaging Bags (pcs)	Ledgers (pcs)	Battery (packs)	Lamps KG Only (pcs)
Bassa	418	836	209	209	418	38
Bong	414	828	207	207	414	50
Lofa	394	788	197	197	394	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>2,452</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>134</b>

<sup>1</sup> Pre-primary teachers were included as they are expected to teach the ABC-K2 students, many of whom enrolled as a result of the GOAL-sponsored appropriate age enrollment campaign that focused on age 3 for the ABC classes.

<sup>2</sup> The lanterns are distributed once a year; teachers in grades 1-6 received them in the first semester and teachers in pre-primary (KG) received them as part of their kit during the second semester distribution.

<sup>3</sup> KG = Kindergarten, encompassing all of pre-primary

**Figure 4: Supplies distributed to 60 USG supported schools in Bassa, Bong and Lofa Counties, March 2014**

County	A4-paper (reams)	Dusters (doz.)	Chalk (doz.)
Bassa	18	2	21
Bong	25	15	28
Lofa	18	21	21
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>70</b>



*Lofa-Zorzor Assistant DEO James Zayzay Presenting Best Performance Certificates to Students at Nekebuzu while Parents Look On*

*Award to Best Performance Girls and Age Appropriate Enrollees.* There are 323 girls who scored (85 percent) or above in their grade point average; these girls were awarded certificates of recognition as “Best Performance” while 75 girls’ and 35 boys’ parents were also awarded certificates of recognition for enrolling their children in school at the appropriate age (age 6 or 7 for grade 1). Parents and PTA members participated in the presentation of certificates to the “Best Performance” girls and age appropriate enrollees in the schools. The ceremonies were conducted in the presence of other key stakeholders such as District Education Officers (DEO), other parents and students, teachers, and school administrators.

**Figure 5: Number of best performed and age appropriate enrollees in USG supported schools receiving gratitude, March 2014**

County	Best Performed Students (girls only)	Age Appropriate Enrollees			No. of students receiving certificates in March 2014
		Boys	Girls	Total	
Bassa	113	7	13	20	133
Bong	79	0	13	13	92
Lofa	131	28	49	77	208
<b>Total</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>433</b>

**Book Donation.** Through a partnership with the International Book Bank (IBB), GOAL Plus received a donation of 27,777 books. These books are intended for primary students and teachers in the GOAL Plus-supported schools and junior secondary students and teachers in co-located Upper Basic schools. The selection of the books was completed by GOAL Plus staff with review and approval by the Assistant Minister for Basic and Primary Education. The books selected were considered appropriate for basic education subjects, including reading and math, as well as youth-friendly literature in English. Teachers and students will benefit from the increased availability of high quality materials to supplement their classroom as well as teaching practices for individual professional development and classroom use. The books are currently in storage with distribution planned to begin this semester. The distribution will be done under several modalities, including sets for: (i) school libraries, (ii) girls who complete grade 6 as a reward, and (iii) teaching and learning materials.

### *Girls' Clubs, Mentoring, and Tutoring*

**Girls' Clubs.** Girls' Clubs have been established or re-established in all three counties as of this quarter. The girls have already elected their leaders in some schools while others are still in the election process. After the completion of the Girls' Club elections, the leaders from the clubs from all 60 project-supported schools will be convened for a leadership conference.

The membership of the Girls' Clubs varies but priority is given to girls, age 10 and above, especially older girls who are likely to drop out from school, and girls from feeder communities as well as from the community where the school is located. Ideally membership will also include some girls who had dropped out of school and then returned to encourage girls who have dropped out to also go back to school.

During the period under review, tips for traditional story writing were developed and shared with the FAWE Literacy Specialist. "Tips" for writing traditional stories were focused on how the students hear stories from their elders, the steps involved in writing traditional stories and the importance of background in a traditional story, especially as it relates to the cultural history of this country. Traditional story telling under the GOAL Plus project is intended to develop the listening, writing, and reading skills of Girls' Club members in schools. Key objectives for traditional story writing were developed:

- To motivate girls to listen to traditional stories from their parents and elders and write the stories based on their own understanding;
- To encourage reading comprehension and improve girls' writing skills;
- To connect community members to girls' learning activities; and
- To keep traditional stories alive with the younger generations.

A sample of a traditional story is being developed as a model for the students to see and relate to as they develop their own stories from their parents and elders in their communities. The theme of the sample story is about a game between greedy spider and the old woman where it lives.

Role model stories were developed by Mrs. Sulenteh, the wife of the Liberian Ambassador to the United States, to be shared with the Girls' Clubs and parents to encourage them in their education and to complete their schooling. A draft narrative was reviewed and approved and videos will be finalized to be shared in April.

**Mentoring.** GOAL Plus also completed the training and signing of contracts for 68 Girls' Club Mentors in the three project counties. The training was conducted in Grand Bassa, Bong and Lofa counties from March 18 - 29, 2014, bringing together Mentors from 60 schools in the three counties under the GOAL Plus project. The general objective of this training was to build the capacity of the female teachers and community members who are serving as Girls' Club Mentor. The specific objectives were to give guidance on:

- using the different activity books and to take responsibility as mentors/supervisors for Girls' Clubs in project schools and communities
- meeting with parents to motivate them to support the girl-child to go to school
- establishing and managing Girls' Clubs in Grand Bassa, Bong and Lofa counties
- working with principals of schools to address issues faced by girls that might stop them from attending school

The training in Bassa brought together 24 mentors from all project schools in the county. Six schools in Grand Bassa have two mentors each due to the large number of girls in those schools. The six schools are the Kpanay Town Public, Benson River, Bassa Demonstration Elementary, Hope KG, Bless Elementary, and the Lower Hardlandville Public School. In Bong County, the training brought together 24 mentors from all of the project schools in the county. In Lofa, 20 mentors from 18 schools across the project county were trained. Two out of the 18 schools have two mentors each: Konia Garbo and Borkeza Public Schools.

#### **Participant Feedback on Mentor Training**

*This training will help not only the girls but also us to know what to do as teachers even in the classroom*

*Now that we have received the training, we are going to help not only girls but parents to take care of their children, especially the girls*

*This training need to be done with the tutors and even teachers to help all girls not only in school but out of school girls*

**Tutoring.** The establishment of the tutoring program was begun during this quarter by hiring tutors to work with girls with low academic performance. These teachers were selected in collaboration with the principals, other teachers, and the PTA working within the schools.

Sixty (60) tutors signed contracts under GOAL Plus. Others will complete the signing of their contracts in the third quarter. Training of teachers for the proper conduct of tutoring classes will be conducted during the next quarter. This will help both returning and new tutors understand their role and conduct their sessions for more effective student learning. Under GOAL Plus, only students facing difficulties meeting the right marks will be encouraged to attend tutoring classes that focus on four core subjects: math, English, science, and social studies.

## **IR 2: Improved Learning Environment for Girls in Selected Communities of Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties**

### **School Improvement Grants, PTA Strengthening, and Community Mobilization**

*School Improvement Grants.* Two-day proposal development trainings for school improvement grants were held for the 31 PTAs supported by the GOAL Plus project that were not eligible for grants under the GOAL project. The trainings took place from February 3-11, 2014. The purpose was to assist the PTA members in accessing school improvement grants to make improvements to their schools with an expected positive effect on girls' enrollments, retention, and promotion rates. The two-day trainings concentrated on the relationship of grants to the School Improvement Plans (SIP) that they developed in the previous quarter and the basics of grant implementation, including how to open PTA bank accounts for the grant fund transfer, the expected type and level of community contribution, e.g., 15-20% of the total amount of the grant.

At the beginning of the training, a proposal form was provided to the PTA members which helped them to: (1) identify priority needs among all of the needs at the school; (2) describe the proposed project, including why certain needs were selected; (3) describe the impact of the selected needs on enrollment, retention, promotion and the learning environment; (4) describe how the activities

will be executed; and (5) the expected outcome(s) of the proposed activities. The PTA members were also taught how to develop a budget including itemization of unit quantity and cost, how to apply and show their financial and in-kind assistance and the grant assistance provided by GOAL Plus, how to keep appropriate and accurate records, and the need for regular PTA meetings to monitor and maintain implementation of the grant-funded activities. It was further stressed that the proposal articulate how the award and implementation of the grant would achieve the following:



*Participants presenting at Proposal Development Training*

1. Increase girl's enrollment completion and retention
2. Improve the learning environment for both girls and boys
3. Increase community participation and contribution in the day to day running of the school

The number of participants attending GOAL Plus PTA proposal development trainings are indicated below in Figure 6:

**Figure 6: PTA Proposal Development Training Participants**

County	No. of Trainings	Number of Participants		County Total
		Male	Female	
Bassa	1	26	8	34
Bong	1	45	7	52
Lofa	1	31	5	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>122</b>

**School Grants Financial Management Training for 31 GOAL Plus PTAs.** The financial management training for the 31 schools eligible for school grants in Year 1 of GOAL Plus was conducted from March 21-30, 2014. This training provided PTAs with knowledge and skills to perform their duties for the effective implementation and reporting of GOAL Plus' school improvement grant activities. The PTAs were provided with basic guidelines describing the grant process, which was intended to enhance the PTAs' knowledge about the school improvement grants as well as the proper implementation procedure of the grant cycle. This training also developed the skills of PTA members to administer and manage the school improvement grant funds. The members were provided with the necessary grant management details, including the importance of PTA meetings before and after any bank withdrawals; allocable, allowable and reasonable budget costs; financial procurement processes; maintaining an accurate record of money received and spent, i.e., grant income and expenditure record; maintaining a grant supply control register book; an activity work plan; and grant financial templates and forms.

**Description of the Training Activities.** The role of the PTA leadership in spearheading grants implementation with the community was emphasized with specific examples given on ensuring that volunteers and employees understand their roles and responsibilities and implementation of the project according to plan.

**Maintain Bank Accounts & Cashbooks.** The PTA executive is responsible for ensuring that the bank account and cashbooks are maintained and periodically submitted to the PTA for inspection.

**Procurement of Project Materials.** The PTA is responsible for the procurement and safe keeping of all project materials. The PTA financial secretary is responsible for purchasing all grant materials as well as ensuring that they are promptly and properly delivered. If for any reason GOAL Plus purchases the materials on their behalf, the PTA will need to arrange for transporting the materials to the site.

**Manage the Project Funds.** The PTA has the responsibility to account for project funds to GOAL Plus, the school, and the community at large. The treasurer is the main custodian of the grant funds and, in addition, the person in charge of keeping the materials safe.

**Reporting.** The PTA is expected to inform the GOAL Plus team and other stakeholders about its progress toward implementing the grant-funded activities. PTAs must submit timely mid-term and final reports to GOAL Plus. The mid-term report is due at the time that the PTA submits a request for the second installment of the grant. The mid-term report should contain:

- An activity report, highlighting successes and challenges faced in project implementation.
- A financial report, showing the project budget with actual expenditures matched against each budget item, such as community contribution and materials, and the balance of any unspent money.

The final report should contain:

- An activity report, highlighting the accomplishments of the project, lessons learned, and the challenges faced in the project.
- A financial report, showing the project budget with actual expenditures matched against each budget item, such as community contribution and materials, and the balance of any unspent money.

**PTA Grant Meetings and Bank Withdrawals.** The PTA leadership is responsible for calling and conducting regular meetings in which the PTA reviews the progress of project implementation and ensures that all PTA members and other community members are made aware of what activities have been implemented and their status.

PTA leaders should conduct work plan review meetings. The work plan acts as an implementation guide: what, when, how, why and who is to implement which activities. It may become necessary for the plan to be altered. When the PTA reviews progress to date, it is important to refer back to the approved action plan. This is achieved by listing the planned activities and their completion dates and then cross-referencing to confirm whether the planned activities were completed as expected. If progress is not being achieved as planned, the PTA needs to identify the reason(s) and agree on corrective measures.

Before a bank withdrawal is made, the PTA should meet to approve the items to be purchased and the amount of money to be withdrawn. A minimum of two authorized signatories are needed before any withdrawal is made. The proceedings of the meeting should be recorded.

**Record Keeping.** PTAs are to keep all the documents related to the project in the file provided to them. PTAs should also ensure that, for any document sent to the GOAL Plus office, they maintain a copy for their file. The project file should be accessible to the PTA and other stakeholders, especially the MOE and GOAL Plus staff. The project file includes the following documents:

1. Project proposal
2. Grant agreement

3. Check or photocopy of the check of the funds that were received (if disbursed by a check)
4. Copy of receipts/acknowledgements of funds or materials received
5. Check or photocopy of checks used in the PTA's financial transactions
6. Grants Income / Expenditure Records
7. Supplies Control Register Book
8. Narrative reports (monthly, quarterly, mid-term, and project close out)
9. Feedback on reports from GOAL Plus
10. Minutes of meetings
11. Monitoring reports
12. Correspondence

**Financial Procedures.** The PTA must ensure that the beneficiary community knows how project money is being spent to ensure transparency. Also, in addition to GOAL Plus reports, the PTA is also expected to inform the community at large about the progress of the project and expenses incurred on project activities.

**Acknowledgement of Receipt and Use of Funds.** When funds are received, the PTA acknowledge receipt of funds by issuing a receipt to GOAL Plus. The funds should be kept in the PTA bank account, if possible. Use of an alternative bank account than the PTA bank account for the GOAL plus grant must be approved by the GOAL Plus Finance Manager.

An activity or purchase cost is reasonable if, in its nature or amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under circumstances prevailing at the time a decision was made to incur the cost. For example, if the cost of public transportation from the project site to a local shopping center is LD100, an expenditure exceeding this amount would be regarded as unreasonable. Another example is if the average cost of an ordinary door frame is LD1,000 it would be unreasonable to pay LD2,000 for the same type and kind of door frame.

**Budget and Procurement.** The approved budget gives an indication of how much is to be spent on each specific activity. PTAs are expected to adhere to approved budgets and work plans. If it becomes necessary that these should be changed or altered, GOAL Plus should be consulted in writing before any changes can be made. The PTA is responsible for budgeting and procurement of project materials. Procurement should be done inline within the following guidelines:

1. Make sure that all proposed purchases are approved by the PTA leadership.
2. Obtain receipts for all purchases. Receipts should have the following information: receipt number, date of purchase, printed name, address and telephone number of the shop or supplier, items purchased, unit cost, total cost, and the signature of the supplier.
3. Make and keep photocopies of all receipts.
4. Enter purchased goods in a register as received items before they are released for use. Similarly, enter all items removed for use in the out column of the register. This is important because PTAs need to be able to monitor stock or items purchased.

The typical procurement process is to:

1. Identify what materials the grant activities need at the meeting.
2. Go out and get prices from businesses in the community or the next big town.
3. Make a selection among the prices and identify the business that has a reasonable price or that can provide quality materials or services and their time of delivery.

## GRANT FINANCIAL FORMS

### Cash Advance Request and Confirmation Fund Received Form

The PTA will maintain a recording of money received and spent to undertake grant activities. GOAL Plus will assist in establishing record books for each PTA. How grant funds were requested and received needs to be documented.

### Maintenance of a Grant Supplies Control Register Book

The control register book will help PTAs safeguard project materials. All supplies purchased for the project should be entered into the register before they are removed and used (issued). Only designated persons are allowed to sign for supplies. Supplies are purchased when the project is about to start.

### Income and Expenditure Record

The grant funds received and the expenditures are recorded and eventually will coincide, with expenditures supported with the receipts of all purchases and payments. This report accompanies the mid-term and final narrative and financial reports.

### Mid-Term and Final Narrative and Financial Reports

PTAs must ensure that the narrative report represents the status, lessons learned, best practices, accomplishments and challenges experienced by the project, accompanied by the financial report.

### Progress Review Monitoring and Grantee Close-Out

PTAs must track the level of work completed before each installment, record the progress and finally the end date of the grant activities.

**Training Outputs.** From March 21-30, three two-day trainings occurred on school improvement grants. A total of 123 participants from 31 PTAs new to GOAL Plus grants participated in the trainings. By the end of the trainings, the PTA members were able to demonstrate the processes through presentations and role play.

**Figure 7: Number of participants in the grants financial and management training workshops, by county**

County	No. or participants		County Total
	Females	Males	
Lofa	5	30	35
Bong	7	45	52
Bassa	5	31	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>123</b>

*PTA Strengthening.* The GOAL Plus Community Mobilization and Grants Team provided a two-day refresher training for 29 GOAL Plus-supported PTA leaders from Lofa, Bong and Grand Bassa counties from January 20-30, 2014. The purpose of the refresher training was to reinforce and sustain PTA leaders' interest to better perform their roles and responsibilities according to MOE PTA operational policy, and to facilitate and lead the development and implementation of SIP to improve the learning environment for girls and boys in the 60 schools. School community PTA representatives participating in the training have previously received at least one round of similar but more extensive training during the GOAL project.



*PTA Refresher Training in Grand Bassa*

The PTAs participating in this refresher training were grant recipients under the GOAL project and therefore not eligible for grant support during this first year of GOAL Plus (which is being directed this year to the 31 schools that did not receive grants under GOAL). However, as part of the ongoing GOAL Plus support to the schools, these PTAs are being motivated and coached to continue the practice of developing annual SIPs and raising any necessary funding from their own sources. In addition to continuing an active role in

supporting the quality of their children's learning environment, the performance of these PTAs in implementing their SIPs during this year without grant support will be a factor in their application next year when they become eligible for the Year 2 competitive grants.

**Training methodology.** The MOE's PTA operational training manual was used alongside the GOAL Plus SIP methodology for the refresher training. At the refresher training, PTAs shared their experiences with the PTA training they received in the past and how it impacted their leadership roles in the schools, especially the development and implementation of SIPs. These experiences and lessons informed recommendations that were shared for future SIPs that are practical, applicable, and sustainable within each school context. GOAL Plus also introduced for use by PTAs the school level data gathered through the project's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system. These data provide guidance for self-assessment and decision making about priority needs and activities.

The methodology included sharing of experiences, lessons learned and best practices which would help to inform future SIPs. PTAs reflected on the development and implementation of their first SIPs and identified improvements for future SIPs. PTA leaders were placed in micro-working sessions in which they developed draft priority needs for each individual school. The draft priority needs were taken back to their respective communities as part of a broader School Improvement Planning session that included a wider range of perspectives in each school community, including students, teachers, school administrators, and local leaders.

**Training implementation.** The training was implemented over two days. Day 1 training included the objective of the refresher training, i.e., methodologies, expectations and rule setting, PTA organization function and structure, leadership and PTA sub-committees, team and relationship building, advocacy within the PTAs, planning and coordinating PTA meetings and PTA bylaws and constitution. Day 2 of the training dealt exclusively with an in-depth discussion of SIP development and implementation, including needs identification, the difference between school needs and wants, prioritization of identified needs reflecting the basic opportunity to learn, resource mobilization and their importance in school improvement, and draft preparation and presentation of SIPs by PTA leaders.

During the course of the training, the GOAL Plus team encouraged PTAs to identify critical underlying elements in their SIP which contribute to improvements in the opportunity for girls and boys to learn as part of their school improvement strategy. In many school communities, these

strategies are over-looked or sometimes PTAs do not think about them at all. School improvement plans developed by PTAs in the past were mainly focused on physical improvements. The GOAL Plus team asked PTAs to also consider and include in their future SIP activities tied around nonphysical school improvements, such as:

- Parents support of their children’s education
- Completion of school grant projects
- PTA members monitoring of schools and awareness raising about enrollment, performance, and attendance
- PTA initiatives to establish study classes
- Burden of pregnancy and early marriages among teenagers
- Suspension of movie screening and video clubs in school communities during school days
- Regular PTA meetings
- Support, promote, and ensure the usage of School Progress Card, as well as improvements in the areas that received low marks
- Ensure safe hygienic and sanitation practices in school
- Town chiefs, DEO’s etc. taking action against parents who do not send their children to school

**Training outputs.** Five PTA leaders each from 29 schools in Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa received PTA refresher training. A total of 143 PTA leaders participated in the refresher training. The DEO from GOAL Plus program school districts including the MOE Planning Officers in the counties also participated in the training. See Figures 8 and 9 for a list of GOAL Plus program schools and participants by county that participated in the PTA refresher training.

**Figure 8: Schools that participated in the PTA refresher training, by county**

Bassa	Bong	Lofa
Bassa Demonstration	Nuarpah Waterside	Gleh
Lower Hardnersville	William R. Tolbert	Gorlu
Kpanay Town	Gorpu Dolo Boi	Gbonyea
William V.S. Tubman (AM and PM)	Togbah Kolliegbor	Borkeza
Hope Kindergarten	Warty Charity	Boi
Tubmanville	Gbokew Kollie	Wakesu
Bless Elementary	Dormeyanutah	Zuwulo
Al-Nasru Islamic	John P. Mitchell	Zelemai
	Gwetamue	Konia
	Kollieta	
	Geita	

**Figure 9: Participants attending GOAL Plus PTA refresher training**

County	No. of Trainings	No. of Participants		Total
		Male	Female	
Bassa	1	26	14	40
Bong	1	36	19	55
Lofa	1	31	17	48
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>143</b>

For the PTA leaders and community members, the implementation of a SIP requires PTA leadership to ensure that the SIP is implemented. The PTA must encourage and keep community members motivated from start to finish during the school improvement planning and implementation process. The PTA leaders benefit from documenting the successes and challenges encountered during the implementation of the SIP to be shared with others in order to replicate best practices.

GOAL Plus staff will continue to provide technical support and individualized assistance to PTAs for school improvement planning and implementation as well as documenting school improvement successes. Community mobilization activities also raise awareness and encourage community buy-in to school improvement planning and help to address barriers to positive change. Through this approach, the project is working more closely with the DEOs, the County School Board, and local government administrators. The project also is increasing routine personal contact with the communities through the project Field Assistants.

**School Progress Cards.** The School Progress Card is one of GOAL Plus project’s PTA capacity development tools that is used by parents, community members, teachers and students to measure what they value in their schools (please see Annex A). GOAL Plus conducted School Progress Card trainings in GOAL Plus schools from March 20-April 2, 2014.

**Figure 10: School Progress Card Training Participants**

County	No. of Schools	No. of trainings	Number of Participants		County Total
			Male	Female	
Bassa	6	1	77	81	158
Bong	7	1	75	195	270
Lofa	5	1	100	120	220
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>648</b>

The participatory learning approach used among school stakeholders provides parents, community leaders, teachers, and students with the vision, direction, leadership and management of what is required to provide the conditions that create effective learning opportunities. The School Progress Card is comprised of nine dimensions of an effective school:

1. School and community relations
2. Opportunity to learn
3. Supportive learning environment
4. Healthy school environment
5. Sanitation and safe drinking water
6. Security, safety, and psychosocial well-being of students and teachers
7. Support for teaching and learning
8. Recreational activities
9. School record and record keeping

Several indicators are listed beneath each major category, by which a score is placed. The score values are labeled as follows: (3) Very true, (2) Half true, (1) Small true, and (0) Not true at all.

The assessment of school progress, using the card, is conducted using an on-going participatory discussion among parents, students, community members, and teachers. Eighteen GOAL Plus schools participated in the School Progress Card evaluation training. Eventually all of the GOAL Plus project’s 60 schools will be evaluated using the progress card. The Field Assistants will lead

and facilitate the training and evaluations at the school level. GOAL Plus staff will provide periodic oversight to address areas of concerns that will emerge while they roll-out the process.

The School Progress Card training was interactive and the scoring process proved interesting. At times, parents, and students or parents and teachers had opposing views about the scoring of a particular indicator which sometimes resulted in disagreements. Students and women were more vocal and responsive in providing answers to the indicators. The process was received as a welcome development in each community visited and there was no objection from any community about the use of the School Progress Card – each embraced the concept and expressed willingness to continue the exercise at the beginning of the second semester and at the end of the school year. The training exercise for school administrators and PTA leadership was designed and conducted with the expectation that they will lead and facilitate the process in their own schools, without continuing external support.

**Methodology.** The School Progress Card evaluation training was done with parents, community leaders, students, and teachers in attendance. GOAL Plus staff, and at times the PTA chairperson or school principal, led the process by reading out the indicators associated with the categories and participants provided a score option associated with each indicator. After all the indicators were scored, the total score was then given a color coded interpretation.<sup>4</sup> The color coded interpretation was read out loud to the participants. Feedback was then solicited from participants to get their views about the grading process. When general agreement or acceptance was reached with the grading, the activity came to a close and a copy of the graded School Progress Card was given to the principal to be used as data for decision making on priority areas for improvement.

**School Progress Card Results.** An analysis was conducted by comparing the average score of the indicators of each category across the three counties. For instance the possible score for the School and Community Relation category is 36, and Bassa received the highest of 22.5 followed by Lofa 22.2 and Bong, 20.4. Figure 11 indicates the comparison scores. In some cases, the difference between the counties is negligible.

**Figure 11: School Progress Cards Results for early participants**

Value Category	Possible Score	Bassa	Bong	Lofa
1. School and Community Relation	36	22.5	20.4	22.2
2. Opportunity to Learn	21	13.5	13.1	14.4
3. Supportive Learning Environment	36	25.3	28.7	29.4
4. Healthy School Environment	15	9.8	8.5	7.5
5. Sanitation and Safe Drinking Water	24	7.0	5.2	7.2
6. Security, Safety and Psychosocial Wellbeing of Students	18	13.7	13.8	15.7
7. Support for Teaching and Learning	27	17.0	19.7	17.2
8. Recreational Activities	12	7.6	7.7	9.0
9. School Record and Record Keeping	12	9.8	8.0	6.6

When the scores were given a color coded interpretation, no school from the three counties passed green which indicates that many of the schools’ parents, teachers, PTAs, and education offices

<sup>4</sup> Red is failure; yellow is moving away from the danger zone; green is average but has not yet moved into creating learning opportunities; purple represents a commendable job toward creating learning opportunities; blue is a model school.

understand the concept of what it takes to provide the basis for effective learning opportunities, but achieving that level of quality is still a challenge.

**Sharing Approaches and Tools.** Two USAID-Advancing Youth Project (AYP) staff, Owen Dunbar and Maada Rogers, attended the School Progress Card training session in Barseegiah District # 3 in Grand Bassa County. The purpose of their attendance was to observe the way GOAL Plus implements the School Progress Card approach and whether the lessons learned and best practices could be replicated within AYP communities. The GOAL Plus project team shared copies of the SIPs that the PTAs had developed to show the priorities and the direction they envisioned for school improvement. The AYP staff expressed appreciation for the School Progress Card training session and how it was organized and facilitated by GOAL Plus including the participation of parents, students, community leaders, and school administrators. They also expressed appreciation for the way everyone shared their perspectives, provided feedback, and engaged constructively in disagreement about a score option before finally coming to an agreement.

Other observations from the School Progress Card training session revealed that more women participate in PTA meetings and are involved in the decision making progress of their children's education. According to one mother in Bassa, she said that the father of her children always told her "These children are yours, so take care of them".

**Observations from School Progress Card Training.** During the School Progress Card meetings, parents made recommendations and GOAL Plus staff observed and documented key points that should be taken into consideration for action. In Lofa, for instance, most women are involved in attending PTA meetings and providing support to the school. GOAL Plus needs to formulate a strategy to attract more men to participate in school improvement. Parents mentioned students staying away from school during school days and going to video clubs. The farm burdens faced by children also prohibit them from having time to study at home or attend school regularly which affects their completion and pass rates.

On a more positive note, some schools were observed and acknowledged as taking necessary steps to improve the learning environment. For instance in Borkeza, PTA dues are being used for construction of a six classroom annex and in Boeglay PTA dues were used to construct a school latrine. In Hope Kindergarten School, students are often hit by boys driving motorbikes when crossing the road. Parents have gone to the police and complained to deploy police officer at the crossing point (but the police have yet to take action).

*Community Mobilization.* GOAL Plus' community mobilization activities continue to play an integral role in the effectiveness of the scholarships and school improvement grants. Community mobilization creates awareness among the parents, community, and other stakeholders on the importance of girls attending school on a regular basis.

The Community Mobilization and Grants Team, in collaboration with GOAL Plus county-based Field Assistants conducted awareness meetings in school communities in Lofa, Bong, and Grand Bassa counties where enrollments and/or attendance rates were lower than expected. Several of the schools new to GOAL Plus (among the 20 comparison schools under GOAL) were also visited to reinforce the detailed information about participation in the GOAL Plus program, including what to expect from the project and what is expected of the school community to support their girls' schooling. The community awareness meetings focused on the following objectives:

- Roles and responsibilities of parents, PTAs, community leaders, and education stakeholders in ensuring girls' enrollment, attendance, performance, and promotion
- Parents' and community members' full involvement in creating awareness of girls' education and strategies to help them remain in school

The meetings were attended by PTA leaders, parents, guardians, community leaders, and other stakeholders. The discussions focused on: (1) students' attendance, retention, performance, promotion, and their risk of dropping out; (2) parents, community members and stakeholders' roles and responsibilities in promoting girls' education through strategies that will allow girls to attend classes regularly and ensure that girls will not associate with activities that may negatively affect their learning process; (3) PTAs' roles in ensuring regular visitation on school campuses to monitor school conditions and girls' performances and retention (key issues highlighted in their SIPs); and (4) what else the community can do to improve the school environment in their communities and ensure that girls' enroll, attend, and graduate.

**Community  
Mobilization Meetings**

Gorlu, Nekebozu,  
Tailemai, Kokormah,  
Pengia, Garyea, and  
Joseph M. N. Gbardyu

**Lofa County Awareness Meetings.** When the awareness meeting was held at the schools in Lofa, the team learned that farming, teenage pregnancy and gold mining were the main factors leading to girls not attending regularly and dropping out. During the discussions, it was mentioned that some parents take their children, including girls, to work on farms during school hours. It was also mentioned that some of the girls chose to go to work in the gold mine and, in the process, some of them became pregnant and subsequently dropped out of school. Based on these discussions, the participants formulated the following commitments to help the girls at risk of dropping out to return to school:

- Parents, guardians, stakeholders and the community, including women and youth groups, agreed to ensure that girls are given proper care and actively discouraged from activities that will make them vulnerable to dropping out of school.
- The community, through the leadership, should enforce the free and compulsory primary education announced by the Government of Liberia. The leadership will encourage every parent to enroll their children, both girls and boys, in school and encourage girls and boys to remain until they complete primary education and to continue to the next level. The girls should be encouraged to serve as role models, through the Girls' Clubs, to conduct outreach activities in the community to convey the importance of girls' education.
- PTAs should work with parents and education leaders to ensure that girls who are enrolled stay in school and get promoted to the next grade or level.

**Bong County Awareness Meetings.** The communities in Bong county were experiencing problems similar to those in Lofa. The team discovered over the course of these meetings that some parents in Bong do not express awareness of the importance of girls' education nor what roles and responsibilities they can take on to support girls' education. Based on these findings, the team provided participants with suggestions for appropriate roles and encouraged them to support improvements in their children's education.

Not all of the communities in Bong County were deficient in their knowledge regarding the benefits of girls' education, however. The parents, teachers and community members involved with Kokormah Public School, for example, were enthusiastic about the presence of the GOAL Plus project in their school. They indicated that they had been trying to transform their school

environment and thereby improve student attendance. According to one elder of the town, “In the past, we have tried to improve the standard of the school but our efforts did not materialize. The coming of the GOAL Plus project, in the community, is a relief to us as a community. We appreciate GOAL Plus and we commit ourselves to support the girls to remain in school and also support the project in achieving its goals.”



*Community Mobilization Awareness Meeting, Bong County*

**Grand Bassa County Awareness Meetings.** In Grand Bassa County, the team conducted a meeting at the Joseph M. N. Gbadyu Public School. The meeting focused on the rates of girls’ attendance, retention, performance, and completion. Three key issues evolved during the course of these meetings:

- The shortage of teachers in the school
- Parents and community members not supporting the school
- Some parents and children not valuing education

There appeared to be consensus among parents, the school administration and the Township Commissioner, Hon. Moses V. Daduo, on these issues. Initially, the MOE had assigned four teachers including the principal to the school. Of these four, two are regular (principal and registrar), one teacher is not listed as a government employee under the school, and the fourth teacher’s name was deleted from the government payroll and eventually stopped teaching. The participants’ discussion then centered on the best way forward for parents, community members, and leaders to meaningfully contribute to the improvement of the school. The discussion also highlighted strategies to be employed to encourage girls who are out of school to enroll.

The participants unanimously agreed to support the project through encouraging girls to enroll, attend school regularly, perform well, and be promoted to the next class or level. The Commission stated, “We will ensure that all parents send their children to school once the child reaches the appropriate age. I will use my administrative influence to encourage stakeholders in the community to constructively contribute to the development of the school community.”

The participants also discussed how the community could reasonably support the volunteer teacher’s pay (the fourth teacher not on payroll), so that the man would be adequately compensated for providing his time to assist the children in the community.

**Joseph M.N. Gbadya**  
**Town/Communities Targeted**  
**for Community Mobilization**

Ceetar, Char-deh gar, Dond, Flog, Gbar, George, Ham-madu, Ma-deh-dyu, Mayu-sai, Kar-yah, Kie-yah, Jeremiah Harris, Taye, Yellah, and Zoe

The Commissioner and Town Chiefs also made a commitment to call a Township general meeting in which the participants will discuss issues relating to the improvement of the school and how to encourage children to enroll. The commissioner and the meeting participants also agreed to reach out to parents who did not attend the meeting to inform them of their roles and responsibilities.

At the conclusion of the meeting, participants were informed that the next round of community mobilization that will take place in the various catchment communities for Joseph M. N. Gbadyu Public School.

The Community Mobilization Team held a fruitful meeting with the Grand Bassa Education Officer (CEO), Mr. Edwin G. Kwapae. The team shared the outcome of the community mobilization awareness meeting at the Joseph M. N. Gbadyu School. Action points and related resolutions were shared. The need for additional teachers for the school was relayed to him and the status of teachers in the school was highlighted for government intervention through his office.

The Grand Bassa CEO commended the GOAL Plus project for the support it provided to promote girls' education in the two districts (# 3 and # 5), including the provision of scholastic materials and other support services. He committed to working with GOAL Plus to provide quality education for girls. He also commented that information sharing between the two parties will help to cement the cordial working relationship between GOAL Plus and the MOE at the county level.

**Figure 12: Meeting Attendance per County**

County	Name of School	Male	Female	Total
Bassa	Joseph M. N. Gbadyu	6	14	20
Bong	Garyea	7	12	19
Bong	Kokormah	19	23	42
Bong	Pengia	14	10	24
Lofa	Gorlu	11	66	77
Lofa	Nekebozu	2	24	26
<b>Total</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>208</b>

**IR 3: Increased Awareness of the Importance of Educating Girls in Selected Counties, Districts, and Communities**

*Activity 2: Provide support to the Ministry of Education in the dissemination and use of the National Policy on Girls' Education*

GOAL Plus is continuing its close support relationship with the MOE, including the Girls' Education Division (GED). GOAL Plus was represented in numerous meetings at the MOE that included the senior leadership, USAID, UNICEF, the Education NGO Forum, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and the European Union. The principal result of these working meetings is a costed 1 and 3 Year Operational Plan for the MOE that has been reviewed and approved by the President.

In the course of supporting development of the Operations Plan, GOAL Plus shared an overview of where the project supports the Ministry's plan for girls' education, including our planned field activity expenditures, and a summary of our first quarterly report. At an MOE meeting with the

donor partners, USAID shared copies of the GOAL Plus overview of support to the Ministry's plan, which the MOE accepted as a model for other donor's and projects' inputs.

During this planning process with the MOE, a two-person GPE Mission was conducted to review their support program to the MOE (funded by the GPE, administered by the World Bank, and coordinated by UNICEF). As part of that process, GOAL Plus participated in an Education NGO Forum meeting with the GPE Mission to discuss our (NGOs) role in the GPE/MOE process. It was agreed that the MOE should encourage the Education NGO Forum to meet with them on common issues to better understand the field issues and to find common solutions where possible. One example offered from GOAL Plus experience was the challenge of setting up bank accounts for PTAs and schools. The MOE, USAID-Liberia Teacher Training Program (LTTP), and other NGOs have faced similar challenges and we concluded that we may find more power in dealing with EcoBank, for example, to reduce fees and simplify the process if we approach them together rather than on an individual basis. As a result, the GPE encouraged the MOE to convene task forces with NGOs partners to tackle common issues.

In February, the International Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) requested UNICEF and USAID, through GOAL Plus, to pilot its newly developed Conflict Sensitive Education (CSE) Pack. INEE proposed to conduct a two-day pilot training on the CSE pack in Liberia on February 12-13, 2014. GOAL Plus agreed with USAID, UNICEF and the Education NGO Forum to co-host this training at the MOE, with agreement from the Minister to conduct the training at the MOE. GOAL Plus' role in co-hosting was in organizing and communication; budget support for the pilot training was from INEE (from a UNICEF grant). This pilot training was INEE's first on CSE and will serve as a model for trainings worldwide on the CSE Pack. The attendees for the training included representatives from USAID, other donor and implementing partners and NGOs, and the MOE.



*Assistant Minister Lawrence (second from Left) at Scholarship Distribution in Bong*

MOE Assistant Minister Lawrence and Lorpu Mannah (GED Director) accompanied the GOAL Plus Scholarship Team to two schools in Bassa and two schools in Bong and actively participated in the distribution process. The distribution teams were also joined throughout the entire process by three members of the MOE who also were very active in the process. These MOE representatives expressed appreciation for the process used by GOAL Plus to engage the school community and for the support packages for the girls.

Assistant Minister Lawrence is planning a series of workshops for all school principals in the next quarter. At these workshops, she will introduce and distribute the revised National Policy on Girls' Education. To facilitate the use of the Policy at the school level, GOAL Plus developed a summary of the Policy to be used in the training and given to the principals to take back to share with their schools and communities.

*Activity 3: Conduct research on issues related to girls' completion of primary education and extend M&E activities*

GOAL Plus continues to use its rigorous M&E system to track girls' enrollment, attendance, completion, and retention at an individual level for use in decision-making at the program and school levels. GOAL Plus is collecting enrollment data for girls and boys in pre-primary and junior high grades associated with GOAL Plus-supported schools. The objective is to use the data to analyze GOAL Plus' school programming and to better understand transition patterns. GOAL Plus also is collecting additional data on boys in the GOAL Plus supported schools to explore any effects and unintended consequences of the GOAL and GOAL Plus interventions on boys and across the schools holistically. This assessment can provide a natural within-school comparison group that can be used to estimate program impacts.

The GOAL Plus staff, with support from the AIR leadership, consulted with the MOE and USAID to determine areas of research that are of highest priority and more likely to be actionable when results are forthcoming. The three topics that were of most interest to the three groups of stakeholders were:

1. Girls' transition rates and trends from Grade 6 to Grade 7
2. PTA strengthening and sustainability – what makes a successful and productive PTA
3. The extent to which support for access (GOAL Plus intervention) is associated with learning achievement through reading interventions and Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA)

*1. Girls' transition rates and trends from Grade 6 to Grade 7.* The GOAL and GOAL Plus projects were designed to promote primary school access, retention, promotion, and completion for girls. The projects have been tracking 3,443 individual scholarship holders in grades 1-6 for three years<sup>5</sup> and are now tracking 6,000+ girls. A concern in the Liberian education system is the transition from Grade 6 to Grade 7 (Upper Basic), where the drop off for girls' enrollment is dramatic: nationally, the Grade 6 enrollment for girls in 2013 were 19,336 while the enrollment for Grade 7 were 13,625, a 30 percent drop in the transition.

GOAL Plus is currently collecting enrollment data on last year's Grade 6 girl students in GOAL-supported schools to identify those who have successfully transitioned to grade 7 and those who have not. Qualitative research is planned during the mid-part of 2014 at the community level with key stakeholders—including girls, teachers, parents, community leaders, and MOE staff and other stakeholders—in order to better understand the motivations, opportunities, and challenges related to successful transition for girls and continuation of their education. This study will include moving beyond anecdotal information to get a more nuanced and realistic understanding of the effects of over-age enrollment<sup>6</sup> on drop out and how the project-supported Girls' Clubs and sexual and reproductive health activities affect retention and transition for adolescent girls and young women.

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<sup>5</sup> Grade 1 was added in the second year

<sup>6</sup> The NER for girls in primary school is 20.1% while the GER is 50% (MOE, 2013).

**Figure 13: Illustrative Data Needs for Transition from Grade 6 to Grade 7 Research**

M&E data currently collected by GOAL Plus	Additional data needed for this study (illustrative)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girls’ profiles: name, age, current school attending with address, participation in Girls’ Clubs and/or tutorials, promotion history, location and enrollment in grade 7</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girls’ profiles: aspirations, work status, other extracurricular activities, participation in bush school, birth rate, role models</li> <li>• Parents’ Profiles: occupation, economic status, literacy status, marital status, level of education, aspiration/expectation for girl child</li> <li>• Siblings’ education status</li> <li>• Cultural context of the community (leaders’ aspiration/ expectation for girl child, support for schools)</li> <li>• Operating barriers to girls’ enrollments into grade 7 from that school</li> <li>• Actions taken to overcome barriers</li> <li>• Actions needed to overcome barriers not addressed</li> </ul>

AIR Vice President and Program Director Hans Bos and GOAL Plus Project Manager Kate Fleming briefed Julie Hanson Swanson and her colleagues, Katharina Anton-Erxleben and Sandy Ojikutu, at USAID/Washington on February 6, 2014 on the proposed research topics. The USAID/W team expressed particular interest in this topic as a myriad of issues play into that transition. They also discussed school-based sexual and gender-based violence and how it relates to access, safety, completion, learning outcomes, and how it may relate to the grade 7 transition or how such issues are defined in the context of an over-age population. These factors will be taken into account in the design and conduct of the research.

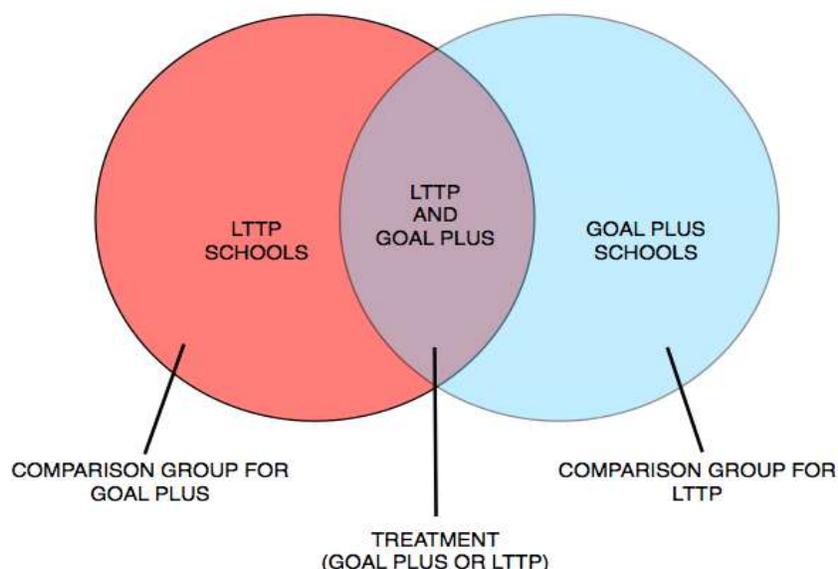
2. *PTA effectiveness – what makes a successful, productive and sustainable PTA.* GOAL Plus will also explore the managed phase out of PTA grant support in schools in order to evaluate the maintenance and sustainability of the PTA support for girls’ enrollment, attendance and completion in primary schools after the completion of project provided services. The project will continue other PTA support activities where grant support has been phased out, including refresher trainings on PTA strengthening and SIP. This inquiry is expected to include an assessment of the ‘positive deviants’ – the communities and parents who have the same problems as most but still mobilize for school support and succeed in supporting girls enrollment and success – to provide guidance for redesigning the PTA handbook as needed and strengthening other PTAs. This research will be initiated by mid-year 2014.

**Figure 14: Illustrative Data Needs for PTA Resilience Research**

M&E data currently collected by GOAL Plus	Additional data needed for this study (illustrative)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PTA structure (number, m/f, leadership)</li> <li>• Role of PTA in School Management</li> <li>• GOAL + grant support to PTA (dates, amounts)</li> <li>• PTA SIP priorities and activities, funded/ unfunded activities (annual, by type)</li> <li>• PTA completion of activities (annual, by type)</li> <li>• School performance (operations, enrollment, conditions/learning environment, student and teacher attendance, retention, pass rates, completion)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PTA leadership profiles: selection, tenure, demographics</li> <li>• PTA financial profile: levels, sources, expenditures, transparency/accountability</li> <li>• PTA operational profile: communication, number/purpose of meetings, attendance, decision making process, inclusiveness</li> <li>• Participation/support from community/ traditional leaders</li> </ul>

3. *The extent to which support for increased opportunities to learn<sup>7</sup> and a supportive learning environment (focus of GOAL Plus interventions) are associated with learning achievement.* The presence and absence of LTTP’s early grade reading and math program (curricula, teaching-learning materials, pre and in-service teacher training, and testing) in GOAL Plus schools provides an opportunity to assess the relative effect of the GOAL Plus intervention package on learning achievement and can also support a measure of the relative effect of LTTP in schools where GOAL Plus is in place (see Figure 15).

**Figure 15: GOAL Plus and LTTP Treatment Overlap**



GOAL Plus introduced the possibility of coordinating with LTTP to conduct this research as a joint effort. Discussions were held with LTTP and FHI 360 staff on short term technical assistance (STTA) in Monrovia, and in follow-up correspondence. It was agreed that this is an opportunity to collaborate on research to increase our collective knowledge and understanding of what works to increase learning in Liberia’s primary schools. Through these discussions, we noted some considerations in designing and conducting the study, or studies:

- EGRA and the reading interventions have been focused on grades 1-3.
- EGRA data are collected every two years; the next EGRA administration conducted by LTTP will be April-May 2015.
- The sampling for EGRA suggests that the level of analysis will be at the school level.
- There is a pool of trained EGRA enumerators who can be accessed by GOAL Plus for conducting EGRA in GOAL Plus supported schools where LTTP is not present; LTTP can provide a list and contact information for the enumerators.
- EGRA data are collected using the Tangerine program on tablets that allow for direct uploading to a database managed by RTI (a sub under LTTP); RTI analyzes the raw data and reports it as needed; RTI has been responsive to requests for reporting; requests for the raw data have been met but the raw data are in a statistical package that is not commonly used, e.g., not Stata or SPSS.

<sup>7</sup> Increased “opportunities to learn” is operationalized as (a) increased enrollments and (b) regular students and teachers’ attendance.

**Figure 16: Illustrative Data Needs for Opportunities to Learn and Supportive Learning Environment Early Grade Reading Research**

M&E data currently collected by GOAL Plus	Additional data needed for this study (illustrative)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of students (girls and boys) enrolled in primary schools</li> <li>• Student and teacher attendance</li> <li>• Percentage of girls and boys who complete their grade</li> <li>• Percentage of girls and boys who pass their grade</li> <li>• Number of girls attending tutoring classes</li> <li>• Number of girls participating in Girls’ Club activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EGRA results for GOAL Plus schools (LTTP/non-LTTP)</li> <li>• EGRA results for LTTP schools (non-GOAL Plus)</li> <li>• Comparison of enrollment, EGRA scores, and completion and promotion rates</li> </ul>

LTTP has shared their EGRA reports which include their sampling and methodology. The next step is for GOAL Plus to develop a draft design to share with LTTP to reach agreement on the approach to ensure it can be supported programmatically and financially. An agreed upon draft design will then be shared with USAID to confirm that it is consistent with our collective understanding of what information the research is expected to yield and whether that is of priority interest to the Mission and the MOE. These will be completed in the coming quarter.

In the course of these discussion, LTTP also has shared the full set of the teaching-learning materials produced with project support and GOAL Plus has shared its tools for strengthening PTAs and developing SIPs.

**Additional Research.** In addition to the research topics described above, AIR also has submitted a request to an external funding source to conduct a participatory action research (PAR) study on the societal beliefs and gender norms contributing to the prevalence of sexual and intimate partner (S/IP) violence in Liberian school communities. The proposed approach will empower the school-based Gender Focal Persons (GFPs), a role that GOAL Plus is developing with the MOE to implement and activate the MOE’s revised Policy on Girls’ Education and the Administrator and Teacher Code of Conduct. Using the PAR approach, it is proposed that focus groups will be conducted with male and female students and PTA members with the aim of unearthing current perceptions of gender roles and attitudes toward S/IP violence in school communities. By using vignettes, fictitious individuals, and theoretical scenarios, participants will be able to speak openly without having to reference their own personal experiences which could potentially re-traumatize. A limited quantitative component will complement the qualitative research. This will include a brief survey to collect demographic information and a larger number of responses to questions about gender norms and attitudes toward S/IP violence.

Three primary outcomes are expected from this study. First, a final report will highlight key findings from the study, discuss results and recommendations for further research, and identify potential S/IP violence prevention and response strategies for use in schools. Second, individual action agendas for each school community researched will be developed which will be informed by the data collected and will contain tailored strategies for S/IP violence prevention and response in that community. Third, through the PAR approach, the research team will build the capacity of GFPs to implement future studies on S/IP violence in other communities while simultaneously continuing to expand their understanding of S/IP violence and the changes that result from their prevention efforts. The proposed study will be implemented over 12 months, beginning in September 2014, if approved, with \$99,606 in funding from the external source.

*Activity 4: Build the technical and managerial capacity of our partner, FAWE, in logistics, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation*

Strengthening local institutions is critical for sustainable development and to ensure the relevance and viability of local interventions and support. USAID Forward and the USAID Project Design Guidance encourages partnership and development of local institutions for sustainability, local relevance, promotion of gender equity, to foster a climate for data use and evidence for decision making, and adaptive management practices.

GOAL Plus is working with its partner, FAWE, to build capacities that are relevant to its scope of work under GOAL Plus. Joint planning and implementation between AIR and FAWE for GOAL Plus field activities has been intensified under the current project in the past two quarters and includes the Field Assistants on a regular basis. FAWE also has hired an M&E Specialist who is now working closely with the AIR/GOAL Plus M&E Officer and program staff for implementation of schedules, activities, and routine monitoring and collection of school community level data.

It was envisioned that an adapted Organization Capacity Assessment (OCA) Tool will be used as a baseline to guide the systematic development of FAWE's organizational capacity. The OCA is a guided, interactive self-assessment tool. Adaptation of the OCAT is required in order to be useful for a specific purpose. The GOAL Plus Chief of Party began adaptation of the OCAT during the last quarter. However, adaptation was put on hold while more attention was given to MOE capacity development (operational planning and GOAL Plus activity planning) and capacity development for FAWE was focused on immediate and practical improvement to facilitate project effectiveness.

AIR/GOAL Plus Headquarters Project Manager conducted an internal review in March with the GOAL Plus finance, management, and program staff to identify priority areas for organizational strengthening of FAWE's operations. The results of these consultations highlighted opportunities to further strengthen financial management and reporting, supervision of the Field Assistants, and management and utilization of assets.

For financial management and reporting, AIR staff shared templates and procedures to make FAWE's reconciliation of expenditures more consistent with the forms and procedures that AIR uses in full compliance with USAID rules and regulations. This harmonization of procedures and templates is expected to expedite financial and administrative processing and reduce time and effort in that regard. FAWE also is setting up bank accounts for the Field Assistants with EcoBank to expedite salary and expense payments in the three counties. FAWE had attempted to use alternate banking opportunities to avoid EcoBank's high fees, which was laudable, but was unable to fully secure alternate means of payment outside of EcoBank. This action will reduce time and effort for the Field Assistants on routine banking matters freeing up more time for program and school community support.

AIR/GOAL Plus also initiated a survey of vendors for venues and catering (for training) and motorcycle maintenance and repair in order to solicit bids and contract with the most reliable and cost effective vendors for these purposes. This effort also should reduce the time and effort for the Field Assistants to gather quotes for routine activities on an event by event basis.

Computer support and communication support also are being upgraded for Field Assistants to facilitate regular interactions with the program and administrative staff based in Monrovia. Additional support for the field offices will include a printer, scanner, generator and internet

connection for each of the three offices. A meeting has been set for April 10, 2014, with FAWE, after the Chief of Party returns from leave and the Program Manager is still in Monrovia on STTA to finalize these operational upgrades within FAWE’s approved budget.

### Monitoring & Evaluation

The GOAL Plus Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) was formally approved in February 2014 following review by the Liberia – Monitoring and Evaluation Program (L-MEP) and USAID. The tracking by name of the scholarship beneficiaries, Grades 1-6, continued this quarter with the second distribution of the scholarship packages. Additionally, GOAL Plus continues to collect grade level data on pre-primary students and student level data on GOAL Plus-supported



*School Record Keeping Training*

girls who transition to Grade 7. New enrollees can be separated from continuing enrollees in the database for reporting under SART. During this quarter, the M&E Team<sup>8</sup> and program staff carried out a series of field activities, including the training of School Principals, Registrars and PTA Chairpersons on school record keeping and reporting. The training brought together 177 (159 males, 18 females) school representatives across the three counties. The training was participant-centered, using participatory methods such as group exercises, group presentations, interactive discussions, and question and answer periods.

**Figure 17: Number of Participants at Record Keeping and Reporting Training**

Schools	County	Participants			Number of Schools
		Male	Female	Total	
Saturday Town	Bassa	13	1	14	5
Kpanay Town	Bassa	29	10	39	13
John P. Mitchell	Bong	17	1	18	7
Raymond Town	Bong	9	1	10	4
Gorpu Dolo Boi	Bong	39	0	39	13
Borkeza	Lofa	18	0	18	5
Salayea	Lofa	21	3	24	8
Konia Garbo	Lofa	13	2	15	5
<b>Total</b>		<b>159</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>60</b>

Comments were welcome from participants as this was intended to allow individual participants to share their experiences about different practices and challenges regarding school record keeping. Participants were also given the chance to set up ground rules to govern the smooth running of the workshop. The training topics included:

<sup>8</sup> The GOAL Plus “M&E Section” is comprised of the AIR/GOALPlus M&E Officer, the FAWE M&E Specialist, and support from the Field Assistants.

- What is meant by record keeping and reporting
- Stakeholders' and beneficiaries' roles in record keeping
- Categories and types of records kept by school administrators and PTAs
- The importance of school records
- Characteristics of school records
- Steps in school record keeping

The GOAL Plus M&E Team also conducted the first round of spot checks of school records and student and teacher attendance across all 60 program schools. The spot checks are intended to document the attendance status of girls and boys at each school in order to document regularity of attendance, gender disparity and identification of students at risk of dropping out. Figure 18 shows the spot check findings.

**Figure 18: Spot Check on Student Attendance**

County	Grade Level	2013/2014 Semester I Enrollment		Attendance on Date of Spot Check		Attendance (percentage)	
		Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Bong	1	456	391	338	328	74	84
	2	236	304	195	248	83	82
	3	193	310	164	237	85	76
	4	195	250	170	185	87	74
	5	134	228	105	144	78	63
	6	120	185	94	116	78	63
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>1,334</b>	<b>1,668</b>	<b>1,066</b>	<b>1,258</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>75</b>
Lofa	1	546	574	468	493	86	86
	2	521	497	474	448	91	90
	3	357	450	313	384	88	85
	4	364	387	331	332	91	86
	5	239	323	226	283	95	88
	6	233	291	200	254	86	87
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>2,260</b>	<b>2,522</b>	<b>2,012</b>	<b>2,194</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>87</b>
Grand Bassa	1	539	480	456	384	85	80
	2	464	396	406	318	88	80
	3	411	355	343	275	83	77
	4	402	353	344	281	86	80
	5	338	291	276	228	82	78
	6	247	282	194	220	79	78
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>2,401</b>	<b>2,157</b>	<b>2,019</b>	<b>1,706</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>5,995</b>	<b>6,347</b>	<b>5,097</b>	<b>5,158</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>81</b>

The M&E Team also completed the entry of enrollment data from the 2013/2014 first semester's enrollment data and the entry of Second II scholarship packages distribution data from all schools in the three counties. Data entry was done using the project database (master tracking list) for all girls.

The collection of Semester II enrollment data also was conducted during this quarter. The M&E Team, along with the Scholarship and Community Mobilization teams, and Field Assistants, assisted in the collection of the 2013/2014 Semester II enrollment data from all 60 schools in the three counties. The total enrollment for girls in Grades 1-6 by the second semester was 6,401 and 6,165 for boys.



*Grade 1 Students Signs for Semester II Scholarship Package  
Guzeh Public, Salayea, Lofa*

### III. Challenges and Lessons Learned

#### *Challenges*

1. A national challenge that has hindered students' academic attendance and achievement is linked to teachers' absenteeism. There are numerous cases of teachers trained at the Regional Teacher Training Institutes and at the end of their studies, they are not employed by the Government of Liberia. At the same time, many of those who are fortunate enough to be assigned to schools are not on the payroll. After struggling for many months without a monthly salary, some teachers get discouraged, and abandon their teaching posts which means fewer teachers and unattended classrooms.
2. One major challenge that PTAs have is their limited participation and experience in school improvement. Parents are engaged in other household functions, such as farm work, that leaves little time to commit to school support functions. There are limited parents' visitations in schools to monitor the academic progress of their children or helping their children at home with their school work. Many parents leave their children to seek academic solutions on their own.
3. Logistical challenges often delay getting data from the individual schools on an ongoing basis. The complexity and detail of the data collected through GOAL Plus (as in GOAL) requires many follow-up visits from project staff to ensure timeliness and quality of the data.

#### *Lessons Learned*

1. Regular attendance of teachers serves as motivation for students, enhancing enrollment and attendance. It is normal to see high enrollment and attendance when the system of education is regularly supportive of teachers, school administrators, and PTAs. This is demonstrated by evidence from the Gorpu Dolo Annex (100 % attendance) and David Fajue Elementary (100% attendance). In the two schools, the teachers seen to be very concerned about their students, they have been in full attendance, and the students are punctual and regular. Support from MOE and their PTAs have increased teachers' motivation/self-esteem which is associated with their being regular and punctual for class.

Expecting PTAs to fully pick up their school support duties after a one time training event is not realistic. Constant follow-up visitations and coaching for parents about their roles and responsibilities in school improvement offer a better chance for parents to act and sustain school improvements. When PTAs developed their SIPs, many of them had the plans in the principal' offices and were not taking action until the mobilization team provided individualized technical assistance to each PTA through a community-wide meeting. A broader discussion on the plans with the community, looking at the different roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders, the time frame for implementation, and the importance of the implementation of the plan for school improvement, is more likely to produce positive results.

3. The School Progress Card is proving to be an effective tool at the community level to help generate parents' interest in school improvement. During the School Progress Card training sessions, many parents did not know that parents' participation in school improvement is more than receiving students' report cards, making school gardens, or attending PTA meetings. At the School Progress Card training, they articulated a clearer understanding of many other possible activities, such as maintaining a healthy, safe and protective school environment and making regular school visitations.

4. Our continual visits to collect and inspect school related data and to mobilize communities on the importance of girls' education have raised the awareness and expectations of school authorities and the communities about monitoring student progress. Regular visits by the Field Assistants and GOAL Plus staff to each school can maintain that level of interest while school administrators and teachers gain more skills at record keeping and using the data to encourage enrollment and regular attendance.

5. Collaboration and exchanges of resource materials with LTTP and AYP Projects helps to strengthen our partnership and collaboration in counties, districts, and schools where one, both or all are working to improve education.

#### IV. Status of Overall Project Progress and Performance on Key Indicators

GOAL Plus activities are on track with some variance in implementation due to scheduling and new opportunities that have been presented to the program. These include showing expected results on distribution of scholarship packages, teachers' kits, and supplemental teaching-learning materials in the second semester of the 2013-14 school year. Uniforms and first semester school fees were distributed early in the quarter. Support to the MOE has increased and will continue to expand through jointly planned activities. The research topics have been confirmed and work on the designs has been initiated. Progress has been made on FAWE capacity development and will continue in the third quarter. Spots check on student and teacher attendance are producing data on those indicators, including identifying at-risk girls for follow-up on attendance.

## V. Activities Completed and Not Completed

### Quarter 2 (January – March 2014)

Indicator	2014			Notes
	Jan	Feb	Mar	
<b>Overall Objective: Improved Education Opportunities for Girls in Selected Communities of Lofa, Bong, and Grand Bassa Counties</b>				
<b>Intermediate Result 1: Increased Access to School for Girls in Selected Communities of Bong, Lofa and Grand Bassa</b>				
<i>Activity 1: Expand the most promising model (scholarships and community mobilization) to all 60 GOAL schools</i>				
1.1 Conduct community meetings in 40 existing schools and 20 new schools				Conducted in September-October 2013 and ongoing
1.2. Sign agreements with 60 program schools for two years of GOAL Plus assistance to school-community support for girls' education				Completed in October-November 2013
<b>Sub-Intermediate Result 1.1: Improved Academic Performance for Girls in Targeted Grades in Targeted Schools</b>				
1.1.1 Procure teaching/learning supplies for grades 1 - 6 teachers				Completed
1.1.2 Distribute teaching/learning supplies to grades 1 - 6 teachers				Completed
1.1.3 Provide Gender Responsive Pedagogy training to 20 new schools				Pending
1.1.4 Mentor & monitor teachers for Gender Responsive Pedagogy in 60 schools				Pending
1.1.5 Coordinate with LTTP in Bong and Lofa Counties				Joint technical staff meetings (GOAL Plus and LTTP) conducted
1.1.6 Payment of school related fees for girls (grades 1-6 in 60 schools)				1st semester paid in January; 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester to be paid in April
1.1.7 Procure scholarship packages for grades 1 - 6 girls in 60 schools				Completed
1.1.8 Distribute scholarship packages and recreational materials				Completed
1.1.18 Provide after school tutorials to scholarship recipients with low academic performance in core subjects				Contracts signed and training conducted for all schools; Girls' Clubs started
<b>Intermediate Result 2: Improved Learning Environment for Girls in Selected Communities of Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties</b>				
2.1 Conduct PTA pre-assessment in 20 new +10 previous scholarship only schools				Completed in October-November 2013
2.2 Strategize appropriate interventions and technical assistance to address PTA capacity development needs				Completed in November-December 2013
2.3 Provide technical support to PTAs according to the pre-assessment w/ technical support for SIPs and announce solicitation for annual grants to 30 schools				Grant proposal and management trainings conducted for new grant schools; SIP refresher training for previous grant schools
2.11 Support schools and communities in regular monitoring of enrollments & attendance and for mobilizing responses (e.g., via town hall meetings)				Completed and ongoing

<b>Intermediate Result 3: Increased Awareness of the Importance of Educating Girls in Selected Counties, Districts, and Communities</b>				
<b>Activity 2: Provide support to the Ministry of Education in the dissemination and use of the National Policy on Girls' Education</b>				
3.1 Finalize strategy to disseminate the National Policy on Girls' Education				Strategy developed with GED Director; confirmed with Asst. Minister and included in the MOE's 2013-15 Operational Plan
3.2 Assist the MOE with dissemination of the National Policy on Girls' Education through the grants program and teacher training				Planned for next quarter
3.4 Develop talking points for presentations, posters, and laminated handouts to promote policy awareness and use				Laminated handouts for town criers developed and distributed
<b>Activity 3: Conduct research on issues related to girls' completion of primary education and extend M&amp;E activities</b>				
3.7 Track girls' enrollments, attendance, repetition, and completion in grades 1-6 in program schools; and boys' enrollments, attendance, and completion rates at the same schools				Enrollments and attendance completed; repetition and completion scheduled for July 2014
3.8 Track girls' enrollments and completion at the pre-primary and junior high grades associated with schools				Enrollment completed for second semester 2013-14
3.9 Consultation with MOE and USAID to determine priority and actionable topics for research				Completed
3.12 Integrate M&E and research findings into media campaign and national policy to support girls' education.				Pending
3.13 Reproduce spot messages on key issues				Role model messages produced
3.14 Facilitate live radio discussions on the importance of girls' education				Pending
<b>Activity 4: Build the technical and managerial capacity of our partner, FAWE, in logistics, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation</b>				
4.1 Conduct collaborative assessment of FAWE's institutional capacity for procurement, inventory, logistics, financial management, and M&E using adapted OCA Tool				Identification of immediate organizational needs relevant to GOAL Plus implementation; follow-up training for Field Assistants
<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation (M&amp;E)</b>				
5.1 Collect student enrollment data from schools				1 <sup>st</sup> Semester and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester completed
5.2 Collect student and teacher attendance data				1 <sup>st</sup> Semester spot check completed; 2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester spot check in progress

## VI. Plans for the Next Quarter (April - June 2014)

### ***Activity 1: Expand the most promising model (scholarships and community mobilization) to all 60 GOAL schools***

- School fees payment for students of the scholarship program – 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester
- Award new grants to 31 schools
- Training of tutors; provide after school tutoring to scholarship recipients with low academic performance
- Continuing support for Girls' Clubs; counseling and mobilization for at-risk girls
- Conduct sexual and reproductive health training for all schools
- Develop and coordinate traditional story writing activity among Girls' Clubs
- Gender-Responsive Pedagogy Training for Teachers
- Continue coordination with USAID-LTTP in Bong and Lofa counties
- Refresher support to PTAs in use of SIPs and School Progress Cards

### ***Activity 2: Provide support to the MOE in the dissemination and use of the revised National Policy on Girls' Education***

- Finalize strategy to disseminate the revised National Policy on Girls' Education
- Assist the MOE with dissemination of the revised National Policy on Girls' Education through the grants program and training
- Finalize Gender Focal Persons Terms of Reference, develop GBV reporting system, and identify and train Gender Focal Persons at schools
- Planning alignment with USAID and MOE of UNICEF support for grades 7-9 with GOAL Plus support for grades 1-6
- Develop school crossing guard program and conduct training of trainers
- Develop talking points for presentations, posters, and laminated handouts to promote policy awareness and use
- Technical support to PTAs in the implementation of SIPs and grants
- Support schools and communities in regular monitoring of enrollments and attendance and for mobilizing responses (e.g., via town hall meetings)
- Sort and begin distribution of IBB-donated books
- Train PTAs, Girls' Clubs mentors, teachers, and parents in sexual and reproductive health

### ***Activity 3: Conduct research on issues related to girls' completion of primary education and extend M&E activities***

- Complete research designs for all three topics and initiate, if scheduled within the next quarter
- Reproduce spot messages on key issues in girls' education.
- Track girls' enrollment, attendance, repetition, and completion in grades 1-6 in program schools; and boys' enrollment, attendance, and completion rates at the same schools
- Track girls' enrollments and completion at the pre-primary and junior high grades associated with schools

***Activity 4: Build the technical and managerial capacity of our partner, FAWE, in logistics, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation***

- Meet with FAWE to finalize operational upgrades and continue capacity development for FAWE focused on immediate and practical improvement to facilitate project effectiveness, including M&E
- Foday Varnie, GOAL Plus Finance and Administration Manager, and Wilson Bee, FAWE's Finance Manager, have been scheduled to attend USAID's Inside NGO – USAID Rules and Regulations: Grants and Cooperative Agreement Training from June 24-26, 2014, in Washington, DC
- Continue collaborative assessment of FAWE's institutional capacity focusing on procurement, inventory, and logistics

***Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)***

- Collect student and teacher attendance data through spot checks
- Continued data entry and analysis
- Data entry into the L-MEP PIDS
- M&E Data Quality Assurance (DQA) (request submitted to L-MEP)
- Collect required M&E data on student completion and academic progress
- Prepare project and policy briefs

## VII. Results towards activity objectives

### Performance Data Reporting Table

*Indicates \*F Framework Indicator*

Indicator	Indicator Type	Unit of Measure	Disaggregation	Baseline Year	Baseline Value	2014 Target	2014 Actual	2015 Target	2015 Actual	End of Project Target	End of Project Actual
<b>Overall Objective: Improved Education Opportunities for Girls in Selected Communities of Lofa, Bong, and Grand Bassa Counties</b>											
*Number of learners enrolled in primary schools and /or equivalent non-school based setting with USG support	*F Indicator	Number	Continuing vs New, Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	6,097 (f) 6,216 (m)	+5% 6,402 (f) 6,527 (m)	6,401 (f) <sup>9</sup> 6,165 (m) <sup>10</sup>	+15% 7,012 (f) 7,148 (m)		+15% 7,012 (f) 7,148 (m)	
Percentage of girls and boys who complete their grade	Custom	Percentage	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	77% (f) 78% (m)	+5%	N/A <sup>11</sup>	+15%		+15%	
Percentage of girls and boys who pass their grade	Context	Percentage	Grade, Age, School, County, and District		TBN		N/A				
Number of girls from 6 <sup>th</sup> grade in USG supported schools who transitioned to 7 <sup>th</sup> grade	Context	Number	Grade, Age, School, County, and District				N/A				
Average teacher attendance rate	Context	Percentage	School, County, District, Gender		TBN		79% (f) 87% (m) 86% (t) <sup>12</sup>				
FAWE's organizational capacity in targeted areas strengthened	Custom	Number	Central	2013	TBN	NA	N/A	NA		TBN	NA

<sup>9</sup> (f)=females

<sup>10</sup> (m)=males

<sup>11</sup> N/A=not available for this reporting period

<sup>12</sup> (t)=average teacher attendance for female and male teachers

Indicator	Indicator Type	Unit of Measure	Disaggregation	Baseline Year	Baseline Value	2014 Target	2014 Actual	2015 Target	2015 Actual	End of Project Target	End of Project Actual
<b>IR 1: Increased Access to School for Girls in Targeted Communities of Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties</b>											
Number of in-kind scholarship awards distributed in USG supported schools	Custom	Number	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	6,097	6,237	6,037 <sup>13</sup> 6,073 <sup>14</sup>	7,172		13,409	
*Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provides with USG assistance	*F Indicator	Number	Grade, School, County, and District	2013	0	454	502 <sup>15</sup> 613 <sup>16</sup>	454		908	
Number of teachers who receive gender responsive pedagogy training	Custom	Number	Grade, Gender, School, County, and District	-	0	180	N/A	0		180	
Percentage of enrolled girl students in targeted grades attending school	Custom	Percentage	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	61.2%	+1	85% <sup>17</sup>	+2%		+2%	
Number of girls enrolled at an appropriate age in grade 1	Custom	Number	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	60	75	79	200		275	
<b>IR 1.1: Improved Academic Performance for Girls in Targeted Grades in Targeted Schools</b>											
Number of girls attending tutoring classes	Custom	Number	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	1,120	600	N/A	600		1,200	
Number of girls participating in Girls' Club activities	Custom	Number	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	985	1,000	N/A	1,500		1,500	
Percentage of girls and boys who pass their grade	Context	Percentage	Grade, Age, School, County, and District				N/A				

<sup>13</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> semester in-kind scholarship awards distributed

<sup>14</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> semester in-kind scholarship awards distributed

<sup>15</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> semester number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials distributed to school teachers

<sup>16</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> semester number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials distributed to school teachers

<sup>17</sup> This percentage is from the first spot check

Indicator	Indicator Type	Unit of Measure	Disaggregation	Baseline Year	Baseline Value	2014 Target	2014 Actual	2015 Target	2015 Actual	End of Project Target	End of Project Actual
<b>IR 2: Improved Learning Environment for Girls in Selected Communities of Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties</b>											
*Number of PTAs or similar school governance structures supported	*F Indicator	Number	School, Community, County, and District	2013	30	60	60	60		60	
Number of PTAs that prepare school improvement plans (to be confirmed in final PMP as some PTA's support two schools)	Custom	Number	School, Community, County, and District	2013	29	56	N/A	56		56	
Number of grant-supported PTA school improvement projects completed	Custom	Number	School, Community, County, and District	-	0	30	N/A	20		50	
Number of schools that present School Progress Card results to their communities	Custom	Number	School, County, and District	2013	40	60	N/A	60		60	
<b>IR 3: Increased Awareness of the Importance of Educating Girls in Selected Counties, Districts, and Communities</b>											
Number of participants at town hall meetings on girls' education	Custom	Number	Community, Gender, County and District		0	1,500	396 (f) 201 (m) 597 (t)	1,500		3,000	
Number of trainings for MOE on using data for decision making	Custom	Number	National, County and District		0	2	NA	2		4	
Number of teachers trained on National Policy on Girls' Education and role as gender-focal person for the school	Custom	Number	School, County and District	-	0	60	NA	0		60	

IX. Annex A

**School Progress Card**  
**Measuring What We Value in Our Schools**

#	Categories	Indicators	Score/Option Very true=3 Half true=2 Small true=1 Not at all true=0		Next Steps/Remarks
<b>CATEGORY A: SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATION</b>					
1)	<b>School and Community Relations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information from the school to parents is communicated regularly and on time</li> </ul>		<b>Possible Score = 36</b>  <b>Actual Score =</b>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information from the school reaches all parents</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The principal is accessible to parents</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents visit school regularly to monitor learning conditions and/ or the academic progress of their children</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most of the parents participate in PTA meetings regularly</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Men and women equally participate in PTA meetings and other activities</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School and community (leaders, PTA, women`s groups, youth groups, and other stakeholders) work with the school to mobilize resources to respond to school needs</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school leadership involves parents and the PTA in school decisions</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents actively monitor children`s completion of their homework assignments</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family members help the children practice their reading at home</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents have high hopes for their children as students</li> </ul>			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PTA and school leadership give recognition to teachers and the principal for good performance</li> </ul>			

#	Categories	Indicators	Score/Option Very true=3 Half true=2 Small true=1 Not at all true=0		Next Steps/Remarks
<b>CATEGORY B: OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN</b>					
2)	<b>Opportunity to learn</b>	• Students attendance is high		<b>Possible Score = 21</b>	
		• Teachers are regular in school ( all teachers come to school every day from Monday to Friday)			
		• DEO's and/ or other MOE representatives visit the school regularly and provide support			
		• School opens on time and closes on time everyday			
		• More than 80% of girls are promoted to the next grade level			
		• More than 80% of boys are promoted to the next grade level			
		• All children from ages 6 to 11 are in primary school			
<b>CATEGORY C: SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT</b>					
3)	<b>Supportive learning environment</b>	• There are enough seats and space for the boys and girls to sit comfortably in class		<b>Possible Score = 36</b>	
		• There is adequate lighting and breeze in the classroom			
		• School wall are talking=posters, students` work, art project, health and hygiene posters are on the classroom walls			
		• Both boys and girls in classes are using textbooks equally for academic work			
		• Teachers are using the MOE curriculum to plan and teach			
		• Teachers give assignment to students regularly			
		• Students regularly receive feedback on the assignments that they complete			
		• Teachers help each individual student remain in school and pass her or his lessons			
		• Students feel like the teachers care about them			
				<b>Actual Score =</b>	

#	Categories	Indicators	Score/Option Very true=3 Half true=2 Small true=1 Not at all true=0		Next Steps/Remarks
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students like going to school ( friendly atmosphere, learning is interesting and fun)</li> <li>• All the students-boys and girls, old and young, clever and not-are treated equally</li> <li>• Students receive praise from their teacher</li> </ul>			
<b>CATEGORY D: HEALTHY SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT</b>					
4)	<b>Healthy school environment</b>	• There is functional school water and sanitation committee		<b>Possible Score = 15</b>  <b>Actual Score =</b>	
		• School classrooms are kept clean, and free from dirt and animal s` toilets			
		• Bushes and grass are cut low			
		• No dangerous insects, snakes, sharp object like nails, pins, glass bottles, and harmful wastes products are found on the school grounds			
		• The school burns its wastes in garbage pits			
<b>CATEGORY E: SANITATION AND SAFE DRINKING WATER</b>					
5)	<b>Sanitation and Safe Drinking Water</b>	• There are separate toilets for girls and boys on the school campus		<b>Possible Score = 24</b>  <b>Actual Score =</b>	
		• The toilets are in use			
		• The toilets are clean			
		• The toilets have inside locks			
		• The toilets have separate locks			
		• There is a hand washing station with soap and water available for use			
		• Students and teachers wash their hands after using toilets or latrines			
	• There is safe drinking water and drinking cups that are well taken care of and stored for serving water				

#	Categories	Indicators	Score/Option Very true=3 Half true=2 Small true=1 Not at all true=0		Next Steps/Remarks
<b>CATEGORY F: SECURITY, SAFETY AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL WELLBEING</b>					
6)	<b>Security, Safety, and Psychosocial wellbeing of students and teachers</b>	• Teachers advise students		<b>Possible Score = 18</b>  <b>Actual Score =</b>	
		• Our school is free of all forms of violence, sexual exploitation and abuse			
		• Our school is free from drugs and alcohol			
		• Teachers and students respect each other. Students and staff feel relaxed with one another in and out of school.			
		• There is a sense of community in the school			
		• Staff respect one another`s work			
<b>CATEGORY G: SUPPORT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING</b>					
7)	<b>Support for teaching and learning</b>	• Students come to class on time		<b>Possible Score = 27</b>  <b>Actual Score =</b>	
		• Teachers come to school on time			
		• Students are well-behaved in class, showing respect for each other and the teacher			
		• There are adequate number of good chalkboards			
		• Classrooms have adequate chalk			
		• School management monitors what goes on in the classroom and takes actions			
		• There is a strong common sense of purpose and direction among staff			
		• Teachers participate in staff development opportunities			
	• Achievement of teachers are recognized and rewarded				

#	Categories	Indicators	Score/Option Very true=3 Half true=2 Small true=1 Not at all true=0		Next Steps/Remarks
<b>CATEGORY H: RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES</b>					
8	<b>Recreational activities</b>	• The school has an area set aside for recreation		<b>Possible Score = 12</b> <b>Actual score =</b>	
		• Students engage in recreational activities			
		• Sporting materials are accessible to boys and girls			
		• There are equal recreational opportunities for boys and girls			
<b>CATEGORY I: SCHOOL RECORDS AND RECORD KEEPING</b>					
9)	<b>School record and record keeping</b>	• Parents or guardians receive student grade sheets every period		<b>Possible Score = 12</b> <b>Actual Score =</b>	
		• Parents receive report cards at the end of every academic year			
		• Master grade sheets are available for parents review			
		• Attendance records of teachers and students are available(separated column for females and males)			
<b>Remarks:</b>					
<b>General Remarks:</b>					
<b>Total Possible Score: 201</b>					
<b>Total Actual Score:</b>					
<b>Grade (Color Level):</b>					

## **Grading System**

The grading of the schools will be done in collaboration with the PTA representatives and the district school representatives. Achievements will be detailed in terms of colors as follows:

### **Red Level**

The red level is a dangerous zone which means failure. Any school that scores a mark in the range of 0 to 50 points will be classified as being in the Red level. Schools at the Red level show that the school has not yet grasped the concept of what it takes to provide the basic opportunity to learn where good teaching and learning practices take place for children. Those activities that create the basic opportunity to learn are not yet fully implemented in a coordinated manner. At this level, the school needs more support from the PTA, school authorities, education officers and the community in order to move to the next level. Schools at this level also need more monitoring visits.

### **Yellow Level**

This level is when the school is above the danger zone (red level). A school that scores a mark from 51-99 points is at this level, showing some understanding of the concept of what it takes to create the basic opportunity to learn. The PTA, school authorities, students, education officers and parents though not yet very active, are beginning to work in a coordinated manner.

### **Green Level**

A school is qualified to be at the green level if the score ranges from 100-139 points. The school at this level is moving to a supportive level but has not yet created the basic opportunity to learn. At this level, the school PTA, parents, students and education officers understand the concept of what it takes to provide the basic opportunity to learn, but taking actions to fully implement the concept is still a problem. There is partial implementation of the concept. Nonetheless at this level, the school is half way in the implementation process of what it takes to create the basic opportunity to learn.

### **Purple Level**

A school at the purple level means that the school is doing a commendable job as far as promoting the basic opportunity to learn and promoting a healthy learning environment. The score ranges from 140-179 points. At this level, the PTA/school management committee, parents, school administrators are all actively performing their responsibilities. The school is practicing good school-based health and sanitation activities. The PTA is strongly supporting the school and having regular meetings. Student and teacher attendance is high and the school is practicing good record keeping. The teachers, learners and the community have a good understanding of safe and hygienic learning environments, and the students have high learning prospects. All activities are coordinated in a good manner.

### **Blue Level**

A school that reaches the blue level is qualified to be a model school. Its score ranges from 180-201. There is innovativeness and best practices in the implementation of the activities that other schools can adopt. The importance of education and healthy hygiene practices are well understood, and the teachers and learners together with community members are undertaking many school improvement activities/projects using their local resources. These students have an opportunity to learn and achieve.

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