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USAID Office of Transition Initiatives BRDG – Liberia

**Fifth / Final Quarterly Report
August 31, 2007 – December 15, 2007**

Submission Date: January 30, 2008

This report was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development's Office of Transitional Initiatives by Development Alternatives Inc. (DAI) BRDG-Liberia

Building Recovery and Reform through Democratic Governance - Liberia (BRDG – Liberia)

**Contract No. DFD-I-00-05-00220-00
Task Order # 003**

DISCLAIMER

The Authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government

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INTRODUCTION

On 30 August 2006, Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) was awarded Contract No. DFD-I-00-05-00220, Task Order #3 by USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI). This contract, entitled BRDG-Liberia, used the Building Recovery and Reform through Democratic Governance (BRDG) IQC mechanism, signed by DAI on September 12, 2005.

While originally slated to end on August 30, 2007, a contract modification in May 2007 extended the end date to December 15, 2007.

The purpose of the BRDG-Liberia Task Order was to put into place, and manage, a quick-response mechanism supporting activities that contribute to Liberia's democratic transition. On a larger scale, BRDG-Liberia was designed to contribute to Liberia's successful transformation to a State and society that manages national stability, recovery, and democratic reform.

DAI implemented BRDG-Liberia with its sub-contractor, Academy for Educational Development (AED). AED's central role was to provide short-term technical consultants requested by USAID/OTI through DAI to achieve BRDG-Liberia's program objectives.

This report notes the administrative issues, program highlights, and financial costs associated with implementing BRDG-Liberia activities of the final quarter of the program, as well as provides insights and analysis of the program since inception.

OPERATIONS

A. Communication

Communication between the Liberia-based team members of DAI and USAID/OTI was more frequent and informal in this last quarter of the program. This was driven by the necessity of making quick decisions for a smooth closedown process, as well as to support OTI's team-driven Liberia-based leadership approach that included Musu Clemens (out-going Country Representative), Elizabeth Callender (Acting Country Representative), Patti Buckles (Acting Country Representative), and Donna Kerner (CTO providing in-country support).

On the other end of the communication spectrum, communication that included all four corners of the program was much less frequent than during any other quarter. We held only one four corners phone call (October 23rd) to discuss the planned processes and procedures for the closeout – including property disposition, records management, personnel issues, remaining funding, up-coming visit from high ranking USAID officials, the program farewell event, and the After Exit Review.

In reviewing the program with the Liberia-based team during the final week of BRDG-Liberia, without exception, all members noted that communication and its positive effect on teamwork were the cornerstones that ensured BRDG-Liberia was an effective, efficient program. Initially, team members expected to receive information only on their specific role. By holding weekly all-team meetings on both

administrative and programming issues, all team members recognized their role in program successes and mistakes. This increased their motivation to increase the former and decrease the latter.

B. Staffing, Professional Development and Post-BRDG Employment

BRDG Liberia experienced an average level of attrition during the 15 months of operation. The program was fully staffed with all necessary team members (15 staff / 17 positions) by October 10, 2006. As the existing team members gained expertise, we added the remaining two positions in December. Over the course of the program, two employees were promoted within the organization, five resigned to pursue other opportunities, and two were involuntarily terminated. (Annex A: Final Organizational Chart)

Throughout the first year of the project we conducted both in-house training and distance learning opportunities on administrative and programmatic processes. In-house programs were facilitated by DAI's BRDG Senior Managers on topics such as professional standards, basic computer skills, presentation skills, meeting participation, and financial accountability. Distance learning opportunities were conducted by DAI/Bethesda's information technology unit on MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and IT systems that organizations would use in the near future.



DAI's Home Office Project Coordinator, Amanda Brondy, providing one-on-one computer training to BRDG driver, Moore Attia

Based on the team's strong interest in professional development, USAID/OTI approved a Professional Development Assistance Program in September 2007. This individualized approach to capacity building required each participant to identify a program that would support their professional growth. While the BRDG program would fund 75% of the program, the staff person must fund the remaining 25%. BRDG Senior Managers predicted that 50% of the team would take advantage of this benefit. As a welcome surprise, all employees applied and received approval for their selected career development program. Most team members took computer courses on everything from basic Microsoft computer applications to more advanced web design, database design and Cisco certifications. Others used the Professional Development Assistance Program to take courses on such varied topics as USAID Project Management and Regulations, Business and Meeting protocol, and Master's Level Business Management courses at Liberia's only graduate school, Cuttington University. In sum, BRDG-Liberia invested \$5,700 in the professional development of our Liberian team.

Following through with the contract deliverable of "assisting local staff in pursuing new job opportunities following program closeout" BRDG Senior Managers took various actions to ease the termination experience of the Liberian staff's employment in the last quarter of the BRDG Task Order. In addition to the Professional Development Assistance Program introduced in September, we conducted a four-week series of training programs in October to strengthen each team members ability to formulate cover letters,

prepare their resumes, engage in effective networking opportunities, and enhance their interview skills. Rather than hire an external consultant, we facilitated this class with BRDG managers who were familiar with each team member's needs. The second contract deliverable pertaining to the Liberian staff's future employment was to provide "letters of appreciation, certificates and/or letters of recommendation for all field staff." Our Liberian staff received letters of recommendation from DAI and letters of appreciation from USAID-Liberia.

As one tribute to the success of this post-program employment effort, by the end of the BRDG program, nine out of fourteen Liberian staff had secured employment.

C. Closedown and After Exit Review

Due to our constant fine tuning and rigid compliance of project systems throughout the implementation of BRDG-Liberia, our close-out process was relatively smooth. We closely followed the contract deliverables with regard to project closedown and conducted the necessary audits including grant files, human resource files, financial vouchers and documentation and all relevant legal and bank documents including leases and employee compensation tax payments. There were very few gaps in our closedown audits of activities and administration. The gaps that were found were readily remedied by locating the missing authorizations and/or original documents that simply had not been forwarded to the correct destination. After auditing the files and ensuring all documentation was present, all files were shipped to DAI's storage facility in the Washington DC area.

Two DAI/Bethesda staff members came to Liberia to assist with our closedown. Amanda Brondy, the BRDG Project Coordinator, supervised the file audit and assisted with final administrative issues. Stamen Mitev, DAI's Network Administrator, cleaned all of BRDG's computers and server to ensure no confidential information remained on the equipment that was donated to BRDG partners. He also remained in Liberia as the BRDG Senior Liaison to coordinate the transfer of IT equipment and vehicles after the BRDG managers left for the US.

At the end of the contract we transferred our non-expendable property to nine local partners who demonstrated exemplary program integrity during their implementation of their BRDG activities and a need for material resources. The actual disposition was planned and approved by USAID well in advance of the end of the contract which ensured smooth distribution of these items. The selected partners were as follows:

- Agricultural and Industrial Training Board
- Ministry of Agriculture's Agro-business Center in Bensonville
- Agriculture Relief Services
- RECEIVE
- Justice and Peace Commission
- United Muslim Women's Advocacy and Empowerment Organization
- Community Empowerment Program
- House of Freedom
- Mano River Union Youth Parliament

The team also requested that the office donate the remaining expendable property (office supplies, cleaning supplies, etc) to a school promoting links between Muslim and Christian youth in Paynesville and a school for girls in Sinkor.

One of the final financial logistics of close-out was the final payments to local employees. They received their last paychecks and severance in accordance with FAR and DAI regulations, in addition to a thirteenth month bonus, a customary benefit given to employees during the holiday season in Liberia.

During the final quarter of the program, USAID/OTI contracted Social Impact to conduct three linked evaluation processes. The first was a Final Program Evaluation facilitated by Dr. Martina Nicolls and Susan Kupperstein in November 2007. They presented their results to a wider audience of USAID Liberia-focused professionals on December 13th, 2007. One of the key findings was that USAID/OTI had used the lessons learned from the previous OTI/Liberia program (Liberia Transition Initiative) to increase the effectiveness of BRDG-Liberia. The second process was a review of the contract efficiencies and cost-effectiveness of using the BRDG IQC. The evaluator presented his results at the After Exit Review, noting that it is actually not possible to compare BRDG (Time/Materials contract) and SWIFT (Cost Plus Fixed Fee contract) due to the financial considerations that arise during implementation based on the contract type rather than the program. The final evaluation process was the After Exit Review held on December 12 – 13th and facilitated by Karen Kaplan and held at DAI/Bethesda. The 25 participants included OTI and DAI Senior Leadership, program support representatives based in the US, and Liberia-based program managers. Notes from the Program Evaluation and After Exit Review were sent out to all participants.

D. Visitors and Events

Throughout the year we have hosted several visitors from OTI and DAI and more than thirty short-term technical consultants. From the first visitor through the last, ensured their safe arrival into Monrovia from the airport and provided a welcome packet with useful information about Liberia and BRDG as well as refreshments to set the tone of the hospitality provided by BRDG-Liberia. Every consultant was immortalized by posting their photos on the BRDG family tree on the wall in the office entry way.

In addition to our quarterly strategy sessions and implementation reviews, we held several social events at BRDG with invited guests that included our Liberian civil society partners and government ministries. Often times these were held as an appreciation for their effort, such as a lunch for the Liberian Children's Parliament in November, 2007. Throughout the year we also hosted several informal "Lunch and Learn" workshops for visitors from OTI and DAI (USAID/OTI's Acting Director, CTO, Africa Team Leader; and DAI's President, Crisis Mitigation and Recovery Group Practice Manager, and BRDG-Liberia Task Order Manager) to better understand our program and meet all team members.

As a fitting end to mark our closeout, from December 2-5, 2007 we hosted the Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for DCHA (Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance) and the Special Assistant to the Assistant Administrator for DCHA in addition to USAID/OTI's Acting Director and the Africa Team Leader to visit BRDG programs and partners.

On December 4, 2007 we held a farewell event to mark the end of the program. Liberia's President, Madame Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was the Guest of Honor and the Keynote Speaker. In addition to the previously mentioned US government representatives, US Ambassador Donald Booth and USAID's Acting Mission Director Rick Scott were honored guests.



Closing event MC'd by BRDG staff, Mimi Johnson with Guest of Honor, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Ambassador Donald Booth, DCHA Assistant Administrator, Mike Hess, and Acting Chief of Mission, Rick Scott.

E. Finances

The financial systems implemented by BRDG throughout the life of the program included significantly scaling down cash payments in favor of check payments, as well as an increased stringency on financial documentation from vendors and grantees. We also created a Grantee Receipt Tracking Sheet form and conducted training with BRDG team members and local grantees on how to use the form to better track receipts and payments. These practices increased the capacity of our local partners and our local staff by setting expectations of fiscal responsibility.

On a monthly basis, BRDG's Finance Manager would review invoices with the OTI Country Representative in Liberia, while the Washington DC corner of DAI and OTI would do the same as requested. This consistent review led to greater understanding of all project costs and procurement cycles as well as implications of using the Time and Materials contracting mechanism. Throughout the program, all invoices were submitted and reimbursed in a timely manner.

During this final quarter of the program, extra efforts were made to ensure payments to vendors and grantees were completed within the timeframe of the contract. Initial plans targeted all grant and STTA activities to be completed by November 15, 2007 to facilitate orderly finance payment and tracking. This date was extended for four grants and two STTAs due to their extreme necessity in Liberia.

(Annex B BRDG Liberia Financial Summary)

F. Contract and Budget Modifications

We submitted four budget modifications during this contract. Throughout the project, BRDG responded quickly to visible trends and immediate needs on the ground. The shifts in priorities and/or methods required us to shift funds, workdays ordered, the contract end date, and ultimately, the financial ceiling of the task order. Below please find the details of each budget modification.

Modification 1

- Provide incremental Funding (\$2 million)
- Modify/update our envisioned STTA and grant activities to better reflect, in numbers and in cost, STTA and grant activities in the future
- Increased support from DAI's Home Office to cover the administrative needs of the program
- Change of Key Personnel from Hawre Faraj to Rhett Gurian as Senior Grants Manager

Modification 2

- Extension of completion date to December 15, 2007
- Add an additional 240 days of STTA Senior Level TCN labor
- Increase TO ceiling by \$474,196 from \$5,927,565 to \$6,401,671.
- Provide incremental funding in the amount of \$850,000

Modification 3

- Provided final obligation of \$1,472,031 fully funding the project
- Change of Key Personnel from Rhett Gurian to Gathoni Mungai as Senior Grants Manager

Modification 4

- Final shift of funds from STTA activities to grants, ODCs and related G&A

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

A. Overall Review

During the final quarter of the program, an additional 21 activities were approved, 20 of which were implemented. One STTA activity was cancelled when the consultant selected to work with the Civil Service Agency unexpectedly withdrew from the program one week before she was to arrive. As the work was scheduled for mid-October through the end of November, time limitations prevented us from finding another qualified candidate to accomplish this Scope of Work before the end of the BRDG contract.

Over 85% of the activities implemented this quarter were in support of the program's first objective, strengthening the Government of Liberia. This marked a significant increase from the previous cumulative average of 40%. Most activities were grant programs that either supported the work of earlier consultants or followed-on from activities initiated in earlier grants.

This quarter also represented the highest number of activities being consecutively implemented. On average, the team had 42 open activities each week. A significant driving force for this was the belief in a "Program Legacy". All team members seemed to push themselves to higher levels to ensure that no program development activity was forgotten – and that all program implementation activities achieved

every objective within the BRDG contract timeframe. This extra effort also ensured that the final monitoring and evaluation process was on target as the team had been more intensely involved in the day-to-day activities and therefore identified and redirected problems as they arose.

By the end of this reporting period, all but four activities were “closed”. These four “completed, but not closed” activities were all STTA consultancies conducted in November and December. As of the submission of this Quarterly Report, we have not received the consultants’ final expense reports, and therefore are unable to move the activities to “closed”.

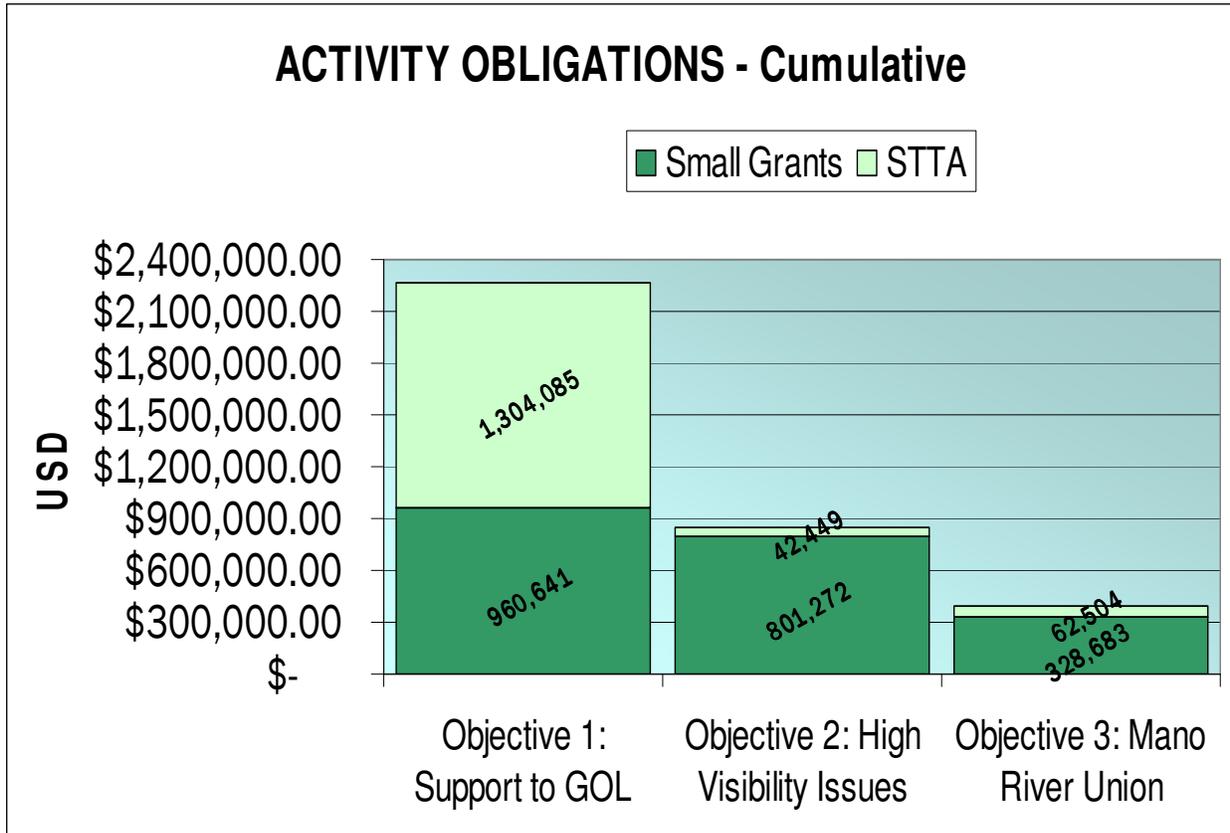
During the life of BRDG-Liberia, the team submitted 103 activities for approval. One activity designed to film the proceedings of the National Parliament was rejected in April but revised and resubmitted 10 weeks later when the political climate was more conducive to this process. Three activities were cancelled due to 1) as noted above, consultant withdrawal, 2) grantee received UNDP funding for the same activity of traveling to a regional amputee football tournament, and 3) the GOL’s inability to coordinate their participation in GEMAP theatre presentations.

Using the figure of 102 approved activities between the first approval date of October 12, 2006 and the final approval date of November 7, 2007, the BRDG team received approval and initiated approximately two new activities every week. The average life cycle of a grant activity was 20 weeks (3 weeks to develop, 10 weeks to implement, and 7 weeks to monitor/evaluate). Due to the recruitment and mobilization time requirements for STTA consultancies, the average life cycle of these activities was 27 weeks (5 weeks to develop and recruit, 6 weeks to mobilize, 9 weeks to implement, and 7 weeks to monitor/evaluate.)

Program statistics can be viewed in a more reader-friendly style in the two charts on the following pages. The first chart (below) delineates the information by number of activities per program objective, separating this final quarter from the overall program totals.

<i>Objective</i>	<i>Program Activities Fifth Quarter</i>			<i>Program Activities Cumulative</i>		
	<i>Grants</i>	<i>STTA</i>	<i>Amount (USD)</i>	<i>Grants</i>	<i>STTA</i>	<i>Amount (USD)</i>
<i>Assist GOL and other key actors to improve capacity</i>	14	4	\$515,597	30	28	\$2,276,550
<i>Assist GOL and other key actors mount effective political responses to high visibility issues</i>	3	0	\$83,536	32	2	\$856,521
<i>Support regional activities aimed at strengthening the Mano River Union</i>	0	0	\$0	9	1	\$391,187
<i>Totals</i>	17	4	\$599,133	71	31	\$3,524,258

The second chart (below) provides a visual image of the dollar value for activities in each program objective. In a quick glance, it is apparent that most program funding was allocated to Short-Term Technical Assistance to strengthen the capacity of the Liberian government (37% of all activity funds). An additional 27% of program funds supported small grants for the government under the same objective. The remaining two objectives had combined grant and STTA activity funding of 25% and 11% respectively.



(Annex C: Success Stories)

B. Objective 1: Assist the GOL and other key actors to improve capacity with an emphasis on communication systems

As can be seen in the two charts, 58 activities totaling 2,276,550 USD supported the implementation of our first program objective. This represents well over 1/2 of all program activities and almost 2/3 of all program financial resources. While as noted above, a peak in the final quarter of programming on this objective significantly increased the total percentages, the consistent trend throughout the year was the programs focus on this capacity building objective. This is reflective of both the most urgent need in Liberia of building the capacity of leaders and leading institutions, as well as the value-added BRDG-Liberia has to Liberia’s reform process. The program’s ability to move quickly and to access highly qualified consultants proved to fill a capacity building need that resonated strongly within both Liberian institutions and other international institutions working with the Government of Liberia.

The specific capacity building emphasis of this objective is to strengthen key Liberian leaders to effectively participate in Liberia's reform process. Our guiding principle for implementing this objective has been to respond to their requests, rather than dictate US government priorities. To do otherwise would compromise the benefit of having the partner acknowledge their organizational strengths and gaps – and seek assistance to address the gaps.

One practice that was especially useful that was driven by the BRDG team was the requirement that the partner ministry designate one staff person to be fully responsible for the program. This ensured that the consultant's skills were transferred to the agency and there was accountability for all material resources.

The following is a succinct listing of all 58 activities implemented under this objective (the 18 activities new to this quarter are in bold italics).

► **18 ACTIVITIES responded to requests of 9 government ministries**

1. Ministry of State for Presidential Affairs
 - ☼ ***Communication strategies for the District Development Programs (Grant)***
2. Ministry of Justice
 - ☼ Organizational Management (STTA)
 - ☼ Anti-corruption Support (STTA)
3. Ministry of Planning and Development
 - ☼ Strategic Planning for Human Resource Development (STTA)
 - ☼ Equipment to support Ministry's relocation to government-owned building (Grant)
 - ☼ Strategic Planning to inform BRDG's mandate to support the GOL (3 STTAs)
4. Ministry of Agriculture
 - ☼ Research history of concession agreements (STTA)
 - ☼ ***Equipment and office resources for Liberia's Agro-business Center for Youth in Bensonville (Grant)***
5. Ministry of Labor
 - ☼ Organizational Management (STTA)
6. Ministry of Lands, Mines, and Energy
 - ☼ Kimberly Process Guidance (STTA)
 - ☼ Resources for Government Diamond Offices (Grant)
7. Ministry of Education
 - ☼ Resources to facilitate a Vocational Training Assessment (Grant)
 - ☼ ***Executive Coaching (STTA)***
8. Ministry of Youth and Sports
 - ☼ Resources for National Youth Day celebration (Grant)
 - ☼ ***Equipment to support the MoYS relocation to the government owned SKD Sports Complex (Grant)***
9. Ministry of Health
 - ☼ ***Resources to develop and communicate the process for obtaining a birth certificate (Grant through the House of Freedom)***

► **1 ACTIVITY responded to the request of the Judicial Branch of Government**

1. Supreme Court
 - ☼ Furniture to organize court documents (Grant)

► **4 ACTIVITIES supported strategic communication on legislative actions**

1. Justice and Peace Commission
 - ☼ Develop and publish a monthly report card on the actions within the National Legislature (Grant)
2. Mano River Union Youth Parliament
 - ☼ Strengthen Liberia's Youth Parliamentarians by observing and debating the actions of the National Legislature (STTA)
3. Liberian Children's Parliament
 - ☼ **Support the development of a regional children's parliament (Grant)**
4. Female Legislative Caucus
 - ☼ **Office Equipment to establish a secretariat office (Grant)**

► **21 ACTIVITIES responded to requests by 11 government agencies and offices**

1. Civil Service Agency
 - ☼ Support development of the Senior Executive Service (2 STTAs)
 - ☼ Support structuring of consistent Pay and Benefits program (STTA)
 - ☼ **Support for developing a Strategic Plan (STTA – cancelled)**
2. Liberian Institute for Public Administration
 - ☼ Strategic Planning (STTA)
 - ☼ **Organizational Development (STTA)**
3. Forest Development Authority
 - ☼ Support development of Liberia's Peace Parks (STTA)
4. Agriculture Industrial and Training Board
 - ☼ Develop updated vocational training tests (STTA)
 - ☼ Pilot test the new tests (Grant)
5. National Port Authority
 - ☼ Develop a transparent procurement process (STTA)
6. Truth and Reconciliation Commission
 - ☼ Perform a financial review (2 STTAs)
7. Roberts International Airport
 - ☼ Develop Operations Manual (2 STTAs)
 - ☼ Develop Emergency Equipment Procurement Plan (STTA)
8. Liberian Passport Agency
 - ☼ Equipment to digitize passport processes (Grant)
 - ☼ **Develop and communicate the procedures for obtaining a passport (Grant through Flomo Theatre Production)**
9. LISGIS
 - ☼ Equipment for 2008 census (Grant)
 - ☼ **Strategic communication materials for the 2008 census (Grant)**
10. Liberian Electrical Company
 - ☼ Equipment for Public Information Office (Grant)
11. Bureau of the Budget
 - ☼ Resources to replicate 2007 National Budget (Grant)

► **6 ACTIVITIES supported free, independent media in Liberia**

1. Star Radio
 - ☼ Resources to strengthen the country-wide network of strong community radio stations (Grant)

- ☼ Resources to relocate the station to a more financially appropriate location (Grant)
- ☼ Media coverage of National Budget process and result (Grant)
- ☼ *Consultancy to strengthen leadership in community radio stations (STTA)*
- ☼ *Community radio media coverage of multiple strategic communication messages (Grant through Radio Bomi)*



BRDG Senior Grants Manager, Gathoni Munghai meeting with 42 community radio station managers.

2. CHF International
 - ☼ *Community radio media coverage of multiple strategic communication messages (Grant)*
- **8 ACTIVITIES supported civil society transparency initiatives**
1. Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL)
 - ☼ Funds to participate in regional transparency meeting in South Africa (Grant)
 2. Community Empowerment Program
 - ☼ Develop transparent and accountable practices for managing a women's market (STTA)
 3. EITI Coalition
 - ☼ Organizational Development (STTA)
 - ☼ Funds to participate in regional transparency meeting in Cameroon (Grant)
 4. House of Freedom
 - ☼ *Communication strategies to promote community involvement in the District Development Programs (Grant)*

5. RECEIVE
 - ☀ *Engaging community participation in the Bong County District Development Programs (Grant)*
6. ARS
 - ☀ *Engaging community participation in the Nimba County District Development Programs (Grant)*
7. Organization of Liberian Muslim Youth
 - ☀ *Resources to engage Liberia's Muslim population in the upcoming census (Grant)*

C. Objective 2: Assist the Government of Liberia and other key actors to mount effective political responses to high visibility issues

BRDG-Liberia supported three new activities in the final quarter of programming to bring the overall program total to 32 activities that strengthened national players to respond to high visibility issues. A significant majority of political responses undertaken over the past year have been done by non-governmental offices both to prod the government into action, as well as to support positive government interventions.

Our activities can easily be divided under the following four central themes: Disseminating Information, Creating a Venue for Public Reaction, Building the Capacity of Political Response Organizations, and Liberian Identity.

Disseminating Information

One new grant in this quarter joined the twelve activities currently disseminating information to the public regarding movement on political issues. This quarter's grant was implemented through House of Freedom's community theatre group with skits to inform marketers about the new mandate of the Liberian Marketers Association – and their process to enhance involvement from the marketers, thereby increasing transparency. This grant was implemented through the community theatre group, House of Freedom.

Activities that continued to be implemented during this quarter included those that discussed the transparency-focused program of GEMAP (DAIM030, DAIM032, DAIM052), how civil society can monitor the government's adherence to the National Budget (DAIM055), televised and radio commentaries on the activities of the National Legislature (DAIM071, DAIM073), youth taking responsibility for their own future (DAIM080), and political parties using sporting events to find common ground (DAIM083).



OTI Acting Country Representative, Elizabeth Callender presenting a trophy to the winner of the political party sporting event

Creating a Venue for Public Reaction

The second activity approved and implemented in this objective was the development of a Press Studio for the President's Office. Previously, the Liberian President traveled to a radio studio to broadcast her weekly message to the Liberian people. Due to the time commitment required to travel across town, she was frequently forced to cancel her broadcast. With the new studio, she will be able to hold radio programs weekly, as well as anytime high visibility issues arise. The Press Studio also provides a mechanism for the public to call in and ask questions directly to the President.

The other program implemented during this time period was holding community theatre programs with mining communities to better understand the Kimberly Process (DAIM069, DAIM070).

Building the Capacity of Political Response Organizations

While the previous interventions addressed issues arising during BRDG's tenure in Liberia, it was clear that the program would need to strengthen the capacity of a select few organizations to continue bringing high visibility issues to the public and government's attention.

Three organizations appeared to have the strongest history of addressing high visibility issues, the Federation of Liberian Youth, CENTAL, and Green Advocates. BRDG Liberia strengthened each of these organizations in a different manner. FLY received funds to organize and facilitate an annual meeting of all Liberian youth organizations. CENTAL received funds to implement a community advocacy campaign on anti-corruption activities. Green Advocates received material resources to develop a resource center for the Publish What You Pay Coalition.

New this quarter, BRDG-Liberia sponsored the Mano River Union Youth Parliament to hold their first quarterly meeting in Buchanan. In addition to the 30 Youth Parliamentarians, honored guests included all six National Senators and Legislators who engaged the young parliamentarians on reaching out to their constituents on issues affecting youth.

Liberian Identity

One of the most targeted high visibility issues this year has been Liberian identity. As many of Liberia's domestic and international conflicts are either based on – or exploit – ethnic differences, the Governance Reform Commission was tasked with bringing this issue to the forefront rather than pretending it does not exist. Recognizing the political volatility involved with this issue, the GRC requested assistance from the US government to tackle this issue with children.

Most of BRDG-Liberia's eight identity activities continued in this quarter to target children from 8 – 16 years old, gradually incorporating their parents into the programs. At the end of each program, the children drew their vision of Liberian identity. The dozen best drawings were displayed at the official Government of Liberia Independence Day celebration in Buchanan and later hung at the Ministry of Youth and Sports' new building at the SKD Sports Stadium. (DAIM014, DAIM032, DAIM033, DAIM042, DAIM057, DAIM062, DAIM077, and DAIM078)

D. Objective 3: Support regional activities aimed at strengthening the Mano River Union

No new activities were approved under the third objective, but many of the previous quarter's activities were initiated and/or continued to be implemented throughout the region. Of the 10 activities under BRDG-Liberia's third objective, just under 50% (4) supported government initiatives.

As a contractor self-appraisal, our most effective interventions on this objective were when the program directly or in-directly brought counterparts from the three Mano River Union countries together. Never did we have the intention of bringing representatives together just for the sake of coming together. Each event had a powerful objective, be it employment for youth, sports competition for amputee footballers, conservation efforts for environmentalists, or community action planning to decrease rising tensions in border villages.

Youth Employment

Twenty-six government and civil society representatives from the three countries participated in a study tour of the Songhai Agro-business Youth Center in Benin (DAIM001). The representatives from Liberia continued to meet at the BRDG office on a regular basis to develop and implement a plan for establishing a similar center in Liberia. As of the end of the first year, a site has been selected and 30 Liberian youth have been trained at the Songhai Center in Benin. (As noted in the first objective, BRDG-Liberia provided equipment to the new Center in Bensonville, Liberia.)

In a parallel path, BRDG-Liberia hired Songhai Center's Director to work with key stakeholders in Sierra Leone to develop a strategy and action plan for establishing Sierra Leone's Songhai Center (DAIM066). Fr. Godfrey travel to Freetown in November and worked with USAID/SL to develop a strategic plan and concept paper for establishing the center near the border area that connects Sierra Leone to Guinea and Liberia.

Peace Building

BRDG-Liberia continued to monitor the effect of the program implementation during the past six months on the border between Guinea and Liberia. Many community leaders attribute the non-eruption of violence to the community meetings held by OLMY in Lofa County (DAIM036), RECEIVE in Bong County (DAIM038) and ARS in Nimba County (DAIM040).

LESSONS LEARNED / OBSERVATIONS

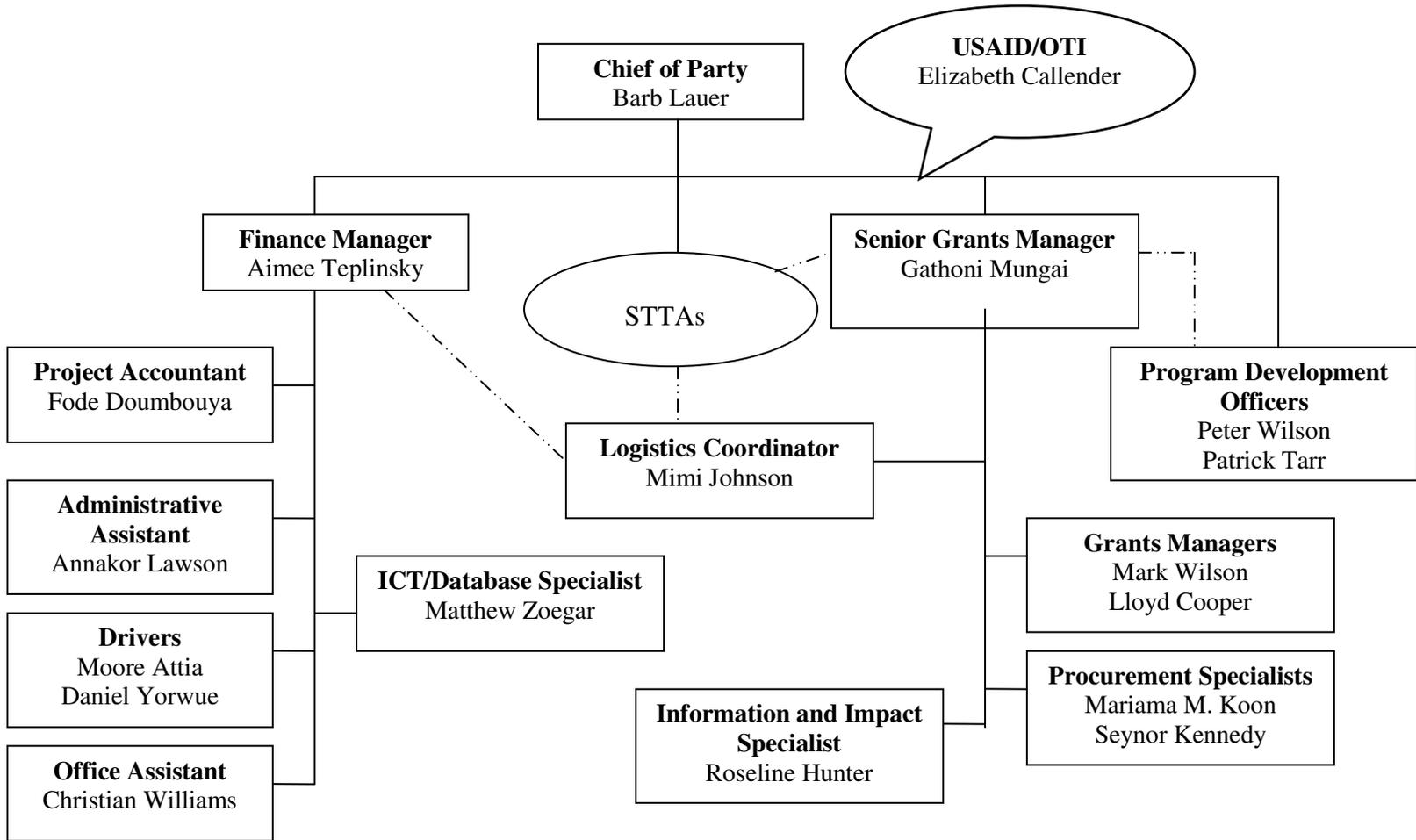
BRDG-Liberia's 15 month timeframe mandated a completely cohesive team approach to implementing this program. It was quickly understood by all that, for this program to be a success, we had to institute a One Team approach. USAID/OTI and DAI communicated as often as needed – sometimes hourly – to ensure that we all moved forward together.

The One Team approach also flowed into team roles. Every team member had to be willing to do their job plus whatever was required that day. Early on, this meant the OTI Program Assistant took the role of a Grant's Manager and traveled with the government representatives to Benin (DAIM001); the Office Assistant steps in as the Receptionist; the drivers facilitate procurement; and the OTI Country Representative builds the capacity of the team by providing training on program procedures. This willingness by all parties has been vital for BRDG-Liberia to respond to immediate needs.

Finally, during the last six months of the program, all managers committed to building the team's capacity in any way the team requested. Some days this meant working with the Office Driver on computer skills – other days linked a BRDG team member with an STTA consulting on a program of specific interest to the team member. Not only did this strengthen the skills of the team, it solidified the team spirit that was so needed in the final months of the program.



BRDG Liberia Organizational Chart



Lines of Primary Supervision: _____
 Lines of Secondary Supervision: -.-.-.-.-

PIPELINE ANALYSIS SUPPORTING IN

Contractor/Recipient: DAI
Award No.: DFD-I-00-05-00220-00 Task Order #3
For the Period: Inception to December 15, 2007; based on information as of January 11

Line Items	A	B ¹	C ²	D ³
	Current Budget Ceiling	Cumulative Obligations thru Mod. 4	Actual Invoiced Amount thru 12/15/2007	Actual Commitments Thru 12/15/07 (Accruals + Commitments)
Workdays Ordered	\$ 2,042,199	\$ 2,042,199	\$ 1,757,776	\$ 284,423
Operations	\$ 1,101,155	\$ 1,101,155	\$ 1,046,375	\$ 54,780
Activities STTA	\$ 941,044	\$ 941,044	\$ 711,401	\$ 229,643
ODCS	\$ 1,525,680	\$ 1,525,680	\$ 1,297,323	\$ 228,357
Operations	\$ 1,019,600	\$ 1,019,600	\$ 911,160	\$ 108,440
Activities STTA	\$ 506,080	\$ 506,080	\$ 386,164	\$ 119,916
G&A	\$ 153,247	\$ 153,247	\$ 116,205	\$ 20,780
Operations	\$ 100,421	\$ 100,421	\$ 80,684	\$ 19,737
Activities STTA	\$ 52,826	\$ 52,826	\$ 35,521	\$ 17,305
Grants	\$ 2,680,635	\$ 2,680,635	\$ 1,934,544	\$ 175,000
TOTAL	\$ 6,401,761	\$ 6,401,761	\$ 5,055,848	\$ 708,560

% of Obligated Amount Invoiced:	79%
% of Obligated Amount Committed:	90%

¹ The numbers in this column are a summation on DAI's projections in the initial task order and mc

² This column represents the costs that DAI has invoiced

³ This column represents the costs that DAI has accrued and committed, but has not invoiced

⁴ This column represents DAI's projected expenditures

⁵ This column represents the obligated funds remaining

⁶ This column represents the total contract funds remaining

INCREMENTAL OBLIGATION

1, 2007

E⁴	F = C + D + E	G⁵ = B - F	H	I⁶ = A - F
Projected New Commitments Thru 12/15/07 (Forecast)	Projected Total Budget Requirements Thru 12/15/07	Balance Remaining Thru 12/15/07	Incremental Obligation Request	Difference
\$ -	\$ 2,042,199	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ -	\$ 1,101,155	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ -	\$ 941,044	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -			
\$ -	\$ 1,525,680	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ -	\$ 1,019,600	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ -	\$ 506,080	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	\$ -			
\$ -	\$ 153,247	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ -	\$ 100,421	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ -	\$ 52,826	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
\$ -	\$ 2,109,544	\$ 571,091	\$ -	\$ 571,091
\$ -	\$ 5,830,670	\$ 571,091	\$ -	\$ 571,091

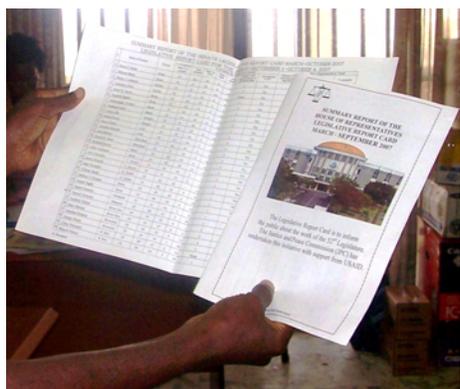
Modification 2



SUCCESS STORY

Shining a Spotlight on Liberian Legislators' Performances

Breaking down the divide between Parliament and the public.



USAID/OTI/LIBERIA

USAID/OTI's BRDG-Liberia program, or "Building Recovery and Reform through Democratic Governance," began in September 2006 in order support the political transition prompted by the free and fair election of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the first democratically elected female head of state in Africa.

This new program approach will help further three specific political objectives:

- *Assist the Government of Liberia and other key actors to improve capacity, with an emphasis on communication systems;*
- *Assist the Government of Liberia and other key actors to mount effective political responses to high visibility issues;*
- *Support regional activities aimed at strengthening the Mano River Union.*

The USAID Mission in Liberia as well as USAID's Africa Bureau and the office of Democracy and Governance are key players in the coordination of the BRDG program.

October 2007 — Liberia has three separate and distinct branches of government that are responsible for serving the country. Until now, common practice has been to focus judgment of the government's performance on the President and her Executive Branch. To break this tradition, thereby holding more government representatives accountable to the public, BRDG-Liberia worked with the Justice and Peace Commission to monitor and publicize the activities of the Liberian Legislature.

The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission designed a non-graded Legislative Report Card that documented the activities of the Parliament on a monthly basis. Of specific interest to the public were the number of times a legislator attended sessions, was on time, was late and/or was absent. There was also strong interest in noting which legislators introduced a bill (noting the nature of the bill) and how each member voted on the legislation. The report card also showed the number of times the legislator visited and met with his constituents. Copies of the report card were disseminated throughout all three branches of government, delivered to civil society organizations and universities, and printed in the local newspapers. To reach a wider audience, the JPC held a call-in talk show that was taped and aired on Monrovia and community radio stations. Popular support and interest in this activity quickly grew. BRDG-Liberia worked with all four television stations to tape the twice weekly sessions and air them in a C-SPAN like manner over Liberian television.

By publicizing the activities of the Legislature, the Liberian public began to question the lack of results. Senators and Representatives were called to task on their lack of attendance and the lack of attention paid to their constituency. In response, the Parliamentarians initially tried to defend their actions, but quickly saw that the public did not back down. Midway through the seven months of report cards, the legislators began asking to see their "grade". Other legislators began referring to their positive attendance and voting records in the Report Card during discussions with civil society groups.



SUCCESS STORY

Mano River Youth: the future has come



USAID/OTI/LIBERIA

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This new program approach will help further three specific political objectives:

- *Assist the Government of Liberia and other key actors to improve capacity in such areas as effective planning, budgeting, communication and coordination with relevant counterparts;*
- *Assist the Government of Liberia and other key actors to mount effective political responses to high visibility issues;*
- *Support regional activities aimed at strengthening the Mano River Union.*

The USAID Mission in Liberia as well as USAID's Africa Bureau and the office of Democracy and Governance are key players in the coordination of the BRDG program.

The Mano River Union Youth Parliament (MRUYP) is a sub-regional network of young people within the Mano River Basin (Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea) that advocates for peace, human rights and the development of young people and their communities. MRUYP was launched during a seminar on peace-building and conflict resolution which was held in Freetown, Sierra Leone in August 2003 with representative from member countries of the MRU. The formation of MRUYP was a direct result of the marginalization of young people in the policy formation and decision making processes of their various countries' governments.

In a region that has endured and continues to experience conflicts, efforts have not been made to invest and promote the role of youth leaders, who not only represent an enormous potential for change in post-conflict situations, but are often key actors in the development process and ultimately agents of social transformation. MRUYP intends to serve as a catalyst for the reawakening of the Mano River Union that has been dormant since the beginning of wars in the region in the early nineties.

BRDG support for the MRUYP was structured into three phases. The first phase was the provision of office equipment and supplies for the Liberian Chapter of the MRUYP and the organization of an election that was a part of the 5th General Assembly of the Federation of Liberian Youth in Gbarnga, Bong County on May 23, 2007 at which time 30 parliamentarians (two from each of the 15 counties of Liberia) were elected. The second phase was the convening of a Liberian Youth Parliament Session - a mock assembly of elected parliamentarians held for 5 days (July 16-20, 2007) at the African Methodist Episcopal University (AMEU) on Camp Johnson Road under the theme: "Enhancing Youth Leadership in Liberia". A training session on parliamentary procedures and the adoption of clear, concrete and comprehensive statutes for the Liberian Chapter of the MRUYP was developed. The final phase was the hosting of The Mano River Union Youth Parliament Second Regional Session held for 5 days (August 27-31, 2007) in the University of Liberia Auditorium. The session was held under the theme "Youth: Strategic Partners for Peace, Security and Poverty Reduction in the MRU" and brought together 36 youth participants from Guinea, Sierra Leone and Guinea (12 persons per country). President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf served as keynote speaker at the opening program and the Vice President, Joseph Boakai closed the session.



SUCCESS STORY

DIAMONDS: MAKE JOBS, NOT WARS

Liberia: Trading Diamonds for Development



First Legal Shipment of Liberian Diamonds

USAID/OTI/LIBERIA

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- *Support regional activities aimed at strengthening the Mano River Union.*

The USAID Mission in Liberia as well as USAID's Africa Bureau and the office of Democracy and Governance are key players in the coordination of the BRDG program.

September 2007 – Due to past decades of armed conflict fueled by the illegal trade of diamonds, the international community banned Liberia from exporting its diamonds because proceeds were used by the past regime to destabilize the sub-region. After persistent efforts to meet the criterion for removal of the ban, the UN lifted the diamond sanctions and subsequently Liberia was admitted to the Kimberly Process (KP) on May 4, 2007. In order to remain in compliance with international diamond exportation regulations, Liberia received the KP Export Certificates, followed by the lifting of the moratorium, and the official licensing of diamond mining. Trading activities officially began in late July 2007. These actions were contingent on the initiative of the Liberian Government to establish credible measures to ensure that Liberian diamonds are being traded through official channels and that they are ultimately being used for the welfare of the people and the development of the country.

Liberia and its people now stand to benefit from diamond exports after meeting the requirements for KP compliance, which is designed to prevent diamonds from being used to fund wars. The GOL, through the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy, requested USAID to provide a consultant to train, advise, and provide support for the MLME, the KP Certificate Scheme Working Group, strategic communications campaigns about the Kimberly Process, and the Mano River Union regional efforts to standardize export taxes in the mining sector, and to reduce incentives for smuggling.

As a result of these efforts, on September 6, 2007, Liberia exported its first shipment of diamonds valued at US \$222,000. Of this amount, 3% royalties, \$6,660, was paid to the GOL to augment Liberia's revenue and help fund development projects. According to the Information Minister, the GOL accepted the KP because it wants to be transparent with the country's resources and attract legitimate miners and dealers to participate in the diamond trade in Liberia.

