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

Quarterly Report

Year 2, Q1 - 1 October – December 31, 2014

January 2015 (revised)

A partnership with the:

American Institutes for Research and Forum for African Women Educationalists

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Prepared by:

American Institutes for Research

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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
ASRH	Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health
AYP	Advancing Youth Project
CEO	County Education Officer
DEO	District Education Officer
EAC	Qatar Education a Child Foundation
ESDC	Education Sector Development Committee
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
GBV	Gender-cased Violence
GEEAP	Gender-Equitable Education and Achievement Program
GED	Girls' Education Division
GOAL	Girls' Opportunities to Access Learning
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IBB	International Book Bank
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
KG	Pre-Primary Teachers – ABC through Kindergarten
L-MEP	Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Program
LNP	Liberia National Police
LTTP	Liberia Teacher Training Program
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SIP	School Improvement Plan
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UL	University of Liberia
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 GOAL Plus project builds on the success of the previous Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)-USAID/GOAL project to improve primary school girls' enrollment, attendance, retention, and completion in 60 schools in Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa counties. To this end, GOAL Plus is offering: (1) a scholarship program to improve girls' access; (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[1]; (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 have been planned to provide evidence concerning the performance of key interventions and issues that influence girls' success in education to inform the policy dialogue and programming related to girls' education.

The first quarter of the second year of the GOAL Plus project, October-December 2014, was primarily defined by the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak, as was all of Liberian society. Schools did not re-open in September and remained closed through the year to avoid congregating both children and adults for fear of further spreading the disease. Project staff travel was initially restricted to the Monrovia office and the expatriate COP remained relocated, working from AIR's home office in Washington, DC. Project staff focused on continued preparations for schools' re-opening, such as procurement and readying of the scholarship packages and the back-to-school/appropriate age enrollment campaign messages and materials, as well as participating in MOE technical working groups to develop and implement the MOE's Emergency Response Plan, including GOAL Plus' role within the plan. The COP, while working with project staff through phone and email, participated in and contributed to meetings with USAID and the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) to facilitate communication among development partners and colleagues related to the situation in Liberia and to support the MOE's Emergency Plan. As conditions improved in the country, GOAL Plus staff visited project-supported schools to assess conditions in each location and to re-engage with communities, school leaders, and PTAs. The results were promising and the project planned for re-engagement to help communities complete their grant-supported school improvement activities and prepare for schools' reopening in early 2015. After a return assessment visit by AIR's security and safety advisor, it was agreed with USAID that GOAL Plus could resume full operations in early 2015.

[1] To address the high proportion of overage students in the primary school grades

II. Description of Activities during the Quarter (October – December 2014)

Introduction

The USAID/Girls' Opportunities to Access Learning (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.

AIR submitted its second Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) to USAID in August 2014 with an assumption that schools would re-open in January 2015. GOAL Plus had projected the January opening date months in advance in consultation with the MOE for planning purposes. Under this scenario, GOAL Plus focused on procurements, preparations, and program adjustments to be ready for the delayed re-opening of schools while adding supplemental activities for Ebola response, such a procurement of WASH supplies for school-communities to use for Ebola prevention while school were closed and to prepare for schools' re-opening when conditions permitted.

Early in the quarter, new cases of EVD were still rising, the international response was still mobilizing to be effectively on the ground in sufficient scope and scale to contain the epidemic, and the MOE stated a criterion of 2-3 months of no new EVD cases before schools could re-open. Given those new conditions and projections, AIR proposed three program options in its updated Contingency Plan, submitted to USAID in October, in order to be as responsive as possible to the conditions in the country while preserving the project assets to achieve the expected results. The three program options included the most productive ways forward under prevailing and projected conditions as well as criteria for the resumption of regular program activities and for the expatriate COP, Dr. Howard Williams, to be able to return safely to post.[2] These program options were intended to maintain the project's relevance and contributions to the MOE's Emergency Plan, to the 2014-16 Operational Plan, and to the project's Results Framework.

GOAL Plus continued operations under Option 1 of the Contingency Plan, which focused on engagement with the MOE's Emergency Plan and Operational Plan and preparedness for schools re-opening in the earlier part of 2015. In this scenario, the project contributed to development of MOE Ebola response programs, procurement and delivery of WASH supplies and Ebola awareness information for the project-supported schools/communities, procurement and packaging of the scholarship materials, and instituting academic support activities while schools remained closed. The COP was expected to continue working remotely with the project until health and safety conditions permitted his return to post.

In this fifth quarter of implementation, Quarter 1 of Year 2, GOAL Plus collaborated with the MOE and USAID on the Emergency Ebola Response Plan while continuing work within its Results Framework. Activities in support of the Emergency Plan are reviewed below, followed by progress on GOAL Plus activities planned for this quarter.

[2] In accordance with AIR's Security and Safety Contingency Plan, and with USAID's approcal, the expatriate COP was relocated to work remotely from AIR's home office in Washington, DC on August 4, 2014 until local health conditions improved sufficiently for his return to post.

GOAL Plus Activities in support of the MOE's Emergency Ebola Response Plan

The GOAL Plus COP participated in the semi-annual meeting of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) working groups in his capacity as AIR's representative to INEE and as co-chair of the INEE Working Group on Standards. The COP coordinated with USAID, UNICEF, and the Liberia Education NGO Forum to solicit feedback on the MOE's Ebola Emergency Plan and additionally solicited feedback from 20+ INEE Steering Group and Working Group members on the plan. Preliminary feedback was sent to the MOE through USAID and UNICEF on October 2, 2014 in time for the MOE's October 3 meeting with the Education Sector Development Committee (ESDC) meeting and a more complete report was sent to the MOE through USAID on October 18 (please see Annex A).

The GOAL Plus COP also participated in two Washington, DC-based meetings, given the circumstances of working remotely from AIR's home office during this period, that included representatives from USAID, FHI360/LTTP and EDC/AYP, to share information on Liberia conditions and status, planned activities, and expectations. These meetings were held at AIR's home office on September 17 and on October 16 (please see Annex B for meeting minutes).

The COP co-facilitated a session at the 2014 Education Alliance International Symposium on October 20, at USAID's request. The session was on developing uses for education technology in complex and challenging environments. Two case studies were presented, one focusing on the education response to the Ebola health crisis in Liberia, the other a UNHRC case study of refugee education in Lebanon.

Matt Murray, GOAL Plus Project Manager, and Hannah Reeves, GOAL Plus Researcher, also delivered a presentation on GBV on Liberia on December 10 at USAID, at the request of the Africa Bureau Education team (please see Annex C).

During this period, AIR also updated and shared its contingency plans and regular project updates with USAID. These included administrative and logistical procedures for the COP to effectively work remotely, including the use of EcoBank's online banking system. The AIR home office and International Safety and Security Advisor also provided support for staff at the Monrovia project office and for travel to project-supported schools and communities in the three counties (please see Annex D for a copy of the safety protocols for travel outside of Monrovia). This support and guidance allowed project staff to continue safely with both planned and modified activities, as described below.

AIR's security and safety advisor, Bob Craft, made a return assessment visit in December and, as a result, it was agreed with USAID that GOAL Plus could resume full operations in early 2015, including having the expatriate COP on site again.

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

Scholarship Packages

The scholarship package for girls is a key component for supporting girls' enrollments each year and a contributing factor to their continued enrollment. All 7,500 student book bags and 500 teachers' bags have been procured and branded and are now stored at the warehouse in Monrovia. GOAL Plus coordinated with SACHU Traders (the vendor) on the long-term safety of the scholarship materials, including spraying insecticides throughout the warehouse to prevent insect damage to the materials. The sewing of uniforms also is complete, and the uniforms are being stored separately to avoid damage from the insecticides. Packing and distribution of the materials will be scheduled as soon as the dates are confirmed for schools to re-open. Payment for the 1st semester school-related fees, planned for this quarter, will be done for registered and enrolled girls after schools re-open in 2015.

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

Community Mobilization and PTA Grants Management

The GOAL Plus team, with staff from MOE/Girls' Education Division, conducted re-engagement and assessment visits to the GOAL Plus schools and communities in Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa counties on November 23-December 5, after months of disconnection with those project-supported schools due to the Ebola outbreak and government restrictions on travel and assembly. The assessment and re-engagement visits were intended to determine the present conditions at GOAL Plus-supported school communities, identify problems and successes associated with the Ebola outbreak, and to reassure communities about the continuation of the project activities. At the same time, the team reinforced public health messages and practices about Ebola prevention. The re-engagement and assessment visit was needed and timely as County and District Education Officers, community members, parents and stakeholders at the community level expressed their appreciation for the GOAL Plus assessment and the re-engagement support provided.

The re-engagement process began with a dialogue at the county level with education stakeholders, including the County and District Education Officers, following which the GOAL Plus/MOE team visited 56 school communities (18 in Lofa, 17 in Bassa and 21 in Bong). The team visited two communities per day. In Bong, only 21 of the 24 project-supported schools could be visited; Garyea, Kokormah and Pengia in Suakoko District were under a mandatory 21-day quarantine due to an outbreak of EVD in nearby Taylor Town. These three school communities will be scheduled for visits after that quarantine period expires.

During each visit, the GOAL Plus team administered questionnaires that assessed community conditions, readiness to engage with GOAL Plus support and home-based study classes utilizing the mini libraries, status of the grants activities and PTA readiness to re-engage in the 2nd installment of grants, readiness of tutors in the school communities to provide tutorial classes in the communities (rather than in schools) using the mini libraries, the physical school environment and readiness of parents to engage in clean-up exercises, the availability of teachers in the school communities, the current activities carried out by local education staffs in the school communities, the EVD behavioral response practices in communities, and other institutional support for EVD.

A town meeting, usually in an open space, in a palaver hut, or under a tree, was held when the team arrived in each community. Community members comprising of not more than 15 persons attended the meeting with safety protocols observed. There was no shaking hands or hugging, everyone washed their hands, and individuals sat at a distance from each other.

The information collected from the community assessments is summarized below.

PTA capacity observation

PTA activity in the three counties varied during the period of extended school closure. In Bong, PTAs still require strengthening support because of the high turnover of PTA leadership by principals. In some communities, principals have unilaterally appointed PTA chairpersons without the democratic consent of the parents and other school stakeholders, which contravenes the PTA constitution and may be contributing to conflict in the affected communities. The team briefed the DEO about the issue, and discussion is ongoing regarding a timetable for MOE intervention.

Some PTA leaders and teachers in Bong are now part of Ebola task force response teams that were trained by the MOE Ebola task force. The local Ebola response teams in the communities are now reported to be actively providing house-by-house awareness on Ebola prevention and response practices.

PTA implementation of the first installment activities of the school grant projects is nearly complete in all the schools in Bong, with the exception of Galai and Kayata in Suakoko District, which are lagging behind the other 11 schools.

In Lofa, 9 out of 18 project-supported schools received the first installment of school improvement grants.[3] Out of the nine schools that received the first installments, eight have completed their first installment activities and are now at the reporting stage. These eight schools expressed eagerness to begin their second installment activities.

The exception in Lofa is Kpassigizia, which has not embarked on its proposed painting project of the school infrastructure. The team visiting Kpassigizia observed that the painting proposed by the school should be given lower priority and higher priority should be given to the health and safety of the students when the school re-opens. For example, livestock (cattle, goats and sheep) are now using the school facility as a shelter, and animal feces are found in the school. The PTA

[3] The other nine schools were not able to receive their first installment due to the early onset of Ebola in Lofa.

has been advised to modify their plan and prioritize fencing the school facility to keep the animals away.

In Bassa, PTAs are functional and working with school authorities and community leaders to ensure the cleaning of various school campuses for school re-opening. Out of the nine schools implementing school improvement grants in Bassa, four have completed their second installment activities, five schools are currently working on their second installment activities, and one school is now writing its report for the first installment. The team visiting Bassa encouraged school communities that are still working on the second installment to continue their progress and follow the good examples of other schools that have completed their second round.

Girls' Club activities and tutorials

The level and types of activities carried out by mentors and tutors in GOAL Plus program school communities varied across the three counties during the period of school closure. Mentors and tutors were present in most communities, though DEOs transferred some to different communities. In Bong, some mentors are conducting community awareness on Ebola prevention but tutorial programs are not ongoing because of the outbreak. The mini-libraries are still intact, although students are not utilizing them while schools are closed. Many of the mini libraries are safe but inaccessible by being locked in principals' offices. Two school communities, Geita and William R. Tolbert in Bong, had initiated tutorial classes in the communities by volunteers but had to cease because some community members were strictly observing the government restriction against community gatherings. During the GOAL Plus team visit to those communities, the team and community stakeholders discussed an improved way of initiating community-led study classes in smaller groups. With this information and encouragement, communities residents have agreed to again begin the community-led study classes.

The incidence of pregnancy among girl students appears to be rising. Parents and teachers expressed fear that this may cause a drop in the enrollment rates for the coming school year and urged action to keep girls engaged in learning activities with their peers. Observations of increases in pregnancy among school-age girls were raised by community members and are at this stage anecdotal. GOAL Plus anticipates collecting more specific information when the enrollments are confirmed and drop-outs are researched for their reasons for not enrolling.

At the end of the dialogue on home-based study classes and tutoring/mentoring support, community stakeholders agreed to meet and schedule a timetable for the community tutorial classes. Many communities agreed to begin in December before schools re-open. Tutorial classes are a regular part of the GOAL Plus support program during the academic year, supporting girls who are showing low achievement after the first exams are taken. At USAID's suggestion, GOAL Plus will report on the completion and passing rates for girls participating in the tutorial classes and the girls' clubs.

In Grand Bassa, some girls' club leadership/members and mentors are present in the communities. Most of the mentors have not been conducting meetings due to the EVD outbreak. At four schools – Barseegiah, J.B.Gardee, Willie C. Peters and Hope Elementary – the mentors have been engaged in house-by-house awareness building on Ebola and encouraging girls to be mindful of avoiding pregnancy. The tutors are present in the communities but are not engaging in

tutorial activities during school closure.[4] The mini-libraries are also in good condition but also have not been in use.[5] When the idea of a community-based or home-based study class was introduced, community members welcomed the idea and some immediately developed timetables for the commencement of study classes. For example, Saturday Town in District 3 agreed to begin on Monday, December 1, 2014. Parents also promised to support the study classes and locate appropriate venues in the community.

In Lofa, tutorial teachers assigned to 17 of the 18 program schools are not active due to Ebola. The exception is Zelemai in Zorzor District, where a former teacher initiated a tutorial program for students. In all schools visited in Lofa, parents expressed concern for their children's learning and support for home-based tutorial classes while they wait for schools to resume. In communities where tutors are present, the PTAs and teachers have started to act on plans to re-establish small-group tutorial classes at the community level to help students with lessons at home.

The 18 donated mini libraries in Lofa are still intact but have not been used while schools are closed. The majority of the libraries are kept in the school, while two are outside the school premises due to security problems at the schools themselves. The tutors, with support from education actors at the community level, are now planning to access and use mini-libraries.

Physical school environment

In Lofa, parents were not active in cleaning their respective school campuses, but agreed with the GOAL Plus team and MOE representative to begin cleaning and sanitizing them. Parents and school authorities are now fully engaged in the clean-up exercises. According to the DEO of Zorzor District, students, teachers and parents have not had the opportunity to focus on the school environment since the closure of schools, other than at those schools where PTAs are implementing school improvement grants.

In Grand Bassa, 8 out of 17 schools have cleaned their campuses and are now student-friendly. The rest of the schools are not yet cleaned and the team encouraged parents, PTA leaders and community residents to begin the cleaning protocols.

In Bong, many school environments were also not clean, some were partially clean, and some were cleaned up at the time of the visit. However, during the meeting, many parents, PTA leadership and community members promised to complete the school cleaning-up exercises and perform minor repairs of the schools infrastructure.

Teacher's presence

The majority of the teachers are still within their respective school-communities, though some teachers have been transferred to other schools. In Lofa, some PTA members expressed dissatisfaction with the manner in which the transfer was done, stating that some of the teachers

[4] The tutors had not been instructed or paid to provide classes during school closure but it was hoped that some would take the initiative, as some have. GOAL Plus will now actively engage the mentors and tutors with roles and support prior to schools' re-opening.

[5] Theft during the school closure of some books from one of the mini-libraries was noted. The lock was broken open. The mini-libraries are considered more secure now that the schools are reopening and not abandoned.

transferred have not been paid by the government for months and some are not on payroll. The Girls' Education Division representative from the MOE who visited Lofa with the team took note and promised to bring it to the attention of the MOE in Monrovia. The names of some teachers whose names have never been placed on government payroll were collected by the team in Lofa to be sent to the Assistant Minister for Basic and Secondary Education.

Status of students

Many students are still present in the school communities, while some students had relocated. The greatest challenge to enrollment when schools reopen appears to be the rise in pregnancies among school going girls during this period of closure, especially among the overaged girls who were in schools. Many of the students are also now engaged in street selling and some farm activities during the closure.

DEO-school community engagement

In Bong, the DEOs for Suakoko and Zota Districts were currently conducting PTA coaching for the management of MOE school grants. The DEOs are maintaining contact with their respective school communities and providing both Ebola and MOE school grant support during the outbreak.

In Lofa, the County Education Officer was processing the West African Examination Papers and conducting workshops for DEOs. The DEOs also supported the assessment exercise. Principals of the 18 schools visited are working with PTAs to prepare for the re-opening of schools, such as cleaning up school facilities with parents and advocating for volunteer teachers to be placed on payroll. Wuomai Public School, for example, has been providing incentives to unpaid teachers in the amount of $2,500 per person per month.

In Grand Bassa, the CEO informed the team that the Education Office has been open and working since the Ebola outbreak. The CEO and DEOs in Bassa also received training on Ebola prevention and response practices. This training was cascaded down to the principals and teachers who are conducting Ebola awareness messages in their respective communities. The District 5 DEO in Bassa also joined the assessment team in the school visits where he encouraged parents, community leaders and stakeholders in the communities to prioritize their children`s education. The DEO message to the community was straightforward: "If you want your community to develop, you need to develop the minds of the children so that they can become good future leaders."

During the visit, the team also learned that the DEO for District 3 in Bassa was suspended for administrative reasons and the principal for Gorblee Public School was acting DEO pending investigation by MOE.

Ebola prevention messages and the provision of hand washing buckets

GOAL Plus teams provided Ebola prevention reinforcement messages, hand washing buckets, and tie-soap to the project-supported school communities in the three counties.[6] Other health and

[6] In September 2014, AIR President and CEO David Myers initiated a plan to harness AIR's ongoing commitment to Liberia to help address the crisis. AIR offered to at least match AIR staff contributions to recognized health or humanitarian organizations working to address the Ebola crisis in Liberia, for a total of $40,000 to be directed to the response effort. AIR staff individually made contributions of

humanitarian organizations and individuals have also visited those communities to spread Ebola prevention messages and provided hand-washing buckets.

In Bong, the GOAL Plus team reinforced those messages and provided hand washing buckets. Before the presentation of the WASH supplies, community residents informed the team of the safety and management practices already in place and agreed to continue following these practices for the WASH supplies provided by GOAL Plus.

In Lofa, every community expressed awareness of the dangers posed by the Ebola virus. Movement there is highly restricted, especially from one community to another. Hand washing buckets are found at the entrances of every town and gathering place. Shaking hands is suspended. The team did discover bush meat being eaten by locals in private, despite government prohibition it. Reports from some of the communities also indicated that the overuse of chlorine was producing negative side effects on the skin, and a frequent message had become, "Chlorine is for things and soap is for people."

In Bassa, the residents are observing and adhering to the EVD prevention measures. Below are the names of institutions that provided complementary support to some of the GOAL Plus-supported school communities.

Figure 1: Institutions or organizations providing services for school communities

No.	Organizations/Institutions	Services provided
1	Concern Worldwide	Provided awareness on Ebola virus prevention and buckets, soap and other Ebola preventive materials
2	AYP	Provided health education and Ebola prevention materials (buckets, etc.)
3	MOH & SW	Messaging on EVD and ensured that residents adhered to the protocols
4	Ministry of Education	Awareness on EVD prevention
5	Nyonblee Care Foundation	Provided buckets, tie soap and EVD preventive materials
6	Liberia National Red Cross	Provided awareness of EVD preventive measures and distributed buckets, chlorine, etc.
7	Acelor Mittal	Created awareness on EVD prevention
8	Methodist Relief Organization	Ebola preventive materials and awareness
9	Karpay Leadership Initiative movement	Provided buckets, soap and chloride and created awareness

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

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$14,800; AIR's contribution is a further $25,200 dedicated specifically to the procurement and delivery of WASH supplies to communities supported by GOAL Plus. AIR and GOAL Plus are very pleased to make this contribution to promote the health and safety of the girl students and their communities whom we serve. The application of this contribution will be carefully documented and shared with USAID as part of our regular project reporting.

GOAL Plus provided support to the Ministry of Education in the formulation of its Emergency Ebola Response Plan by accessing and facilitating an INEE members review of the plan and providing collective feedback, suggestions, and recommendations based on the global, collective experience of INEE members in education responses to a range of emergencies. In addition, GOAL Plus has attended meetings and held exchanges at the Minister/Advisor level (COP and Dr. Coleman) and at Assistant Min. Lawrence and Director Lorpu Mannah levels (with the GOAL Pus staff). These interactions have resulted in direct feedback on the overall emergency plan, feedback on preparations for schools' re-opening, and our own proposal to provide WASH and hygiene supplies and health messaging. GOAL Plus also have participated in the MOE's Technical Working Groups (TMGs) for implementation of the Emergency Plan as follows:

Figure 2: TWG contributors

No.	MOE Technical Working Group	GOAL Plus contributors
1	Social Mobilization	Arthur, Francis
2	Radio messaging (instruction, other learning activities supplemental messaging, e.g., psycho-social)	Gabriel, Mercy
3	Preparations for Schools' Re-opening	Myrline, Marinda
4	Monitoring & Evaluation	Nana, Richelieu, and Field Staff

Communication Campaign for Appropriate Age Enrollment: Keep Winning at Age 6 for Grade 1.

GOAL Plus has developed materials and products for the "Keep Winning" communication campaign in Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa to encourage parents to enroll their children in school when they reach the appropriate age. This continues the theme of last year's communication campaign, "B. A. Winner," which focused on getting children into pre-school at the age of three. The campaign materials are prepared and will be launched one month prior to the re-opening of schools. Materials includes a new radio jingle, radio spots edited from last years' spots, billboards and posters showing a girl walking to school and leading her younger brother to pre-school – her t-shirt reads "Keep Winning at Age 6," and his will be from last year's campaign indicating "B. A. Winner at Age 3." There also are fliers, and non-political role models were identified from the three counties of Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa to aid with the promotion by appearing on posters with the enrollment messages. Other campaign promotions will include t-shirts, fliers, banners, stickers, drama troupes, mobile theaters, and town hall meetings facilitated by community mobilizers and town criers.

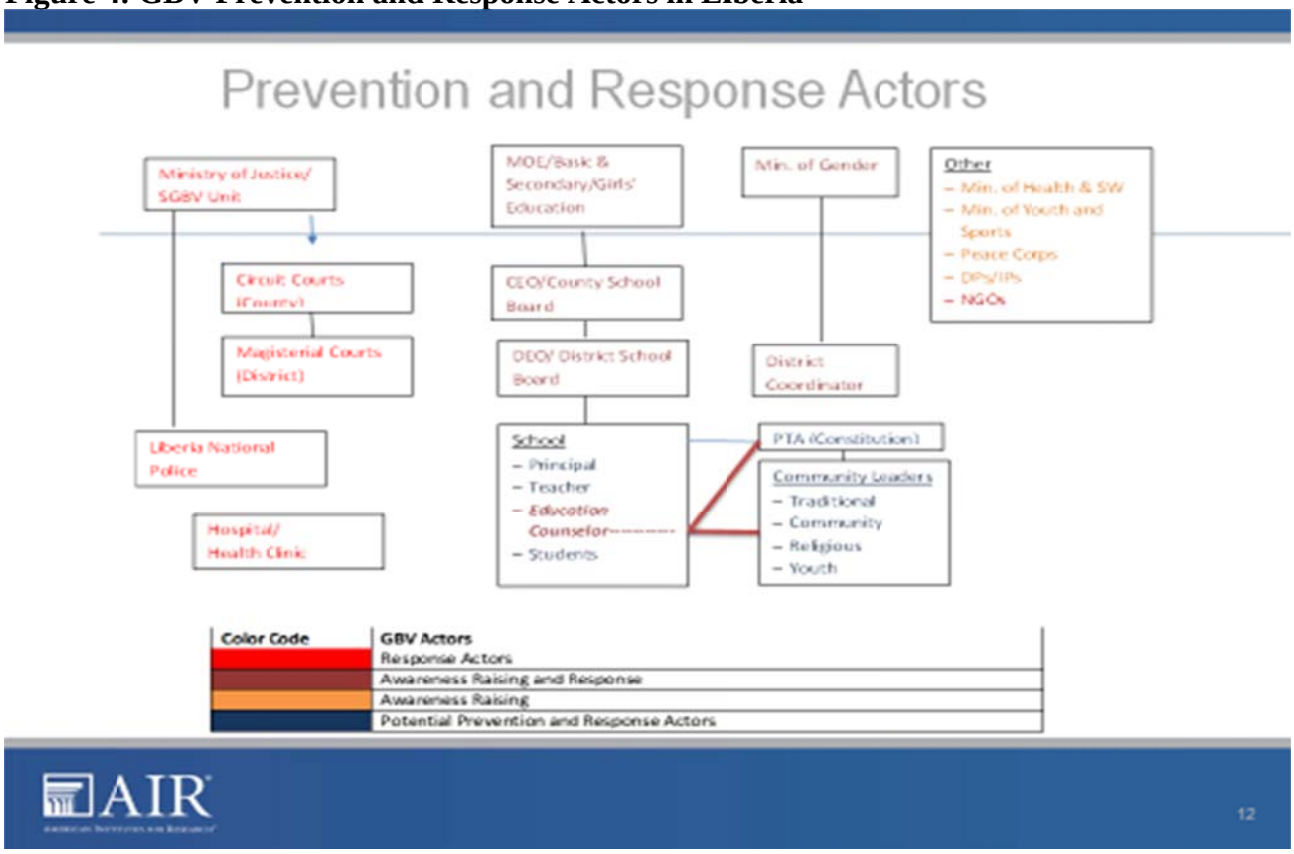
Figure 3: Index of 2014 communication materials

Medium	Design and Message
Radio	
Jingles	Keep Winning at the age of 6 for grade 1 Key Message: "If you want your child to buy tractor to increase farm productivity, make sure your child is in grade 1 at 6 year"
Spot Messages	Keep Winning at age 6 for grade 1 Key Message: "The government of Liberia and all partners are requesting parents to make sure their children sure in grade 1 at age 6. It will be good for you, the child, the community, and the whole country. Many children who start school late drop from school because they feel too old to sit among smaller children in class. If you want your child to be a successful engineer, doctors, and even president send your child to school soon to Keep Winning."
Role Models & Messages	
Posters	Keep Winning at age 6 for grade 1. "Everyone wins if your child is in grade 1 at age 6"
Billboards	Keep Winning at age 6 for grade 1. "Everyone wins if your child is in grade 1 at age 6"
Calendars	Keep Winning at age 6 for grade 1. "Everyone wins if your child is in grade 1 at age 6"
T-Shirts	Keep Winning at age 6 for grade 1. "Everyone wins if your child is in grade 1 at age 6"
Community Mobilizers and Town Criers	
Mobilizers	Scripts to encourage parents to send their children, especially girls, to school for their success in life and for the collective good of the family and community.
Town Criers	Scripts to encourage parents to send their children, especially girls, to school for their success in life and for the collective good of the family and community.

Finalize Gender Focal Persons Terms of Reference for Piloting.

GOAL Plus is transforming the proposed role of Gender Focal Person into a broader role as Community Education Counselor (CEC). The impetus for this change in approach was the realization, based on multiple consultations, that effectiveness would rely more on communication and a community commitment to prevent Gender Based Violence (GBV) rather than designating one individual to foster accountability by monitoring and reporting on incidents. Work on the CEC concept was progressing during the previous quarter and delayed by the changes in activities during the Ebola era. Simultaneously, at the request of USAID/Africa Bureau, AIR researchers Matt Murray and Hannah Reeves presented on the background of GBV in Liberia and the approach that GOAL Plus is developing (please see Annex C). One slide that was of particular interest during their discussion was the mapping of GBV prevention and response actors that we developed during the previous quarter. This slide, shown below, demonstrates the complexity of the social and legal landscape surrounding GBV and the sensitivity that will be required from the GOAL Plus approach. GOAL Plus will give development of this approach priority with the in anticipation of schools re-opening.

Figure 4: GBV Prevention and Response Actors in Liberia



Activity 3: Conduct research on issues related to girls' completion of primary education and extend M&E activities.[7]

During the 2013-2014 school year, GOAL Plus continued to use its extensive M&E system to track girls' enrollment, attendance, completion, and retention at an individual level to determine results associated with the GOAL Plus interventions and for monitoring changes at the school level. GOAL Plus collected enrollment data for girls and boys in pre-primary, primary and Grade 7 associated with GOAL Plus-supported schools. The objective was to use the data to analyze GOAL Plus' school programming and to better understand transition patterns. GOAL Plus also collected additional cohort 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.

[7] "Reproducing spot messages on key issues in girls' education" is included in Activity 3 in the Implementation Plan but is reported here under Activity 2 as a support activity for the implementation of the Policy on Girls' Education. The focus under Activity 2 is on positive role model messages and appropriate age enrollment for grade 1.

Three research topics were originally intended for research in Year 2 of GOAL Plus:

1. Girls' transition rates and trends from Grade 6 to Grade 7;
2. PTA effectiveness – what makes a successful, productive and sustainable PTA; and
3. The extent to which support for increased opportunities to learn and a supportive learning environment (focus of GOAL Plus interventions) are associated with learning achievement.

The extended school closure for the 2014-15 academic year, due to the Ebola outbreak, renders topics 1 and 3 unproductive as stated. AIR will recast topic 1 to address the patterns of re-enrollment after the extended school closure and what facilitates or hinders girl students' re-engagement in their education. Topic 3 will be recast to identify school-community assets/gaps after the Ebola crisis as they relate to enrollments, attendance, retention and completion rates.

Topic 2, PTA effectiveness, will be recast in terms of resiliency, allowing for an examination of the factors that are associated with communities that quickly recover and restore education as a centerpiece of their community. This inquiry could then benefit from the 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 assisting an mobilizing other communities for their post-Ebola recovery. AIR researchers Matt Murray and Hannah Reeves will work closely with the COP and M&E Officer to conduct this research activity.

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

Foday Varnie and Wilson Bee, AIR's and FAWE's Finance and Administration Managers respectively, attended the USAID and AIR training in Washington, DC, September 29-October 8, 2014. As part of the training at AIR, actions were planned to make the accounting and reporting from FAWE to AIR more efficient and timely, meeting USAID standards with less direct input from AIR on a regular basis. The GOAL Plus Finance and Administration Officer continued to work closely with the FAWE Finance Manager following their joint training in Washington, DC, to bring FAWE's financial reporting into full compliance with AIR's reporting cycles.

AIR continues to enjoy a collaborative and productive working relationship with its GOAL Plus partner, FAWE. FAWE is addressing and building relevant capacities for project implementation, including responsive financial budgeting and reporting and organization and delivery of field activities. Joint planning and implementation between AIR and FAWE for GOAL Plus field activities had been intensified in the previous quarters and includes the Field Officers on a regular basis.

The GOAL Plus Field Officers, fielded by FAWE and stationed in Grand Bassa, Bong and Lofa, maintained their relationships with their respective CEOs and DEOs during the Ebola crisis and facilitated communication with them to assess ongoing status and with project-supported schools for the assessment and re-engagement activity. The Field Officers also participated in the MOE's training events and will participate in the upcoming national assessment of conditions related to schools' re-opening.

Monitoring & Evaluation

The M&E Officer completed entry of the student completion and promotion data for 2013/14 that were collected just prior to the restrictions on travel outside Monrovia. Some reporting data were not available due to the Ebola outbreak travel restrictions, including completion of some PTA school improvement grant completion data, some data on percentage of girls and boys who complete their grade, percentage of girls and boys who pass their grade, and progression to Grade 7 (as schools did not re-open). Data collection on these indicators was in progress and is partially complete but completion is pending the ability to communicate with each school when travel restrictions are eased for project staff.

The Liberia Monitoring and Evaluation Project (L-MEP) conducted its scheduled Data Quality Assessment (DQA) of the GOAL Plus M&E/PMP system, August 28-Octoer 31. GOAL Plus has agreed with L-MEP to submit comments on the preliminary report. Key preliminary findings included:

- Overall, most of the data reported on the four assessed indicators meet most of the five data quality standards. However, data on three of the four indicators need further clarification on the definition.
- The project has a full-time M&E Officer with the requisite M&E knowledge, skills and experience. The Field Officers, Assistant Field Officers, and Community Mobilization/ Scholarship Officer who are involved with data collection also demonstrated understanding of the GOAL Plus data collection and management processes.
- There were some instances noted of inconsistency between some school records and the data in the project M&E system, and some data in the M&E system and the PIDS, which need clarification or confirmation.
- The project should to take further steps in Year 2 to ensure that data are maintained and utilized more analytically in each county and district rather than being collected, reported, and reviewed more generally.

III. Challenges and Lessons Learned

Challenges

1. The most obvious challenges to the project in this reporting period was as with all of the education sector partners: how to use the resources at hand promote the health and safety of its constituent students (and families and communities) in the Ebola environment while being faithful to the project objectives and results; and at the same time, how to preserve the gains in access and learning during a prolonged period of school closure.
2. The two main challenges facing the project now are: (1) helping communities and schools re-open with renewed enthusiasm for enrolling their girls (and boys) after this national trauma of Ebola at the same levels or higher than before; and (2) adjusting the project activities and schedule to the new school calendar, which will likely run from February/March through November 2, 2015.
3. An additional challenge to the re-enrollments of girl students is the high rates of pregnancy during the closures among school age youth, as observed by the team during the assessment/re-engagement visits.

Lessons Learned

1. Communication is critical. As at time when the MOE was attempting to coordinate multiple agencies and implementing partners for a new plan, when USAID and its implementing partners were adjusting their programs, when expatriate staff were working remotely, proactive, frequent, empathetic and mutually supportive communication was critical to maintaining momentum, relevance, responsiveness, and partnerships.
2. The GOAL Plus/MOE Team learned during the assessment/re-engagement visits that most communities were as motivated as the MOE and project staff to resume school activities. Education remains high on the most of priorities for communities in working their way out of bad circumstances.
3. As a result of working together, we believe that the partnership with the MOE and with our constituent communities and schools is even stronger. As we look for evidence of this, we also hope to learn that WASH has become a fundamental component of a good school environment.

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

GOAL Plus activities were on track in Year 1 with some variance in implementation due to scheduling and new opportunities that have been presented to the program. These include re-programming the Gender Responsive Pedagogy training into the Community Education Counselor to prepare for schools' re-opening, and delaying summer coaching and training activities due to the Ebola outbreak.

Preparations for providing scholarship packages for Year 2/1st semester, and the girls' education/appropriate age enrollment campaign were fully on track but implementation has been delayed until schools re-open. All other planned activities have been delayed due to schools' closure and the redeployment of staff expertise and time to the MOE's Emergency Plan. The Year 2 Annual Implementation Plan will be revised in early February to reflect these new conditions and schedules, including any necessary adjustments in indicators, activities and targets which will require approval from USAID.

V. Activities Completed and Not Completed

Year 2 Quarter 1 (October – December 2014)

Indicator	2014			Notes
	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Overall Objective: Improved Education Opportunities for Girls in Selected Communities of Lofa, Bong, and Grand Bassa Counties				
Intermediate Result 1: Increased Access to School for Girls in Selected Communities of Bong, Lofa and Grand Bassa				
Activity 1: Expand the most promising model (scholarships and community mobilization) to all 60 GOAL schools				
1.1 Conduct community meetings in 40 existing schools and 20 new schools				Conducted in September-October 2013 and again in December 2014
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
Sub-Intermediate Result 1.1: Improved Academic Performance for Girls in Targeted Grades in Targeted Schools				
1.1.1 Procure teaching/learning supplies for grades 1 - 6 teachers				Completed for Years 1 and 2
1.1.2 Distribute teaching/learning supplies to grades 1 - 6 teachers				Completed for Years 1 and 2
1.1.3 Provide Gender Responsive Pedagogy training to 20 new schools				Pending for Year 2
1.1.4 Mentor & monitor teachers for Gender Responsive Pedagogy in 60 schools				Pending for Year 2
1.1.5 Coordinate with LTTP in Bong and Lofa Counties				Joint technical staff meetings (GOAL Plus and LTTP) conducted in 2nd quarter of Year 1; Ebola responses coordinated in Oct-Dec 2014
1.1.6 Payment of school related fees for girls (grades 1-6 in 60 schools)[8]				1st semester paid in January; 2nd semester paid April 15-May 5, 2014; Year 2 pending
1.1.7 Procure scholarship packages for grades 1 - 6 girls in 60 schools				Completed for Year 2; pending for Year 2 (March 2015?)
1.1.8 Distribute scholarship packages and recreational materials				Completed for Year 2; pending for Year 2 (March 2015?)
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; to be renewed for Year 2
Intermediate Result 2: Improved Learning Environment for Girls in Selected Communities of Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties				
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; to be updated for Year 2 (preliminary assessment conducted December 2014)

[8] GOAL Plus will clarify with the MOE and USAID whether payment of a "Girls Assistance Package (GAP)", rather than school related fees, is still acceptable.

Indicator	2014			Notes
	Oct	Nov	Dec	
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; Grant implementation monitoring ongoing; refresher training to be conducted in year 2
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
Intermediate Result 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				
3.1 Finalize strategy to disseminate the National Policy on Girls' Education				Completed
3.2 Assist the MOE with dissemination of the National Policy on Girls' Education through the grants program and teacher training				Distribution of Policy on Girls' Education being conducted at all relevance meetings; planned for all principals' conference
3.4 Develop talking points for presentations, posters, and laminated handouts to promote policy awareness and use				Ongoing: Laminated handouts for town criers developed and distributed; media campaign plan finalized with MOE and USAID, to be implemented in January 2015 prior to schools' re-opening
Activity 3: Conduct research on issues related to girls' completion of primary education and extend M&E activities				
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				Attendance spot checks completed; repetition and completion data collected for all but a few schools in July 2014; completed in December 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; completion collected for all but a few schools in July 2014; completed in December 2014; transition data to grade 7 will be collected after schools re-open in 2015.
3.9 Consultation with MOE and USAID to determine priority and actionable topics for research				Completed; to be refreshed with focus on PTA resilience
3.12 Integrate M&E and research findings into media campaign and national policy to support girls' education.				Media campaign plan finalized with MOE and USAID, to be implemented in Jnauary 2015 prior to schools' re-opening; GOAL Plus integrated into MOE's Operational Plan and Emergency Plan
3.13 Reproduce spot messages on key issues				Role model messages and enrollment campaign messages produced and set for

Indicator	2014			Notes
	Oct	Nov	Dec	
				January 2015.
3.14 Facilitate live radio discussions on the importance of girls' education				Pending
Activity 4: Build the technical and managerial capacity of our partner, FAWE, in logistics, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation				
4.1 Conduct collaborative assessment of FAWE's institutional capacity for procurement, inventory, logistics, financial management, and M&E using adapted OCA Tool				Activities focused on immediate organizational needs relevant to GOAL Plus implementation; FAWE Finance Manager attended USAID and AIR training in Washington, DC in October (with GOAL Plus Finance Manager); follow-up training for Field Assistants ongoing
Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)				
5.1 Collect student enrollment data from schools				1st Semester and 2nd Semester completed; Year 2 pending
5.2 Collect student and teacher attendance data				1st Semester and 2nd Semester completed; Year 2 pending

VI. Plans for the Next Quarter (January – March 2015)

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

- Transport scholarship materials to the field and distribute
- Collect school related fees information and process payment
- Update the Annual Implementation Plan to reflect new conditions and post-Ebola realities
- Explore feasibility of second round of IBB books and min-libraries delivered to schools
- Implement Community Education Counseling for school representatives
- Close out Year 1 PTA grants

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

- Support communities and schools in preparations to reopen schools following the MOE safety protocols.
- Conduct appropriate age enrollment campaign for girls' education (age 6, grade 1)
- Hold consultation with principals, PTAs, and students on the role and selection of CECs
- Begin pilot test of CECs for GBV

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

- Conduct research on PTA resilience

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

- Train FAWE Field Officers in maintaining and using data with DEOs and CEOs for monitoring schools' progress

Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

- Implement agreed upon DQA recommendations
- Collect and enter data on students that completed and passed their grade
- Continue monitoring project activities
- Enter data into USAID/L-MEP PIDS (Year 2, Quarter 1)

VII. Results towards Activity Objectives

Performance Data Reporting Table

F Indicates Framework Indicator

Indicator	Indicator Type	Unit of Measure	Disaggregation	Baseline Year	Baseline Value	2014 Target	2014 Actual (as of Dec. 2014)	2015 Target	2015 Actual	End of Project Target	End of Project Actual
Overall Objective: Improved Education Opportunities for Girls in Selected Communities of Lofa, Bong, and Grand Bassa Counties											
*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) 6,165 (m)	+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%) 82% (f)	(+8%) 87% (f) 84% (m)	(+15%) 92% (f)		+15%	
Number of girls from 6th grade in USG supported schools who transitioned to 7th grade	Context	Number	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	0	-	4[9]	-		-	
Average teacher attendance rate	Context	Percentage	School, County, District, Gender	2013	73.8%	-	81%	-		-	
FAWE's organizational capacity in targeted areas strengthened	Custom	Number	Central	2013	TBN	TBD	N/A	TBD		TBN	
IR 1: Increased Access to School for Girls in Targeted Communities of Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties											

[9] 4= girls from USAID-GOAL Plus grade 6 who performed well in first semester (2013/2014) and received promotion to grade 7 after the end of first semester exams, exempted from passing final exams and academic year completion

Indicator	Indicator Type	Unit of Measure	Disaggregation	Baseline Year	Baseline Value	2014 Target	2014 Actual (as of Dec. 2014)	2015 Target	2015 Actual	End of Project Target	End of Project Actual
Number of in-kind scholarship awards distributed in USG supported schools	Custom	Number	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	6,097	6,237	6,073[10]	7,172		13,409	
*Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials (TLM) provides with USG assistance	*F Indicator	Number	Grade, Sex, School, County, and District	2013	0	454	625[11]	454		908	
Number of teachers who receive gender responsive pedagogy training	Custom	Number	Grade, Gender, School, County, and District	2013	0	180	N/A[12]	0		180	
Percentage of enrolled girl students in targeted grades attending school	Custom	Percentage	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	66.5%	(+1%) 67.5%	(+13.6%) 80.1%[13]	(+2%) 69.5%		+2%	
Number of girls enrolled at an appropriate age in grade 1	Custom	Number	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	13	75	79	200		275	
IR 1.1: Improved Academic Performance for Girls in Targeted Grades in Targeted Schools											
Number of girls attending tutoring classes	Custom	Number	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	1,120	600	862	600		1,200	
Number of girls participating in Girls' Club activities	Custom	Number	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	985	1,000	1,367	1,500		1,500	

[8] 2nd semester in-kind scholarship awards distributed was the higher number of the two distributions
[9] 2nd semester number of teaching and learning materials distributed to school teachers (625) was the higher of the two distributions
[10] The expected training was cancelled due to Ebola outbreak; we will attempt to include then in the year 2 schedule
[11] This percentage is the annual average percentage from 1st and 2nd spot check

Indicator	Indicator Type	Unit of Measure	Disaggregation	Baseline Year	Baseline Value	2014 Target	2014 Actual (as of Dec. 2014)	2015 Target	2015 Actual	End of Project Target	End of Project Actual
Percentage of girls and boys who pass their grade	Context	Percentage	Grade, Age, School, County, and District	2013	60.3% (f) 70.2 % (m)	65.3% (f)	82% (f) 87% (m)	87% (f)		87% (f)	
IR 2: Improved Learning Environment for Girls in Selected Communities of Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa Counties											
*Number of PTAs or similar school governance structures supported	*F Indicator	Number	School, Community, County, and District	2013	30	59	59	59		59	
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	49[14]	56		56	
Number of grant-supported PTA school improvement projects completed	Custom	Number	School, Community, County, and District	2013	0	30	0[13]	20		50	
Number of schools that present school progress card results to their communities	Custom	Number	School, County, and District	2013	40	60	58	60		60	
IR 3: Increased Awareness of the Importance of Educating Girls in Selected Counties, Districts, and Communities											
Number of participants at town hall meetings on girls' education	Custom	Number	Community, Gender, County and District		0	1,500	1121(f) 1259(m) 2,380[14]	1,500		3,000	

[14] This is the number of PTAs verified to have a prepared school improvement plan; the remaining 10 PTAs are believed to have prepared a achool improvement plan but yet to be verified.

[13] Schools are working on submitting the final report to complete the grant cycle, the delay due to the Ebola epidemic, and will be reported by next quarter.

[14] The total number of participants at all town hall meetings held to promotion girls' education in 1st semester (597) and 2nd semesters (1783).

Indicator	Indicator Type	Unit of Measure	Disaggregation	Baseline Year	Baseline Value	2014 Target	2014 Actual (as of Dec. 2014)	2015 Target	2015 Actual	End of Project Target	End of Project Actual
Number of trainings for MOE on using data for decision making	Custom	Number	National, County and District		0	2	2	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	0	0		60	

Annex A: INEE Feedback on the Ministry of Education Ebola Emergency Plan

Feedback on the Liberia Ministry of Education's Ebola Emergency Plan from members of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and Liberia Education Partners

Introduction. The Ebola crisis is impacting all aspects of life in West Africa, including access and quality of education in Liberia. The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Liberia, with wide support and contributions from its education partners in Liberia, including the Education Sector Development Committee (ESDC) members, is developing an Emergency Plan for an education response to the Ebola crisis. As this particular emergency situation is new to many of the actors in this effort, international expertise—building on global experience in strengthening education as a response to emergencies—can offer insights into the plan. With agreement of the Minister of Education, H.E. Etmonia D. Tarpeh, members of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), representing humanitarian and development agencies, convened to generate and share considerations and suggestions with the MOE for the Emergency Plan. An advantage in calling on global experience comes from INEE members who have used a similar or other approaches and may have recommendations, i.e., what to be aware of (context), to build on (opportunities), to avoid (threats), a sense of recovery timeline, what is even possible, based on their own experiences in emergency conditions.

This document represents the outcome of the collaborative work of the INEE members and other Liberia education actors compiled through the following processes: virtual consultation, in-person session on Ebola education response in West Africa and collaborative workshop on the Liberia education response.

An initial part of this initiative was a **virtual consultation,** conducted to meet the wide interest from colleagues who could not participate in person in Doha, where the INEE participants were meeting. Guidance for virtual participation and a template were shared with anyone interested in contributing to this process. Feedback was received from 11 agencies by September 30, 2014, and incorporated in the discussions in the Doha events. Some agencies submitted their filled-in templates directly to the INEE Secretariat. Organizations based in Liberia worked with the Education NGO Forum, chaired by IBIS Liberia, to contribute to the virtual consultation.

In Doha, a **2-hour session** on the Ebola education response in West Africa took place on October 1, 2014. Over 15 participants discussed the impacts of the Ebola crisis on the education systems and processes in the region and shared some of the challenges that their education agencies and partners have experienced on the ground. Part of the discussion focused on radio programming for education while schools are closed. The session was facilitated by Sarah Nogueira Sanca (EDC), and the session summary is available upon request.

Finally, a **3-hour workshop** on the Liberia Emergency Plan took place in Doha on October 2, 2014. Facilitated by Howard Williams (AIR), the workshop began with a continuation of the discussion on the key questions raised at the session the day before. Relevant linkages to the INEE Minimum Standards, the Sphere Minimum Standards (Health Chapter) and the INEE Guidance on HIV and Education in Emergencies were highlighted as important principles that

could guide the work on the Ebola response. In small groups, the 17 participants then discussed the key areas that are strategic for the Ebola response through education and relevant to the Liberia MOE Emergency Plan. The groups then shared their results in a plenary, giving opportunities for all participants to contribute for the feedback to the Liberia MOE.

At the request of Liberia partners, a draft report was submitted on October 1, 2014, to inform the Liberia MOE discussions on the education response as part of the overall government response and coordination. The information from the virtual consultation and the Doha sessions served as the basis for the draft feedback report. This final report provides more comprehensive feedback on the Emergency Plan.

Acknowledgements. Special thanks to the INEE participants and the Liberia education partners who gave such thoughtful and heartfelt insight and suggestions for the MOE's consideration. These include over 40 colleagues representing the following organizations and agencies: INEE Secretariat, American Institutes for Research (AIR), Education Development Center (EDC), FHI360, Reach Out To Asia (ROTA), Teachers College-Columbia University, INTERSOS, WarChild Holland, Save the Children-Norway, Global Education Cluster, Norwegian Refugee Council, MaviKalem, World Vision International, Save the Children UK, Save the Children US, Open Society Foundation, RET, World Bank, International Rescue Committee, UNICEF, USAID, UNESCO-IIEP, Plan International, Concern Worldwide, IBIS Liberia, Liberia Education NGO Forum, Liberia Education Sector Development Committee (ESDC), Sphere Project, Children in Crisis, European Union, Africa Development Corps, Concern Worldwide, UNRWA, Finn Church Aid and Plan International.

- *Howard Williams, American Institutes for Research; Tzvetomira Laub, Senior Coordinator, INEE Working Group on Minimum Standards and Network Tools;*
Arianna Pacifico, INEE Deputy Coordinator for Minimum Standards and Network Tools
(October 18, 2014)

Overall

There was enthusiasm among the NGO representatives and INEE members who participated in this survey and discussion for review of the Liberia MOE emergency response. It is a difficult situation for everyone and the MOE has outlined a substantive approach. A guiding principle in the feedback is an acknowledgement that the MOE's engagement with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW), as the MOE has done, is an essential priority to ensuring accuracy of health messaging as well as to ensure no harm is done to school or community participants (administrators, principals, teachers, students, parents) through these outreach programs and in preparing and re-opening schools.

Objective 1: Streamline Institutional Arrangements and Strengthen Capacity of MOE Staff and System

Overall

1. This is a very good starting point for the MOE's emergency response.
2. The organization, coordination, and communication arrangements with partners should be explicitly stated so that each party, including the Education Sector Development Committee (ESDC) members and other Ministries, know where and how to collaborate at each stage.
3. The multiplicity of donor and implementing partners and NGOs represented on the ESDC that are willing and able to contribute to the MOE's Emergency Plan constitute a potentially robust response – as well as a very big coordination challenge. The MOE and each ESDC member (and the NGOs represented on the ESDC by the Education NGO Forum) have at least two roles: (1) contributing to and coordinating partner contributions to the MOE's Emergency and Operational Plans and (2) actually implementing those contributions under extreme conditions. Therefore, the MOE is urged to consider requesting activation of the Education Cluster in order to provide additional resources and expertise for the coordination effort. The Education Cluster will not be expected to replace the leadership and coordination of the MOE or the ESDC, but to provide dedicated resources to augment and maximize the coordination effort. The Education Cluster may also offer support for the M&E aspects of the Emergency Plan.
4. The MOE's Emergency Plan initially called for a two-day workshop presumably to kick-off the Emergency Plan. It is suggested that the MOE consider "streamlining institutional arrangements and strengthening capacity of MOE staff and system" as an ongoing capacity development effort to implement and strengthen the Emergency Plan that will eventually support implementation of the Operational Plan.

Considerations and Suggestions

Policy and Programming:

1. In order to plan for schools' re-opening, specify the criteria and triggers for re-opening schools; develop at least two scenarios for opening, e.g., April and September 2015; what approaches will be used for each; and what are the expected costs for each scenario.
2. Multi-sector coordination will be needed to plan and reopen schools, e.g., MOHSW and the media networks of print, radio and cell phone technologies. Advocacy for child protection and health is important and the greatest asset in some of these communities may be schools. There is concern that schools may be used as health centers or even burial sites, making re-opening or attendance at those schools very problematic. The MOE needs to address this with the MOHSW in addition to other technical inputs.
3. What other Ministries may be important partners for the Emergency Plan, including re-opening of schools, such as the Ministry of Gender and Development and the Ministry of Youth Sports.
4. Re: payment to teachers – it is thought that teachers should be paid throughout the period for four reasons: (a) to access their participation for social mobilization, (b) to not lose them for schools' re-opening, (c) to maintain trust with the government during this difficult period and (d) they and the local economies absolutely depend on those cash transfers.
5. Consider a regional sharing of emergency plans with Sierra Leone and Guinea, perhaps a two day event in Accra or exchanges of approaches and plans facilitated by donor partners.
6. Use a Conflict Sensitivity Education (CSE) perspective:
   - If staggered opening of schools is considered, they should not be perceived as favoring one group over another or along any conflict lines;
   - Response actions and messages should always be considered as to whether it promotes confidence in the government;
   - Can the MOE create a communication strategy to explain clearly why and when schools are opening to avoid grievance?
7. Does the MOE see any role for the County School Boards in the Emergency Plan or will activating those Boards be tied to implementation of the Operational Plan?

Funding and Financing

1. What are the budget sources and levels for each of the Emergency Plan activities? Is there a plan for raising the necessary funds?
2. There is urgency for all mobilization activities, especially social mobilization and radio messaging. Can these begin effectively if sufficient funding has not been identified yet for

full implementation, e.g., the cascade training for mobilization?

3. ESDC partners may provide technical assistance to the MOE for proposal writing to access additional funding, e.g., the Qatar Educate a Child (EAC) for reaching children now out of school for this period and to the GPE to support activities during this period.
4. Continue mapping and updating NGOs' contributions to the plan, i.e., who is doing what, where, as IBIS/Education NGO Forum has been doing.
5. Discuss with DPs on the ESDC re-programming aspects of currently funded projects to support the MOE's emergency plan in order to restore sufficient stability to re-open schools.
6. Convene private sector representatives (rubber, mining, shipping, oil & gas) to provide funding or other support beyond their labor supply communities.

Technical Support

1. Solicit the ESDC (and Education NGO Forum) for technical assistance and methods and materials already developed that can be used for the plan, such as radio programming and psycho-social training materials. Likewise, share with all partners what the MOE has decided upon using, such as training materials and risk mitigation practices.
2. Access and integrate technical staff from Donor and Implementing Partners into the MOE's working groups, such as those focused on Social Mobilization, Radio messaging (instruction, other learning activities supplemental messaging, e.g., psycho-social), Preparations for Schools' Re-opening, and Monitoring & Evaluation.

M&E

1. Using EMIS data and existing contact information (including from partners), to track principals'/teachers' active status (who has left or is otherwise no longer available per school) for planning schools' re-opening.
2. Develop and use a feedback format for CEOs, DEOs, and a sample of selected principals as "sentinels" for tracking the implementation of the cascade training and other field activities, using cell phone contacts.
3. The M&E for the Emergency Plan should include targets for each area of the plan and track all partners' inputs (what, where, when) and their contributions to the targets.

Objective 2: Train teachers and DEOs to participate and lead social mobilization and behavior change communication (BCC) to halt the transmission of EVD in communities

Overall

1. This is a good example of using the CEO/DEO structure to reach teachers nationally.
2. It is an extensive network of civil servants that is potentially being activated

Considerations and Suggestions

1. The teacher training approach is grounded on the cascade model, which has strengths and weaknesses:
   - Periodic, ongoing support is important for the teachers and is not included in the strategy. [INEE Minimum Standards- Teaching and Learning #2]
   - Are protocols in place for their physically moving around and engaging community members safely?
   - Suggestion to use an initial set of schools as a pilot to learn from experience for the full scale (can be done quickly to inform the national program to avoid any problems on a larger scale).
2. During this current period when interacting with groups is still a high risk activity, could teachers be considered as "informed opinion leaders", rather than as mobilizers? Then, they can transition to serve as mobilizers when indicators from the MOHSW show an appropriately lower risk when interacting with groups.
3. Other "influencers' in the community can be accessed to support the teachers in this role, such as traditional leaders and youth. We should think more broadly about who has influence in communities. We should not focus only on the education system to share information and influence the community. Need to be creative in using strength of community. But must try to ensure consistency and accuracy in messaging.
4. Can we use this as an opportunity to elevate teachers' roles through special recognition at an especially critical time? [INEE Minimum Standards- Teachers and Other Education Personnel #2]
5. Is it possible to use videos to model expected messages and behaviors at least at the district level?
6. How can this approach be coordinated with the MOHSW, the Ministry of Gender, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports?
7. Consider rolling this out with partners' community networks rather than relying exclusively on the MOE's structure and resources.
8. We know that outsiders approaching a fearful community may not be welcomed and their safety could be at risk. Do we know if teachers *within* their own communities are safe to

deliver Ebola messaging if the community members are not receptive?

9. Not all teachers are extensively knowledgeable or well-trained pedagogically, so there is risk that the messages may not be conveyed accurately or reliably.

Objective 3: Prepare and Broadcast via Radio Education Programs for Children Grades 1-6

Overall

1. The Radio programs should be broader than academic instruction and include age appropriate psycho-social and life skills messages, stories that encourage reading, academic games, messages and stories that support families and peers.
2. The urgency cannot wait for the normal development and testing of a radio instructional program; the MOE should embrace those 2-3 DPs and IPs with the most experience and ready radio programs to adapt and use as soon as possible.
3. Reality check: It might be unrealistic to expect teachers to use learning materials they have never been introduced to (consider the challenge in applying extensive LTTP training).
4. There should be more focus on involving the parents.
5. It is important to detail the media strategy for reaching the learners in each location and setting.
6. Feedback mechanisms for the outreach, quality and appropriateness of the radio programs need to be in place, possibly through IPs and NGOs.
7. The option of supplemental print materials for rural communities may not be realistic in this emergency period.

Considerations

1. The approach being suggested is appropriate. This could represent a win-win situation for MOE and development partners as it could (a) show that the MOE is working in partnership with various Education actors, (b) may be an incentive for the learners to feel even more encouraged to follow if the profiles of facilitators and actors are diverse (background, organizations and even different countries) and (c) could develop more curiosity, excitement and in turn commitment to learning.
2. EDC/AYP is in discussions with various stakeholders (MOE, USAID, etc.) about the use and adaptation of their radio programs, using their Monrovia-based recording studio and engaging their local staff w/expertise. They have also shared templates, production plans, etc.
3. Education and health programs and messages from the MOE (supported by EDC/AYP, UNICEF, and others, need to be carefully coordinated for complementarity and for the

most effective use of media bandwidth time and schedule.

4. New radio programs should be designed where possible in a way that they can continue to support learning objectives even after the Ebola crisis. Teachers and communities should be able to continue to integrate these lessons into their formal and informal education programs.
5. Might there be a rationale for distribution of low-cost radios to facilitate wider access to radio schooling in communities where radios may be few or poor quality?
6. Developing new print materials for use, independent of the radio programming, sounds contradictory and the time it will take to develop materials should be taken into account. How will the MOE manage the extremely high cost of printing in Liberia; and how would these be distributed? This would be a massive logistical challenge even in normal times; giving materials to teachers without training them in their use is not likely to work.
7. The plan does not describe and clarify the modality that will be used for pupils to liaise with their teachers to complement their learning via radio. While the schools remain closed and it is not allowed to assemble learners in groups, what concrete means are foreseen for teachers to provide feedback, i.e. home visits? Or what other modalities are readily available?
8. A summary at the end of each radio program could provide what they should have learned. Once the crisis is over, the summaries can be made into a booklet for the teachers to use as a review.
9. Has the MOE reached out to the Ministry that controls radio licensing for actions to provide airtime and MOE friendly rates? Is there a matrix showing media options (UNMIL, private radio stations, community radio stations), their audience reach, costs, and what time(s) they can make available to the MOE for broadcast? Note: most programs to be broadcast by local stations will need to be physically sent by CD.

Suggestions

1. The Radio programs also should include age appropriate psycho-social and life skills messages, stories that encourage reading, academic games, messages and stories that support families and peers. Try for joint communication with health, such as health messages that immediately follow education broadcasts.
2. The MOE should embrace those 2-3 DPs and IPs with the most experience and ready radio programs to adapt and use as soon as possible. Review existing materials to determine which ones can be modified to meet needs outlined above, and where new programs may need to be created.
3. Start by developing an overall curriculum, starting with the lowest grades, that shows the learning objectives of each program, linked to the basic curriculum; be realistic about how

much airtime you will have, and create only as many programs as you will be able to broadcast.

4. Small technical working groups per subject area and grade(s) level (that include implementing partners and broadcasting experts) could potentially help scriptwriters move more quickly, with radio production happening in parallel so programs can start to get aired while others are still being developed.
5. Learners should start getting access to these programs much sooner than in 3 – 6 months.
6. It is important to note that the majority of Liberian children have missed out on schooling. Also, first grade and early childhood development centers/K1/K2 as a rule are the most populated classes. Therefore, to reach the children that have never attended schooling and to really increase the capacity of the most children; the radio program should give priority to the lowest grades.
7. It would also be an excellent opportunity to strengthen the capacity of parents: some lessons for parents on how to stimulate the child-friendly education of their children and how to communicate simple psychosocial support messages.
8. Link with SMS providers to send out text blasts to promote radio education program and schedules
9. Create programs for mother-tongue broadcasts to engage more learners and promote mother tongue literacy in communities.
10. A calendar can be released with of the dates of episodes to be aired by subject and objective. Consider working with radio stations on rebroadcasts for those who miss certain airings and develop programs that include ways for adults to be engaged (parents, guardians) in supporting their children.
11. Engage both community and private radio stations in the process of developing content and airing programs?
12. Involve PTA's in organizing or at least informing communities to participate in programs.
13. Also a time for teachers to receive academic upgrading – reading/writing Bassa and speaking English as a Second Language.
14. Can MOE consider the use of other media to complement radio, such as mobile, e.g. text messages with math questions on a regular basis, sending key information to parents about how to support their children. The Liberia MOE could consider accessing a partnership with a mobile company, such as Lonestar, to provide free text messages re: education.
15. Could there by opportunities for children to call in and ask questions about the radio lessons? That would allow a teacher to answer some of the questions that come in and make the sessions a bit more interactive. In Sierra Leone, they will have schedule of certain days and times when lessons for specific grades will be presented.

Objective 4: Train teachers to develop skills that will help to mitigate the psychosocial and emotional impact of the Ebola epidemic on children through appropriate child and adolescent developmental activities

Overall

1. Excellent Choice using the Psychosocial First Aid tool and the "Look. Listen. Link" Approach. The brief training is short enough to entertain broad scalability and yet preserve effectiveness.
2. When possible, resume non formal, home and or community based education activities and guided play. The opportunity for play and continued learning has a greater impact on the road to normalcy than trainings for teachers and parents in how to "look, listen and link".
3. Leverage INEE members to seek information on how the education community in Asia dealt with SARS and what can be learned from that.
4. Which teachers will be trained, all or 1-2 representatives for each school? Consider that part of the teacher training also will be providing psychosocial to the teachers.

Considerations and Suggestions

1. **Begin now**. Through determined ICT platforms begin to unpack and modularize this training into parent and teacher messaging (perhaps mobile or text drive). Seek multiple touch-points for messages and support. Mobile driven solutions will reach larger populations but consider voice messaging for illiterate users.
2. Consider a national campaign via radio and television showing examples of the importance of caring and engaged teachers and parents in the safety, health and education of children. The campaign should focus on "Back to School" and link the healing effect of open and functioning schools on the resilience of children.
3. Identify local partners who have previously done extensive psychosocial teacher training. There were many in post conflict in Liberia. INEE also can do a shout–out to the network to help in identification if necessary.
4. Consider rolling this out with partners' school-community networks rather than relying exclusively on the MOE's structure and resources.
5. Leverage the ICT partners in the region, in particular entities like World Reader and others who have experience in getting content to the home level in local languages via a variety of platforms. The psychosocial support should harness these platforms.
6. Map the more Ebola-affected areas and consider a longer and more targeted psychosocial report program that focuses on fostering robust community-based support networks vs. just the Psychological First Aid campaign alone.
7. Align messages with the MOJ and Ministry of Gender (the Child Protection and Social Welfare Community). The incidents of violence against children, trafficking and

exploitation of children in such contexts can increase, especially those newly orphaned and displaced. Teachers and parents need consistent and coordinated messages that reflect the best of thinking from the education, child welfare and mental health communities.

8. Teachers could do this but also consider community social workers. The MOE should think about liaising with child protection actors in the country. Child Protection actors may be providing psychosocial support/psychological first aid and teachers could be involved in training child protection actors to provide or work alongside social workers.
9. Engage with ECD section of the Ministry to insure that messages and support to ECD teachers, parents of young children and children are a part of this campaign and roll out of Psychosocial Teacher Training.
10. Parents Teacher Associations PTAs are not historically the best placed to handle teacher support. The psychosocial benefits of an engaged PTA doing "business as usual" and collaborating on school improvement, enrollment and overall support to the school may be a more strategic use of this group's time.

Objectives 5-7: Re-Opening of Schools: Develop and Communicate Administrative Guidelines; Clean and Disinfect Schools' Environment Nationwide; Repair or install hand washing stations and sanitation facilities in each school.

Overall

1. This is a crucial priority.
2. Who will give the final determination of when schools can reopen, MOHSW? Can a safety guidelines checklist or protocol be developed for schools reopening (and approved by MOHSW and WHO?).
3. There is likely to be displacement of families and students—moving from some communities to others, and the loss of primary care givers.
4. The losses of learning will be related to the length of time schools are closed; a temporary radio program may not advance learning but may help retain prior learning (avoid loss); consequently, use of EGRA may be to determine maintenance or loss of learning and serve as a new baseline.
5. Cell phone number listings and text messaging can be used to communicate with administrators and teachers (reaching remote areas with messages without traveling or physical contact).
6. When the schools' re-opening dates are known, decisions will need to be made about (a) school day and term length and curriculum adjustments (and consider using an accelerated learning program in schools to catch up).
7. The MOE should mobilize NGOs with experience in teacher training in affiliated target Counties/Districts to assist with the teacher refresher workshops and PTA training

associated with the school reopening plan; these experienced teacher trainers are already on the ground and have existing relationships at schools and communities. Likewise, education and humanitarian NGO actors also can be mobilized to support distribution of Student Handbooks and materials and supplies for hand-washing stations in schools and their catchment areas.

8. The provision of hygiene kits and WASH supplies to schools will require replenishment every month to be a long term benefit.
9. Gender considerations should be taken into account when assessing the existing sanitation facilities at the schools and in introducing hand-washing stations.
10. There is no mention of children living with disabilities in the overall plan and any special consideration that it may be necessary to be given to them.
11. When preparing to repair or install new hand-washing facilities consider whether the hand-washing stations are easily accessible also to learners with disabilities.
12. Principal, teacher and/or PTA training must include maintenance planning for WASH facilities.

Additional Considerations and Suggestions:

These are important considerations for re-opening schools. Addressing the following areas might *strengthen* this component:

- Involvement of the PTA (for health messaging, safety, school preparations etc.).
- Improve mechanisms for PTA to be part of decision making in terms of when schools are to be opened and actions to ensure safety of schools (i.e. avoiding burial sites on or near school grounds).
- Sequencing the strategic plan – more details on which activities should come first. For example, WASH facilities can be done and used now but sanitation facilities will take longer and will be needed when schools are re-opened.
- Ensuring a conflict sensitive lens if looking at a phased approach to schools opening. This includes ensuring information on why and which communities have schools that are being reopened, ensuring the education sector continues to focus on children and not specific communities and tribal groups.
- Needs assessment and mapping of schools in hot spots can be used to move forward with some schools re-opening. This can help inform the phasing of the 'back to school'. Will also feed into identifying what response strategy is necessary for which specific areas.
- A clear Behavior Change Communication strategy will help give information that advocates for the value of education and the need for children to return when possible.

Prioritize:

- Participatory approaches and community involvement (can we use some innovative approaches here? Text messaging or other means?)
- Having a clear plan on how to keep school administrative staff active and engaged – perhaps including them in some of the activities suggested above.
- Involve the local MOHSW staff or clinic staff in school sanitizing, where possible, to ensure that health professionals are overseeing and "certifying" the process, can also help build trust in the community.

Risks (be careful)

- Using teachers to do the job of the health workers; they have a lack of technical expertise in health. Look for more of a joined up approach with MoH.
- The WASH plan seems overambitious in terms of scale, timing and funding. Need to have a more realistic review of this in line with mapping and priorities of needs. Increase linkages with partners for funding and implementation.
- Potential for conflict in a number of areas, including schools' opening or not opening, health risks with burials, school workforce, and differential food security situations.

Annex B: Minutes from Meetings of USAID/Liberia Education Implementing Partners

Meeting about Post-Ebola Education Planning

Wednesday, September 17, 9:00-10:30 am at AIR

Participants	**In person or phone-in**
Liberia MOE	
Albert Coleman <albertcoleman895@gmail.com>	In person
USAID/W	
Katie Donohoe <kdonohoe@usaid.gov>;	In person
Yolande Miller-Grandvaux <ymiller-grandvaux@usaid.gov>;	In person
Nina Papadopoulos <npapadopoulos@usaid.gov>;	Phone-in
Kakali Banik <kbanik@usaid.gov>;	Phone-in
USAID/Liberia	
Patrick White <pwhite@usaid.gov>;	Phone-in
Simone Brown <sbrown@usaid.gov>;	Phone-in
Miriam White <mwhite@usaid.gov>;	Phone-in
Mardea Nyumah <mnyumah@usaid.gov>;	Phone-in
EDC/AYP	
Hartenberger, Lisa <lhartenberger@edc.org>;	Phone-in
Clarke, Denise <deniseclarke@edc.org>;	Phone-in
FHI360/LTTP	
Ali Rajpoot <arajpoot@fhi360.org>;	Phone-in (attempted)
Brenda Arrington <barrington@fhi360.org>;	In person
RTI/EHELD	
Yark Kolva <ykolva@eheld.rti.org>;	Phone-in
James Mulbah <jmulbah@eheld.rti.org>	Phone-in
Norton, Tameeka <tnorton@rti.org>	Phone-in
CONCERN/EQUAL	
Jenny Hobbs <Jenny.Hobbs@concern.net>	Phone-in
AIR/GOAL Plus	
David Myers	In person
Mark Kutner	In person
Howard Williams	In person
Jerry Mindes	In person
Dan Sherman	In person
Hannah Reeves	Phone-in
Daniel Friedeberg	In person

Opening Remarks and Introductions

Mark Kutner, AIR Sr. VP: Thank you all for coming. We are committed to helping USAID and Liberia in this difficult time. We are taking notes, and this is also being recorded.

Katie Donohoe: Thanks for organizing.

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: Thank you all in this difficult time. Working together will help this situation pass.

Patrick White, Acting Education Team Leader in USAID Liberia

Simone Brown, USAID Liberia

Mardea Nyumah, USAID Liberia

Katie Donohoe, USAID Washington

Yolande Miller-Grandvaux, USAID Washington, lead on work in education and crisis affected environments

Koli Banik, Senior Education Advisor, USAID Africa Bureau

Nina Papadopoulos, USAID Washington

Kakali Banik, USAID Washington

Jenny Hobbs, Concern/EQUAL Education Advisor in UK

Lisa Hartenberger, COP for EDC/AYP

Denise Clarke, EDC/AYP

Yark Kolva, COP for RTI/EHELD

James Mulbah, DCOP for RTI/EHELD

Brenda Arrington, FHI360/LTTP

Tameeka Norton, Project Associate RTI/EHELD

Howard Williams, COP for AIR/GOAL PLUS

Dan Sherman, AIR

Daniel Friedeberg, AIR

Jerry Mindes, AIR

Hannah Reeves, AIR

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: Schools are closed. Opening of school depends on assessment of situation with advice of WHO and CDC and our own assessment. Focus of the MOE's emergency plan is to provide awareness of Ebola. Our main objective is train people on the dangers and awareness of Ebola. The idea of making people aware is important. Lack of awareness is a cause of the widespread problem. So, the first basic objective is preventing spread through creating awareness. We are training the trainers to go out to communities. But even with the plan, what happens with the students? We are putting together a radio education plan, in hopes that students will listen. We identify subject areas and put out a plan along with ESDC. They had input. The next step was to develop budget. The budget was presented to Senior Management team (SMT) and it was accepted. To open a school, it must be sanitized. So how do we move forward?

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: We would like to introduce David Myers.

David Myers, AIR's President and CEO: Thank you all. AIR wants to support and help. We've made contributions through the Liberian Embassy, and today decided that we would add $20,000. We're encouraging AIR staff to make contribution to charities in support of this.

Brief Updates from Partners

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: Let's have brief updates from partners, beginning with basic education access (Concern/EQUAL and GOAL Plus), basic education quality (LTTP), out of school youth (AYP) and higher education (EHELD).

Jenny Hobbs, Concern/EQUAL: We're continuing to work with the MoE to support the project. We're currently at level 2 of our security plan. We have a PTA training. We're developing an action plan on Ebola. We're also working on social mobilization with support of MOE and MoH. We're also contingency planning with USAID. Also at national level, we are looking into figuring out how to help radio programming, specifically radio programming in Grand Bassa that has mother tongue aspect.

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: Our staff is confined to Monrovia. We're doing planning and procurements to prepare for when schools will open. We're looking to use the same media for health messages. We're planning to provide WASH supplies to schools and communities. We're looking to the MoE for signals about schools will reopen. Also looking to see how our staff can support the Ministry with technical assistance and aspects of the emergency plan.

Brenda Arrington, FHI360/LTTP: We have a number of activities that are continuing. We're getting in procurements that we ordered. We're storing materials in warehouses. We're receiving shipments of computer equipment for EMIS. Using mobile technology for transferring safety messages. We've convened an internal Ebola task force to pull resources from across the

organization on how to help. There are 20 people still working in Monrovia office. Also have 3 satellite offices open.

Lisa Hartenberger, EDC/AYP: All of our expat staff are working from their home of record. The Lofa office is closed. We have 70 staff working out of Monrovia, and others in Grand Bassa. We're working on alternative distance education strategies, like developing audio and print based teacher training. Also some training on agriculture techniques that will replace face-to face training. We're focusing on technology and distance learning. Also mobile learning; we can send out SMS messages to all our people in the country. We're expanding our use of mobile phones for education. We have a working group with the MOE on the Come to School radio program. Other radio programs too - EDC has long history of doing radio for other countries. We can adapt these radio programs for Liberia with help of MoE.

Yark Kolva, RTI/EHELD: At the moment we have the bulk of our staff working from home. We are reassessing the entire situation to see how we can improve come post-Ebola. Apart from that we are continuing with procurements. We also have lab equipment. We are also mobilizing resources in RTI and we're happy to announce that RTI has come up with $25,000 towards the fight against Ebola. We continue to work from our Monrovia office [*Difficult to hear entire update due to the phone connection*]

What's Working? Anything Positive to report?

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: What's working? Anything positive to report? For example, some of our schools are continuing to work on grant-supported school improvement activities, and they are continuing to report.

David Myers, AIR's President and CEO: What do you mean exactly by school improvement activities, can you give examples?

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: School improvement activities, like building a fence around the school, constructing furniture, etc. Anything else working for other people?

Jenny Hobbs, Concern/EQUAL: We're still able to access 68 of the 100 schools we have in Grand Bassa. Our international support team is growing rather than leaving. The program is becoming more active. The thing that's working most for us is the strong team commitment. Country Education office open. We are still active at the community level.

Brenda Arrington, FHI360/LTTP: The reality is that we're facing a sad situation. We lost an employee this week. Now in the process of getting our office fumigated. All activities halted temporarily. It's very sad. Trying to figure out how to address the situation. We can still maintain contact with some of our essential vendors.

Lisa Hartenberger, EDC/AYP: Like LTTP, communication has been good. We're maintaining contact with all our own staff and with some of the communities. We have a good relationship with county health officers as well because of our work in health. People want information, so it's important to keep lines of communication open. We intend to resume activities.

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: It's good that we're maintaining communication and relationships with schools and communities.

James Mulbah, RTI/EHELD: Right now we're operating only from Monrovia office. Training to plan for post Ebola. Hoping to get back to activities soon.

Katie Donohoe, USAID Washington: Positive things from USAID are that our staff is growing (Patrick just got there) we are still there, working around the clock. USAID still supporting the projects, funding, keeping staff.

David Myers, AIR's President and CEO: Is that the plan? To stay open?

Katie Donohoe, USAID Washington: Can't speculate on that, but for now, we are open. Liberia is on an ordered departure of dependents, started on August 6.

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: What are activities to mitigate the effects of school closures? Other things to keep students engaged? Suggestions to help children? One thing for us is to help girls have a leadership role in health messaging.

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: Another big thing is the budgetary support. The sanitizing of schools, as well as training is part of the budget. How do we provide supplies? We're also trying to see what the government can do, then what the partners can do. We hope that training of CEOs and principals will happen before children come back to school.

Katie Donohoe, USAID Washington: Question - this sounds positive, but it sounds like 4-6 months is optimistic. Can schools really open in January? Sounds more like it will be 6-9 months

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: It depends. We have to get advice from CDC. We don't want to bring students to crowded situation. We really don't know.

Lisa Hartenberger, EDC/AYP: Wanted to add that we see two phases before reopening of schools. Right now, cases are increasing, not decreasing. So we think home based solutions are best because we can't gather big groups together. We don't have enough information from district or community level to make decision. Right now things are getting worse rather than getting better. Once cases start to decrease and we have better info and have more confidence, then it's possible to get small groups of training and activities back.

Jenny Hobbs, Concern/EQUAL: I second that, and also, there's an opportunity within this to improve the culture of reading and to bring parents in to help support education. We're considering parent led radio lessons in order to bring parents into the learning process for children. Having distinct age groups in radio programming, for example Sesame Street, and phonics radio programming. Also psychosocial message support for different age-groups.

Simone Brown, USAID Liberia: Following up on Jenny's comments, EQUAL is doing a great job in working with PCA in raising awareness. We need to support groups raising awareness in

communities. We need to explore ways to reinforce learning from the previous school-year. Need to figure out how to help parents create a culture of reading. Also, on the IT side, thinking about psychosocial piece – when all this ends, we have to think about how this will affects students and teachers. Also, re-enforcement of Ebola prevention messages.

Yolande Miller-Grandvaux, USAID Washington: Wondering – Albert, do you have a coordination body to help implement all this? What kind of coordination do you have with your county officers?

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: When I left, we put together a committee in collaboration with partners along with county officers. We developed a plan based on what we think can work, but international organizations need to provide feedback; that would help a lot.

Jerry Mindes, AIR: Is there a way that our communities could be informed about when a community is being treated? Is there a schedule?

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: There is no set planning time about when schools will open. Informing communities is important and will be part of messages that will be sent out. It's important for communities to be empowered and informed. This has to be part of messaging.

Jerry Mindes, AIR: So is there a schedule for schools to re-open?

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: No. It cannot be planned.

Yolande Miller-Grandvaux, USAID Washington: We can use mobile education technology to provide immediate reporting to MoE. We should look at using that.

Lisa Hartenberger, EDC/AYP: Not all schools are equal. Some schools are much more affected than others. For example, we work at a school in West Point, which is now an Ebola treatment center.

Simone Brown, USAID Liberia: We are focused more on awareness-raising.

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: The Operational Plan established priorities and activities. For some things like WASH activities, partners can step in and say, "we can cover those areas," so that MoE can cover the areas not covered by partners. Regarding psychosocial support and radio programming, why don't you (the MOE) pick 2 or 3 leads most experienced to deliver the programs, particularly activities related to what can be done now.

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: Yesterday Sierra Leone came up with a plan similar to the MoE in Liberia. I agree - there needs to be leads, but also subgroups within those leads to lead different areas of education, like focusing on grades. Radio is very useful.

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: There are other concerns: will some of the same people who have been trained still be present? What about leadership in the community/school? Supplies might be gone and facilities can be damaged. What concerns are there for when schools reopen?

Yolande Miller-Grandvaux, USAID Washington: In DRC during Ebola, communities moved away and overcrowded other schools. So displacement could be issue.

Lisa Hartenberger, EDC/AYP: Was there a trust issue?

Yolande Miller-Grandvaux, USAID Washington: Absolutely. Also, there were many orphans. Many community based management challenges. There were issues of identification. Many people didn't have ID.

Katie Donohoe, USAID Washington: From working in Pakistan, opening schools is one of the first things that we want to do to help people get comfortable and settled. Floods were the big problem there. We want to know how we can make schools better than they were before, more attractive; a place to help people rally.

Yolande Miller-Grandvaux, USAID Washington: We have a relationship with health units in the community. Can health people come into schools?

Nina Papadopoulos, USAID Washington: I have an operational question – I understand there's a working group with USAID and its partners. Has there been a discussion to activate the Education Cluster? Is there anything we can do? The Education Cluster is a humanitarian coordination of different sectors. There is a coordinator whose full time job it is to help coordinate and monitor our activities.

Simone Brown, USAID Liberia: UNICEF is the lead in that Cluster. It has not been activated. Christine, Director of Education at UNICEF/Liberia, said there's a need to reactivate the Cluster.

Katie Donohoe, USAID Washington: Can we help the MOE activate the Education Cluster? We're heading into the highest level week of meetings next week. Dr. Shah will be there, I'm writing all his briefing papers now, so if we need him to talk to Tony Lake, who is the head of UNICEF, he can do that. We can have it flow from the top down. I can be very specific in an email that that is what we want.

Final Comments as we Wrap-Up

Jenny Hobbs, Concern/EQUAL: We have a USAID Program to help train communities. We have materials for low-internet environments.

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: Simone will send information to you, to take from high level and bring it down. Please send me the information too.

Katie Donohoe, USAID Washington: We also need to work with ministry on this.

Simone Brown, USAID Liberia: A Cluster will allow for a one team approach for education sector

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: The INEE has been organizing for a review. UNICEF country office has been expressing dissatisfaction at being excluded from the conversation.

Katie Donohoe, USAID Washington: We will work closely with the Ministry.

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: This is something we are interested in because we don't have experience dealing with such a situation. We have a committee.

Lisa Hartenberger, EDC/AYP: Question for USAID – is it possible for USAID to help gather information to better target communities?

Katie Donohoe, USAID Washington: USAID Liberia is working on this, not USAID Washington.

Katie Donohoe, USAID Washington: Can we make an email list serve to share ideas and information? We need to keep Dr. Coleman informed.

Patrick: We'll schedule the next meeting of USAID and the Implementing Partners. [Response]: The Doha INEE meeting is in two weeks. So maybe a week after that.

(Question): Is the DART doing anything with schools? [Response]: Not that we know of with schools. They might be.

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: I'll forward the MOE's emergency plan to everyone.

(Question): Is it possible to create a Google Drive to put plans and documents there? . [Response]: Yes, we'll work on that.

Howard Williams, AIR/GOAL PLUS: Thank you all.

Albert Coleman, Sr. Advisor to the Minister, Liberia MOE: Thanks to everyone on behalf of the ministry.

Meeting of USAID/Liberia and Education Implementing Partners
Thursday, October 16, 9:00-10:30 am EST

Participants in Person:
Katie Donohoe, USAID/W
Nina Papadopoulos, USAID/W
Howard Williams, AIR
Matt Murray, AIR
Rachel Christina, EDC
Lisa Hartenberger-Toby, EDC
Brenda Arrington, FHI 360

Call in Participants:
Patrick White, USAID/Liberia
Miriam White, USAID/Liberia
Mardea Nyumah, USAID/Liberia
Henrique Wilson, USAID/Liberia
Simone Brown, USAID/Liberia
Koli Bannik, USAID/W
Lincoln Ojoku, Concern Worldwide
Nancy Devine, EDC
James Mulbah, RTI
Tameeka Norton, RTI

1. Update on Health Facilities in Liberia

- USAID is continuing to monitor health facilities.
    - One private health facility, the Aspen (former AirMed) behind the Grand Royal Hotel, is operational in Monrovia that at least one partner is using. It has limited but available evacuation services.
    - When evacuations do take place, the difficult part can be finding a place for aircraft to stop and refuel en route to the U.S.

2. Status of the MOE's Ebola Response Plan

- The Ministry of Education's Ebola Response Plan is composed of three key pillars: a) social mobilization, b) radio programs to provide continuous learning to students while schools are closed, and c) preparation for schools re-opening.
- There has been some limited progress on all three pillars.

a. Social Mobilization

- Social Mobilization has been the most active of the three pillars.
- Some teachers and administrators have been trained in Monrovia and will continue to be trained elsewhere as it rolls out over time.
- Some of the planned cascade training has occurred at the county level, but there is not yet a sense of the quality or impact of the training.
- Two of the GOAL Plus staff attended the cascade training in Banga. They said it went well and found it informative, but we understood there was no funding to do any further

cascading below that level. The training reached as far as the CEO/DEO level, but we were not sure it was able to go further down. Katie Donohoe noted hearing the same thing from World Bank. USAID/Liberia would cross-check with UNICEF and the ministry.

b. Radio Programs (Continuous Learning)

- Radio programming is the primary medium for the continuous learning. Some programs are on the horizon, and later in the day USAID was to have a coordination call with the MOE to learn about their vision. The program is called "Come Together".
- The intention of the radio programs is to reach all children in both primary and secondary schools, including out of school children.
- To cover the current gap in schooling, other options and tools will have to be considered in addition to radio programs. Other ideas include reading materials, and the MOE is beginning to look at using SMS to carry messaging.

c. School Re-Opening

- A meeting this morning on this topic was chaired by the MOE with representatives from the WHO, CDC, UNICEF and EU.
- The key questions that arose at the meeting: What are the standards that will have to be met before schools can be re-opened? What are the protocols that must be required to open the schools?
- The key outcome of the meeting was the creation of a small technical working group to carry this issue forward. Resolution of these key questions is a major challenge in the planning for re-opening schools.

d. Budget Template

- In September, the MOE put out the Education Sector Response Plan and followed it up with a budget template, which is largely close to the response plan but represents a move to attach actual cost figures to the different types of interventions.
    - However, the budget template still has a lot of gaps, including the figures around social mobilization because the financial parameters of some of the programs require a lot of attention.
    - The budget template is really just the funding for social mobilization, which is primarily from UNICEF. It does not yet account for other partner support for the response plan.
    - Budget for the response plan is problematic and there is no time horizon for it.
    - The version seen in the USAID Mission focuses only on social mobilization plan and the costs required to implement that model to all the counties.
    - It is not an "education-specific" mobilization plan; rather it uses the idea that teachers are the largest component of the civil service and have close ties to their communities that make them well-suited to deliver messages around the Ebola response.
    - The budget is approached with caution, because it appears to focus only on very rapid implementation of the social mobilization model, and M&E costs were not taken into account.

    - Radio programming, with a very limited focus on broadcasting content, has a very rough cost estimate of $600,000.
- Implementing partners have looked at the operational plan to identify areas of overlap with their own work plans, to link their work to where it can provide support to the MOE's plans.
    - USAID/Liberia does not want to wait to receive the perfect plan before starting activities, in recognition of the fact that the plan that does exist will require continuous refinement.
    - In terms of budgeting across the board, USAID is looking at the implementing partners' work plans, asking partners to look at their plans and the situation on the ground, to look at a longer time horizon with schools reopening later than January, and to think about options for how to respond.
    - The MOE response plan does not change the fact that each partner is in a different situation. Once things get modified, USAID can assess what we're doing with our current programs.
    - There are both immediate needs that we would like to respond to, and the original longer-term issues that each partner is working on that will require attention when the outbreak is under control.
- When AIR submitted our program options for the possibility of schools reopening in May or September, we tried to shift our results framework to radio programming to support the MOE's plans in both the long and short term planning.
    - We are also looking at the aforementioned 3 working groups within the MOE and will suggest that our staff can work with the MOE directly on these 3 pillars (as well as M&E) so we can do our work and also help the MOE make a direct contribution to its response plan.
        - Contact information for the groups would help so we can get in touch as appropriate, but the groups are still notional and not off the ground yet.
        - Getting the groups up and running will require TA, support, and advice.
- One suggestion was that USAID might be interested in providing TA to the MOE as an intermediate option even before the education cluster (see below) was activated. This is something that USAID is looking at as they are adjusting to the absence of a lot of the expat staff.
    - What that TA might look like, whether partner-provided TA that is funded by USAID or USAID-provided direct TA, is an important question. Of course, USAID/Liberia is already providing a lot of weekly TA and support to the MOE around the response plan, especially using USAID's convening authority to make sure the different parties are talking.

e. Activation of Education Cluster

- The MOE is still considering whether to submit the request to activate the Education Cluster[16].
- UNICEF held a briefing for the MOE this week to explain what activation of the Education Cluster would entail. If activated, UNICIEF would act as a lead.

16 10/24/14 post meeting note: The MOE has agreed to request for activation of the Education Cluster

- Activation of the cluster could lead to the UN system providing an additional coordinator to sit in the MOE to help with coordination/communication around responding to Ebola.
    - The coordinator would oversee a subgroup of the Education Sector Development Committee (ESDC), which consists of USAID, UNICEF, the Education NGO Forum and other Donor and Implementing Partners.
- The cluster would also help bring the MOE into the additional, larger planning and fundraising going on across the Government of Liberia in response to the crisis.
- Several other clusters have already been activated, including Health and Food Security.
- Many details, such as where the coordinator would sit and how they would relate to the ESDC are still under discussion. The MOE has been clear that they want to stay in the lead.
- The idea is taking hold is that the cluster would have 3 different discussions mapping the three pillars of the response plan (i.e., social mobilization, continuous learning, and school re-opening).
- As noted above, there are still significant gaps in the budget for the response plan. USAID is trying to get the TA they need to put those figures into the budget.
- The MOE realizes that its focus on short-term emergency response has to be balanced with planning for the longer term 3-year operational plan.
    - Assisting with this balancing is an additional reason to have the cluster work with a subgroup of the ESDC.

3. GPE's Response to the Outbreak

- To clarify: there is not a "GPE response," as such. They are working closely with other donors as the managing entity, while the World Bank is the supervising entity (has the money).
- GPE is not nimble enough to move money to a quick Ebola response, but is supportive and wants to be engaged.
- The World Bank is looking into what they can reprogram within the existing funding structure. GPE does not have Ebola response money per se, but they do want to be helpful in what they can support.
- Doug Summerfield is the day-to-day person at the World Bank working on this. He is seeing if there is funding, but there is nothing specific for the Ebola response right now.
- At the World Bank, like most donors, the first response has been on the health sector with education coming later.
- Reprogramming a portion of the GPE grant could potentially help with WASH facilities and thermometers, as part of the school grants program, but this is currently going through the internal approval process.
- GPE as a donor group will start meeting more regularly.

4. Next Steps for Education Sector Operational Plan

- There is still interest in refining this plan, which is dated approximately 2014-2017.
- UNICEF has been trying to get UNESCO back into Monrovia.
- They are trying to clarify what would serve as the baseline indicators for the plan. Simultaneously, there is recognition that the plan might need another look given the reality of the outbreak.

- Getting feedback to implementing partners on when they can move forward with for reprogramming funds is a priority for USAID/Liberia, and they will do it as fast as possible.
    - USAID has now on the ground a contract officer with a warrant, and a second one coming next month, which will help them respond faster.
    - There are ways that implementing partners can proceed on things in their AIPs or contingency plans.
    - Even on budget line items that don't require approvals, USAID must still look to see if it's in scope.
    - In follow up emails to the AORs, implementing partners are encouraged to suggest activities within scope and budget for approval at the AOR approval (without requiring a contracts officer).
    - As USAID has been short a contracts officer, health is taking a priority at the moment, and there is intense interest in everything USAID does, so the process must be deliberate and might not be immediate.

5. Status of Donor Coordinator at MOE

- There has been movement to hiring this position, which predates Patrick's arrival. The MOE is getting closer to selecting someone for this position, which will likely be a one year contract.
    - One of the things USAID team is looking at is how this person would overlap with the cluster coordinator.
    - The general thinking is that this person would look at longer term issues, while the cluster coordinator would look at the shorter time. Another good way to delineate responsibilities is that the donor coordinator could look at resources/allocation, while the cluster coordinator looks at knowledge management, who's doing what, who's responsible, avoiding duplication, etc.
- A solicitation has been released for this position, which is funded by Open Society – West Africa as additional resource. This will be a newly resourced position, not an internal assignment within the Ministry.

6. Updates from Partners

- AIR/GOAL plus: We are going to Bassa next week to check in with PTAs to see what they are doing with the grant support. We are also supporting our DQA exercise there as well. We have laid out seven safety points for travel, including contacting rural communities beforehand to make sure we are not perceived as outsiders coming in. This is our first field engagement during this period, and we will see how it goes.
    - We talked with the Girls' Education Division about which of the GOAL PLUS staff might be appropriate for the MOE working groups and we will make those recommendations when we know who to reach out to, based on USAID guidance.
    - The final report of the INEE feedback to the Ministry will be sent out shortly.
    - Most of our scholarship packages are ready but in storage.
    - We will follow up with a request to approve WASH facilities as consistent with our scope and budget.
- EDC/AYP: We are working on integrating information from the ToT that our curriculum people attended. We are integrating that into the teacher refresher package and are now

planning for that to be delivered at the school level rather than the county level like we usually do, so that requires redoing some things. We are also conducting our endline for the SMS-based learning package, and we revised our M&E strategy on that. We are conducting a test over the phone and it is working. We did face to face testing for baseline and for endline we created test items that are similar to the baseline items. Very interesting with great results, and we are also doing interviews on the use of mobile phones - we are 2 weeks into a 6 week study.

  - We also plan to put all literacy and numeracy programs on the air. The contracts are ready, the promo is recorded, and everything is cut to CDs and ready to go to the community stations, following a conversation with USAID yesterday.

- FHI360/LTTP: We are working to get four Liberian PhD scholars in Botswana to return by the end of the month, because they have completed their programs. When they get back, they should make contributions to education system. They do not want to go back at this time, but they are getting prepared to do so.
  - We are also working with the MOE to see how we could mobilize our technology and EMIS teams to assist the district and county education offices to have greater internet access to do more tech activities. We received equipment and now need to get teams mobilized.
  - We are looking at how we can revise the curriculums to keep teachers engaged during this time.
- Concern Worldwide/EQUAL: We are working on a draft emergency response plan. We are trying to engage with PTAs, which is very limited, around social mobilization in line with the MOE plans. This engagement will also involve thinking forward about literacy materials and developing those for when schools reopen. We are still moving forward in Grand Bassa, but our activities in Lofa have halted.
- RTI/EHELD: [Note: phone connection was poor] The Ghana Master's program in farm machinery is proceeding. We are trying now to finish the entire project cycle and secure the fields and machinery in Bong to protect the crops. We just submitted our annual report to USAID.

7. Other Notes

- The USAID Administrator visited Liberia on Tuesday, with a full day of meetings and visits. He met with Mission staff, which was a major morale boost. He left early on Wednesday. Education was not a big part of the visit, but a lot of the discussions and his remarks touched on second-order effects of the outbreak, like education.
- A key takeaway is that Patrick White invites all partners to request USAID in writing for activities that might require AOR or higher approval and they will try expedite them as much as possible.
- USAID is its doing best to be communicative and responsive. If partners have any suggestions, please email Katie and Patrick.

Annex C: Presentation to USAID on GBV in Liberia

Gender-Based Violence in Liberia and the GOAL Plus Response

Matthew Murray, Project Manager
Hannah Reeves, Researcher
Howard Williams, Chief of Party

AIR

December 2014

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Introduction

1. Introduction to GOAL Plus
2. Background
   a) Education and gender in Liberia
   b) Gender-based violence (GBV) issues
3. The GOAL Plus response
   a) Support to MOE policies
   b) Community Education Counselor (CEC)

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GOAL Plus

- 6,037 girls in grades 1-6 in 60 schools in Bong, Lofa, and Grand Bassa counties
- Scholarships, PTA capacity building and grants, outreach awareness campaign, health interventions, and support to MOE

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Education and gender in Liberia

- Education
  - Disrupted by lengthy civil war
  - 90% of students too old for their grade *(AIR, 2013)*
- Gender inequality
  - Literacy rate is 70% for men and only 41% for women *(Davis, 2013)*
  - Roughly enrollment rates in primary school, drops off sharply for girls in secondary *(Davis, 2013)*; girls are enrolled in secondary school at a lower rate than boys in all counties *(Plan International West Africa, 2012)*

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Background on GBV in Liberia

- Prevalence worldwide
  - Sexual and intimate partner violence is widespread; most estimates say between 30-60% of women experience physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime
- Prevalence in Liberia
  - Rape is the most frequently reported serious crime *(GOL, 2011)*
  - Mostly affecting the youth population: as many as 55% of rape survivors in Liberia are aged 15 years or under; roughly 41% of perpetrators are men aged 20-39 who are known to the victim *(WHO, 2012; UNECA, 2011)*

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5

Conditions associated with GBV

- Cultural, gender, and religious norms influence how societies define GBV as well as its prevalence within them
- Structural inequalities between men and women
  - "Women's subordinate status to men in many [African] societies, coupled with a general acceptance of interpersonal violence as a means of resolving conflict, renders women disproportionately vulnerable to violence from all levels of society: individual men, within the family and community, and by the state" *(Aura, 2014)*.
- Protracted civil war during which sexual violence used as a weapon
- Extreme poverty
  - "A climate of sexual violence is pervasive [in Liberia] and considered the norm as immediate personal needs (school fees, food, clothes) create an environment where the risks of an abusive relationship outweigh the risks to reproductive health and safety, especially from the perspective of an adolescent girl" *(Marsh, 2007)*.

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Concerns about GBV in Liberian schools

- Findings from *Passing the Test: the real cost of being a student* (2014):
  - 35% of boys and 29% of girls experiencing GBV related to school
  - Perpetrators: classmates (24% for boys, 19% for girls); school staff (13% boys, 11% girls); and teachers (12% girls, 9% boys)
  - Roughly 18% of school girls and over 13% of school boys reported having been asked for sex to get a better grade
  - Out of 1,100 school boys and 758 school girls interviewed:
    - 75% of boys and 22% of girls agreed with the statement 'men are superior to women'
    - 46% of boys and 34% of girls agreed that 'sexual violence and abuse is a normal part of man-woman relationship'
    - 39% of boys and 30% of girls agreed that 'sexual abuse and violence against women and girls is a natural expression of male sexual urges'

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Institutional protections

- 2011 Education Reform Act, intended to "provide for the protection of students and administrators from various offenses" *(Johnson Sirleaf, 2011a, 2-3; Government of the Republic of Liberia, Executive Mansion, 2011)*
- MOE Policy on Girls' Education (revised 2013)
- Teachers' and Administrators' Code of Conduct (enacted 2014)

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Current context - Ebola

- Ebola continues to impact all aspects of life in Liberia:
  - Schools remain closed
  - Families and communities disrupted by death, relocation, and economic downturn
- MOE Emergency Plan for the education response to Ebola
  - Developed with support and contributions from donors & implementing partners
  - Includes learning opportunities (radio)
  - Preparations for the reopening of schools (as early as March, 2015)

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GOAL Plus Response to GBV: Community Education Counselor

- Role is:
  - Raise awareness
  - Support referrals for assistance
  - Support reporting of GBV perpetrators
- Informed by Conflict Sensitivity Analysis
- Helps operationalize MOE policies:
  - Policy on Girls' Education
  - Teachers' and Administrators' Code of Conduct
- Focus is community-level behavior change for prevention and reporting

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Conflict Sensitivity Analysis

- Needed to prevent harm and maximize positive results
- Assesses context and prevalence of GBV and effects on students
- Examines how a GBV prevention and response program at school will interact within the context
- Studies how the GBV program can mitigate conflict dynamics
- Improves program design and implementation

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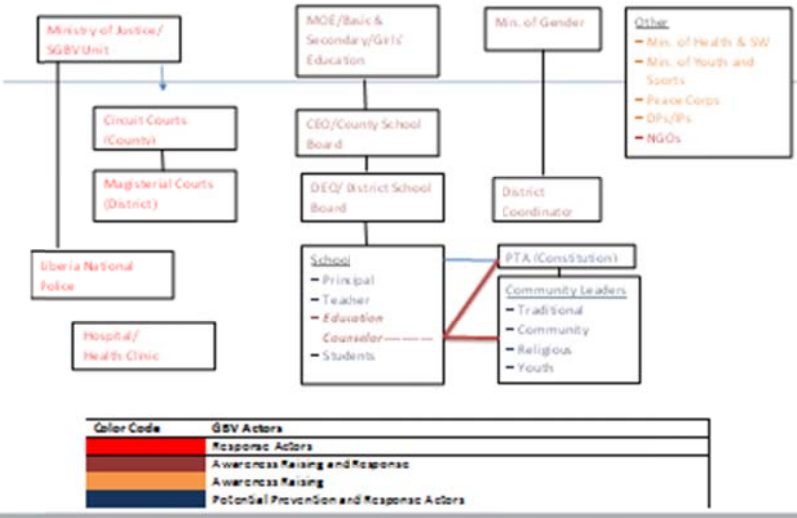
Prevention and Response Actors



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Policy on Girls' Education: Key GBV-related Provisions

- Strengthens protection systems through coordination and reporting
- Recruits female teachers, including as CEC's
- Outlines procedures for addressing complaints
- Charges local bodies – PTA, School Management Committee, Child Welfare Committee, and the District Advisory Board – with monitoring compliance with the Policy

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Code of Conduct: Key GBV-related Provisions

- Prohibits inappropriate relationships
- Defines harassment and offenses
- Outlines procedures for reporting incidents to authorities and for authorities to respond
- Penalties for violations

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GOAL Plus Response: Community Education Counselor

- Supports the policies at the community level, includes student involvement
- Prevention:
  - Changing behavior at the community level to support the health, safety, and security of the students
  - Engaging local students, community, and leaders
- Reporting:
  - Activating teachers' code of conduct and enforcing MOE policy
  - Clarifying and strengthening reporting lines
  - Accountability

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GOAL Plus Response

- Ebola recovery and GBV prevention require trust and a safe space – hence the necessity of a larger cluster of support activities for girl and boys to re-engage with school
- GBV prevention in tandem with:
  - WASH practices
  - Road safety
  - Psychosocial counseling
- Contextualize and normalize security with health and safety

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Questions?

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Annex D: GOAL Plus Safety Protocols for Travel Outside of Monrovia

(effective 21 November 2004)

Name of the traveler:_____
Travel Dates:_____
Locations:_____

The primary point of these safety protocols is to ensure the health and safety for each traveler during the trip – thereby also ensuring the health and safety of their follow passengers and family members after the trip.

These safety protocols must be observed for the entire trip and must be certified each day by the individual travelling <u>and</u> verified by a follow passenger (using a buddy system as reminders). Each traveler must maintain his/her own copy. Copies of each traveler's safety protocol log will be submitted with their receipts for reimbursement.

After the first trip, we will take feedback on the protocols to make any necessary adjustments to the realities of the trip.

1. **Travel outside Monrovia**

   a. Project Administration and Logistics, with the Drivers, will ensure to ensure that each vehicle is fully functional and serviced before departure (as usual)
   b. Each project vehicle has a good tow rope, correct tools to change wheels and minor repairs, and a cell phone charger.
   c. For each vehicle traveling, we will send an extra vehicle (most likely a hired vehicle) as a back-up in case of breakdown (to not be stranded in an uncontrolled environment). The paired vehicles move together at all times.
   d. As usual, drivers do not take passengers not already part of the GOAL Plus/MOE teams or who are otherwise not known to them.
   e. Each driver is fully aware of the journey planning and how to call for additional back-up support if there is a breakdown of both vehicles.
   f. Each vehicle will carry hand sanitizers, extra water for drinking and washing and a gallon of bleach in case they need to dilute it and wash footwear, etc.
   g. Each vehicle's fuel should not be below half a tank unless driving directly to a filling station.

For each vehicle, the driver must verify these points each day, and a passenger must validate by initialing below.

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Driver										
Buddy										

2. Community Engagement

a. For any rural school community activity, we must make contact with a school or community representative prior to arriving at the community.
b. If at any point we receive warnings about the school-communities that we intend to visit, then it needs to be cancelled and rescheduled.
c. Each Team member (including drivers) will wash their hands when leaving the vehicle and before re-entering the vehicle.
d. On arrival in each community, the team will make contact with the principal and/or PTA chair and/or Traditional Leader to review the purpose of the trip and how it will be conducted.
e. The team leader will explain to individuals and groups the purpose of the trip and that hand shaking will not be done at this particular time.
f. Anyone exhibiting any signs of sickness will be strictly avoided.

Each team member must verify these points each day, and a buddy must validate by initialing below.

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Team Member										
Buddy										

3. Overnight stays at a guest house or hotel. Staying at a guest house puts the travelers in the hands and company of others for unpredictable hygiene and health conditions.

a. Each traveler has a fully charged cell phone and scratch cards for minutes.
b. Each traveler will carry bleach and soap for self-washing and for cleaning their toilet and shower and sink facilities before use.
c. Each traveler will carry his/her own mattress, sheets and towels. The mattress will be wiped down with a bleach solution after each stay and cleaned after each trip.
d. Each traveler carries their daily supply of drinking water.

Each team member must verify these points each day, and a buddy must validate by initialing below.

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Team Member										
Buddy										

For anyone initialing this safety protocol, indicate your name and signature next to your initials:

Initials	Print name	Signature

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