

# **Liberia Community Infrastructure Project**

**Quarterly Report: July - September 2005**

**October 28, 2005**



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## **Introduction:**

The events of this quarter have been critical and will help to define the role of the LCIP in Liberia as the project moves into 2006 and possible closure. The first and most important product of this quarter has been the 2005 – 2006 work plan which will lead to an additional 8,000 people being offered either employment or vocational training during this fiscal year. The grants to bring these people into the project have been proposed this quarter and are presented in the work plan. These final grants will be written and approved to begin implementation at the latest early November. The work plan outlines exit strategies for most of the on-going successful projects with all project activities to end June 30, 2006 if additional funding does not become available.

The key events in this reporting period were: the hiring of a new field operations manager (FOM); essential short term technical assistance (STTA), which will impact in all three of the intermediate results (IRs) in the upcoming fiscal year; the completion of our year end annual report, which is a good summary of all of the activities that lead to the LCIP being respected as a quality, high impact program, within Liberia; and the possibility of additional funding coming from DFID to support new and existing programming in four of the eight counties where the LCIP is operating.

This Quarterly Report includes:

1. A narrative report on project progress, achievements and challenges;
2. A year-to-date synopsis of the LCIP employment „actuals’ data;
3. A reporting of quarterly Key Indicators per the project PMP.
4. Summary of next quarter’s planned activities.

### **1. Narrative Report on project progress, achievements and challenges:**

During this reporting quarter significant time was spent in preparing the new LCIP work plan, which will commit all grant funding in the early months of the new fiscal year in order to have all projects completed before June 30, 2006. Most of the projects in the eight counties, including Montserrado, will be finished in late May or early June. It should be noted that grant funding will be fully utilized and, in order to meet our commitment as a parallel program partner in the rehabilitation/reintegration (RR) program, we will have to track closely closed grants in order to use any residual money for project extensions and completions. The management team is meeting monthly to review the status of all grants, closed and on-going, to track any residual money.

The annual report was presented and accepted by USAID. This report is a good summary of all of our work in Liberia, including the social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants and war affected people, the challenges we have faced and will continue to face in project implementation, how we plan on exiting our projects, and subsequent downsizing if the program does not receive additional funding.

The LCIP has been approached by DFID as a potential donor of additional funding via USAID. DFID have specific project interests such as working with the ex-combatants on the Guthrie Rubber Plantation, which is still a contentious rubber plantation being run and operated/managed by former ministers, businessmen and others. They have also indicated interest in working in support of the small stakeholders within the rubber or cocoa industry along the Ivorian boarder and have expressed interest in supporting some of the LCIP exit strategies in agro-business, such as the purchasing of processing equipment. The funding of one million pounds, if obtained, will be transferred through USAID who has received a work plan from the LCIP regarding the same. It is predicted that project activities supported by DFID funding could begin as early as November 1, 2005 if funded.

Media coverage during this reporting period has increased dramatically. Both electronic and print media of project activities in all 8 counties where the LCIP is implementing programs has been brought to public attention through our media campaign which is instrumental in the peace process on-going in Liberia.

The major activities that have taken place during this period can be summarized according to LCIP's three principal components:

#### IR 1 - Peace Process and Psychosocial Support:

Two major events took place under this IR, both of which have had significant impact on present programming and will affect LCIP focus during the new fiscal year. The first was the Traditional Cleansing and Spiritual Healing program which took place in Lofa County. The program brought together primarily two ethnic groups, the Mandigo and Lorma, in a series of gatherings with the traditional leaders in various sacred sites and concluded with these two contentious ethnic groups signing a regional peace accord. This event was the result of previous work done by an international consultant to the LCIP. The consultant outlined reasons for conflict in Lofa and other counties and suggested that traditional ceremonies would bring the two ethnic groups of the Loma and the Mandingo to a point of reconciliation and co-existence. Through these ceremonies the ex-combatants (XCs) would also be cleansed of any wrong doing perpetrated during 14 years of civil war.

The consultant, Steve Archibald an anthropologist, returned during the quarter to do similar work in Montserrado and to develop an instrument to be used for a social reintegration impact survey to be completed next quarter country wide. The survey will help the LCIP and other organizations determine if the social and psychosocial interventions, conducted through the grants program, in the communities are working. It will examine whether the interventions are having the intended impact allowing people to return to a normal everyday life. Levels of trust and confidence will be measured in selected communities where the LCIP is and compared to those communities it is not present in. Focus groups and individual interviews will be conducted during this assessment.

The second significant event under this IR was the return of STTA, Dr. Nancy Baron a well respected psychologist. Dr. Baron returned to follow-up on pervious work for the LCIP setting up a psychosocial training of trainer's workshop in late June to early July. The participants in this workshop were all USAID partners that have a psychosocial component in their programming. Some external participants, such as the Lutheran Church of Liberia and the Women Aid Society and representatives from the Ministry of Health also participated and benefited from the theoretical and practical work done over the 2 month period.

The result of Dr. Baron's work is a newly formed group of psychosocial trainers calling themselves *'The Network for Social Change'* or the NSC. The NSC will now be able to provide a unified approach to psychosocial training in and around the country. With national and international NGOs participating along with the Lutheran Church and the Ministry of Health, this group should be able to continue its work long after the transition in Liberia from reconstruction to development. Their work is part of a vital healing process that will be essential for Liberia if it is to have peace within its communities.

The NSC has also identified the only clinical Psychiatrist, Dr. Ben Harris, in the country that will work along side them on a monthly basis to keep them abreast of new information and ideas in the field of mental health. He will receive referrals from the NSC. This symbiotic relationship is one of the many positive results to come from the workshop lead by Dr. Baron.

Besides the above mentioned consultants the LCIP continued with its overall support for psychosocial interventions supporting the peace process in all of the eight counties where it is implementing programs. Psychosocial counseling, sporting activities, "Palava" [grassroot conflict resolution] and working through cultural groups continued during the quarter benefitting thousands of people in the various communities in the eight counties.

## IR 2 - Economic Opportunities and Public Service Job Creation:

As LCIP moved fully into the second year, its interventions in this IR have developed away from quantity to towards quality. In 2004 and early 2005 LCIP provided short term employment programs which directed money into the rural economy. By late 2005 there is greater support for the private sector and qualitative interventions in the agricultural sector, with the aim of stimulating long term employment. As LCIP meets its targets inevitably the numbers of people in our programs will tail off. This process will continue with a small plateau in the next quarter before the end of programs in 2006. At the end of June the project had a total of 10,898 people registered as benefiting from this IR. As of September 30 the caseload stands at 4594, marking a reduction of 6304.

In Lofa County five schools were finished and handed over to the IRC and the Ministry of Education. The IRC will be providing the „software' for these five schools. Work on a further ten schools began in Nimba and are due for completion during the next quarter. Rehabilitation of the ten schools employs approximately 400 people. It should be noted that the furniture for these schools will come from the Rural Artisans Program described below. The „software' (paying of the teachers' salaries, the supplying of books and other supplies) will be the task of the IRC.

The administration building in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh was finally finished. This completes the total of five that the LCIP was committed to rehabilitating with present funding. This building will be formally turned over next quarter to the Ministry of Internal Affairs with LTI providing the „software'.

In Montserrado (Monrovia) the second phase of "Operation Pot Hole" began on 1<sup>st</sup> July employing 100 people. Operation Pot Hole imported over 6,000 35 Kg bags of cold patch to continue work on some of the main thoroughfares in Monrovia as identified by the Ministry of Public Works. This project should continue through the elections which are to be held October 11, 2005.

The complete reconstruction and upgrade of Gibson Street, located in front of the US Embassy, was finished and inaugurated by the Deputy Chief of Mission, the USAID Mission Director, the Minister of Public Works and the LCIP Chief of Party. The road is now open to all traffic. Due to the speed of traffic on the road LCIP later installed sleeping policemen (speed bumps) to calm the traffic and improve safety.

Under this IR the LCIP had the privilege of working with another international consultant, Dr. John Meadley, who spent several weeks in early July setting up the Rural Artisans Program, RAP, in Bong and Nimba Counties. This work is a direct result of the previous consultancy with Dr. Meadley in September 2004. The RAP will set up 25 sites for an average of 25 apprentices per workshop. The artisans will teach the apprentices carpentry, masonry and blacksmithing with the support of a trainer while still operating their business. This is the key to this program as LCIP is encouraging each work shop to develop its business and sell what the apprentices make. The artisans are not paid by LCIP and have to make a living from their current and improved business.

Since late 2004 LCIP has been engaging ex-combatants to work on oil palm plantations. As these programs developed and the interest from the communities was strong, LCIP strengthened its assistance. This was two fold: two factories were purchased for each plantation and a package of business training was developed.

During Dr. Meadley's visit in October 2004 he advised LCIP on the possibilities of strengthening the oil palm program. This included linking LCIP to the company Gratis in Ghana that develops and manufacturers agricultural processing equipment. LCIP developed this idea, with its implementing partners and Gratis, and ascertained what equipment was required for Liberia. In this quarter LCIP work has come to fruition and eight factory units have arrived.

LCIP is assisting four oil palm plantations in three counties: Grand Gedeh, Bong and Lofa. The factories have been delivered and installed in 3 of the 4 plantations; the outstanding plantation is Foya in Lofa. Due to bad road conditions LCIP has been unable to deliver beyond Voinjama but hopes to make the delivery in the next quarter. Two teams of technicians from Ghana have assisted LCIP in the installation and have provided training to the oil palm cooperatives in the operation and maintenance of the equipment. The teams have also built the capacity of a local business in Monrovia to provide further technical support and carry out the installation in Foya, negating the requirement to bring in another team from Ghana.

Having worked closely with oil palm programs the LCIP team realised there was a lack of business and management capacity and knowledge. As these programs were receiving high capital investment LCIP recognised that the cooperatives needed further training. To this end LCIP requested Dr. Meadley to develop a training package for the oil palm cooperatives in financial management and economic viability and sustainability. The package was designed to promote agribusiness and to enable the plantations to be managed beyond the LCIP interventions.

Dr. Meadley delivered this training package in July 2005 at the plantations in Bong and Grand Gedeh. The cooperative from Foya attended the training in Bong at the invitation of the Kwpatwee cooperative. No sitting fees were paid for these training sessions and the

implementing partners used existing resources together to allow the training to take place. The training conducted was very successful even though it was prior to the factories arriving in country. With the exception of the cooperative in Foya it was observed that the cooperatives are very weak on management skills both financially and technically; for the cooperatives to be successful LCIP will need to support further training and assistance. LCIP continues to work on this assistance through its in-house staff and Dr. Meadley and will continue to strengthen the cooperatives over the next quarter.

Dr. Meadley returned in September to provide follow-up on the above activities and to also look at a similar RAP program for Monrovia. The Monrovia program decided to set up a similar apprenticeship program in various communities on Bushrod Island and in Westpoint. The program name will be MAP; Monrovia Apprenticeship Program. A total of 447 people that will form 59 different businesses will participate in this program. They will be trained in seven sectors: tailoring; metal work; barbering; cosmetology; mechanics; baking and generator repair.

### IR 3 – Education and Training:

Education and training is now a strong presence in LCIP programming with, by the end of this quarter, over half of the people engaged being in some form of training program. LCIP is providing a numerous range of skill sets across the eight counties (although all trade sets are not available in all counties) such as carpentry, tailoring, soap-making, pastry, building skills, masonry, tie & dye and many more.

Along with the conventional training LCIP is also piloting a program called “The Reconciliation and Psychosocial Healing through Skills Training and Cultural Activities Program” in Cape Mount County. This program has been implemented in two stages: stage one: training and sensitization; stage two: utilizing skills learnt and spreading peace messages. One hundred and fifty people have completed skills training in construction building a cultural village in Tienii. The trainees are now actively utilizing their skills to construct (195) shelters in 15 villages in Tewor district along with spreading messages of peace. As well as building a shelter for themselves the trainees will build a further 45 shelters for vulnerable groups within their community. These vulnerable groups have been selected by the communities to receive benefits from this program.

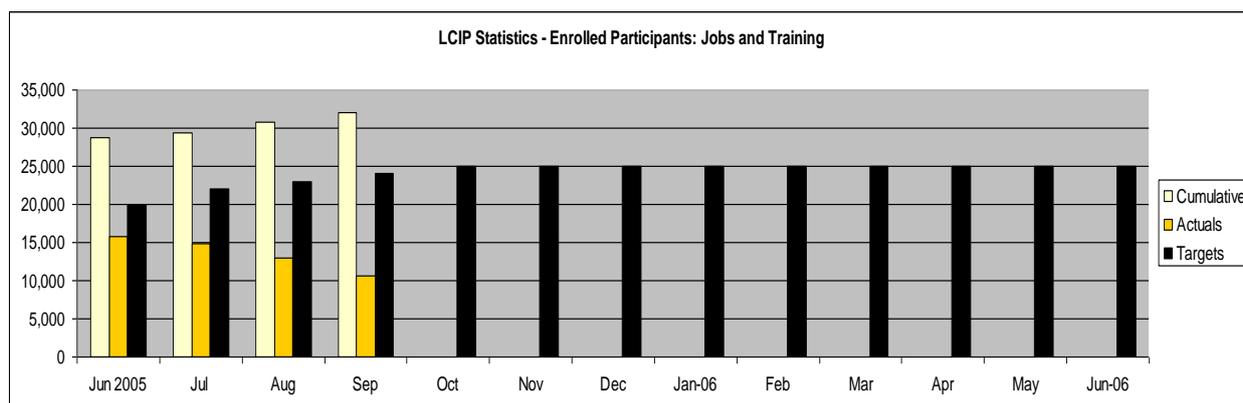
In Monrovia, this quarter, a total of eight new training grants were signed, providing places for 1,875 students in various institutions across the city. These institutions are teaching cosmetology, tailoring, carpentry, masonry, auto mechanics/driving, electricity/electronics, home economics, chicken-raising, cassava processing, chicken feed and vegetable production, water and sanitation, metal working and baking. Each training program also has a psycho-social and counseling component where the participants can either attend sessions in groups or as individuals when more one-on-one care is needed. In addition to learning the specific trade being offered, participants are learning small business management skills as well as a basic mixture of literacy and numeracy that will assist them in working in their specific field after the training is completed.

A number of programs are reaching the stage of graduation. The LCIP team is working closely with its implementing partners to determine the most appropriate tool kits for the individuals and cooperatives that graduate from the training programs. During the next quarter many of the graduation ceremonies will take place.

A total of **7,024** people have participated in some form of vocational training during the quarter.

General:

During this quarter LCIP analyzed its payroll data of all the grants that have been implemented since the beginning of LCIP in 2004. The numbers counted were based on each grant implemented and the highest number of participants recorded for the respective grant. The graph detailed below illustrates the results from this analysis and shows the number of ex-combatants and war affected people that have benefited from LCIP; since the start of the grants program in May 2004 over 30,000 people have been directly engaged by LCIP in various activities from work programs to vocational training.



LCIP is a significant parallel partner to the DDRR program in Liberia and therefore is required to report number of ex-combatants engaged in LCIP to the Joint implementation Unit (JIU) managed by UNDP. The JIU database is created from information provided by LCIP implementing partners every payroll. A data sheet created by the JIU is filled out each time an ex-combatant is paid by LCIP, representing a month worked or active in training. This data is transferred each month to the JIU to input into their database. It was understood by LCIP that the JIU would then be able to track a total number of months each ex-combatant was engaged by LCIP or any other donor. As a result LCIP has not maintained its own database for tracking individual ex-combatants, only payroll record exists. In addition the data forms and the process for information sharing to the JIU were not fully active until late 2004, months after the inception of LCIP. For these reasons the data obtained from LCIP payrolls reports a higher number than that reported by the JIU. LCIP is working with the JIU to consolidate information but due to the difference in the reporting periods and data collection methods utilized, either information may not be fully consolidated.

Security is providing a challenge to some of the projects as some students are not happy about not receiving their full stipend if they do not attend classes. In one project the Implementing Partner (IP) had to ask that certain students not return as they were not attending classes or were disruptive when they did attend. These students have been visiting the training site inciting violence and were removed by the police and are presently in jail pending trial.

The LCIP will continue to be vigilant and will be more so as the election campaigning continues next month and the electoral process begins.

#### Quarterly LCIP Success Stories:

Each quarter the LCIP will be presenting one or two success stories highlighting one of our many implementing partners. This quarter's success story comes from Living Water International (LWI) who is providing vocational training to over 1,000 ex-combatants and war affected persons in two locations in Montserrado County: ELWA and Virginia.

#### LIVING WATER- TRAINING FUTURE CRAFTSMEN OF LIBERIA PHASE I AND II

UNICEF approached LWI to assist them in the installation of 29 hand pumps in various areas in Montserrado and Margibi counties. UNICEF had already identified the locations that needed this assistance donated the hand pumps and the building materials required (rock, sand, culverts and cement blocks), while LWI, with LCIP funding, provided the labor as well as transportation and logistics for the laborers. LWI identified 20 of their best trainees in the water-sanitation area and took those trainees, with instructors, to the field to carry out the installations. Several of the trips required six-night stays in communities where the wells were being installed. LWI also identified students who were from these regions/counties to do the installations so that their home communities could observe them providing something useful and positive.

After UNICEF provided the pumps, with all accessories, LWI set up two teams: the Margibi team from the ELWA School and the Montserrado team which consisted of staff/trainees from the Virginia school. Under the Project Cooperation Agreement the two teams were required to rehabilitate twenty-eight existing open wells in Montserrado County and Margibi County and the construction of one new well in Montserrado county. The contract was apportioned into sixteen (16) wells by the ELWA School and thirteen (13) wells by the Virginia School respectively.

To date, the team from the ELWA School has successfully completed their sixteen wells and has mounted cages on all of the wells. These wells are now waiting for inspection by UNICEF. The Virginia School has completed 12 of their 13 wells. The one remaining well is still outstanding due to the fact that a bridge that needed to be crossed to reach one of the communities is currently impassable. The community has embarked on a self-help project to quickly rehabilitate the bridge to afford the team the opportunity to complete their portion of the contract.

The Calvary Baptist Church School System requested LWI's help in renovating the ELWA Compound School, a K-12 school in Sinkor, so the school could open on September 19, 2005. Twenty-two trainees and two trainers started the work on September 5, 2005. The church provided zinc, cement, wood, sand, rock, nails, steel rods and plywood to rebuild the school building and the chairs so that the school could open for the first time in many years.

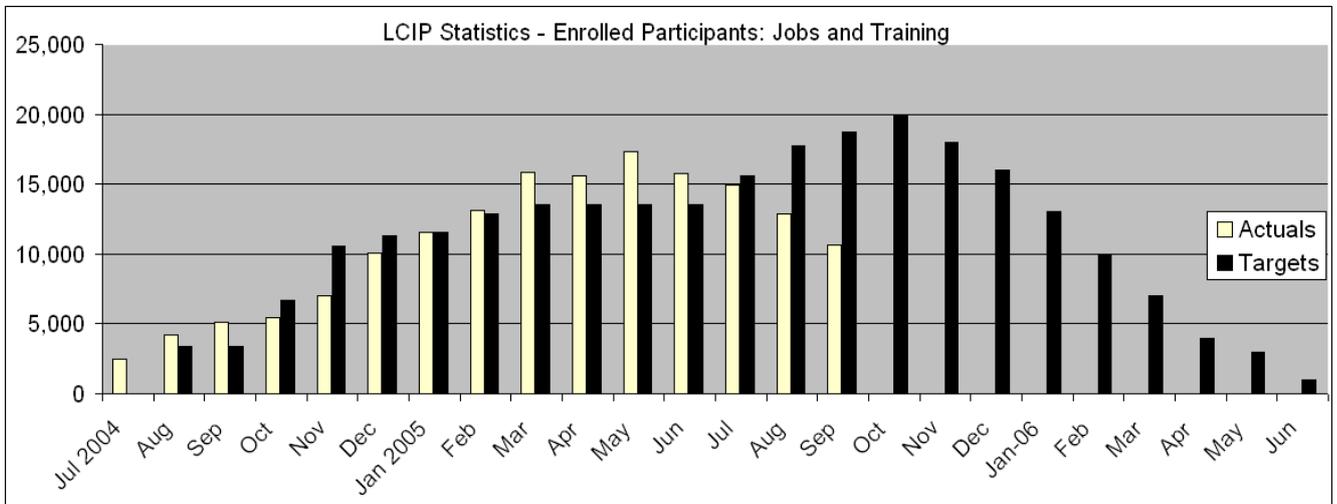
The LWI students rebuilt the fence, the walls, parts of the concrete floor that had caved in, patched the roof and built/repared over 100 chairs. The work on the building was completed by September 18, 2005. The school opened for 280 students on September 19, 2005. An additional 100 school chairs are needed and the Church is providing additional wood for the LWI ELWA Compound School to rebuild them by October 13, 2005.

Living Water International, Inc.-Liberia was not paid for the above services. This was a trainee assignment for some of their best students.

## 2. Year-to-date synopsis of the LCIP employment data:

Currently a total of **6,982** ex-combatants and **3,629** war affect people are participating in IR 2 and IR 3 grant activities. This gives the program a total of **10,611** people actively participating in LCIP grant activities. This is represented below in the bar graph.

### ORIGINAL TARGET GRAPH WORK PLAN '05/'06

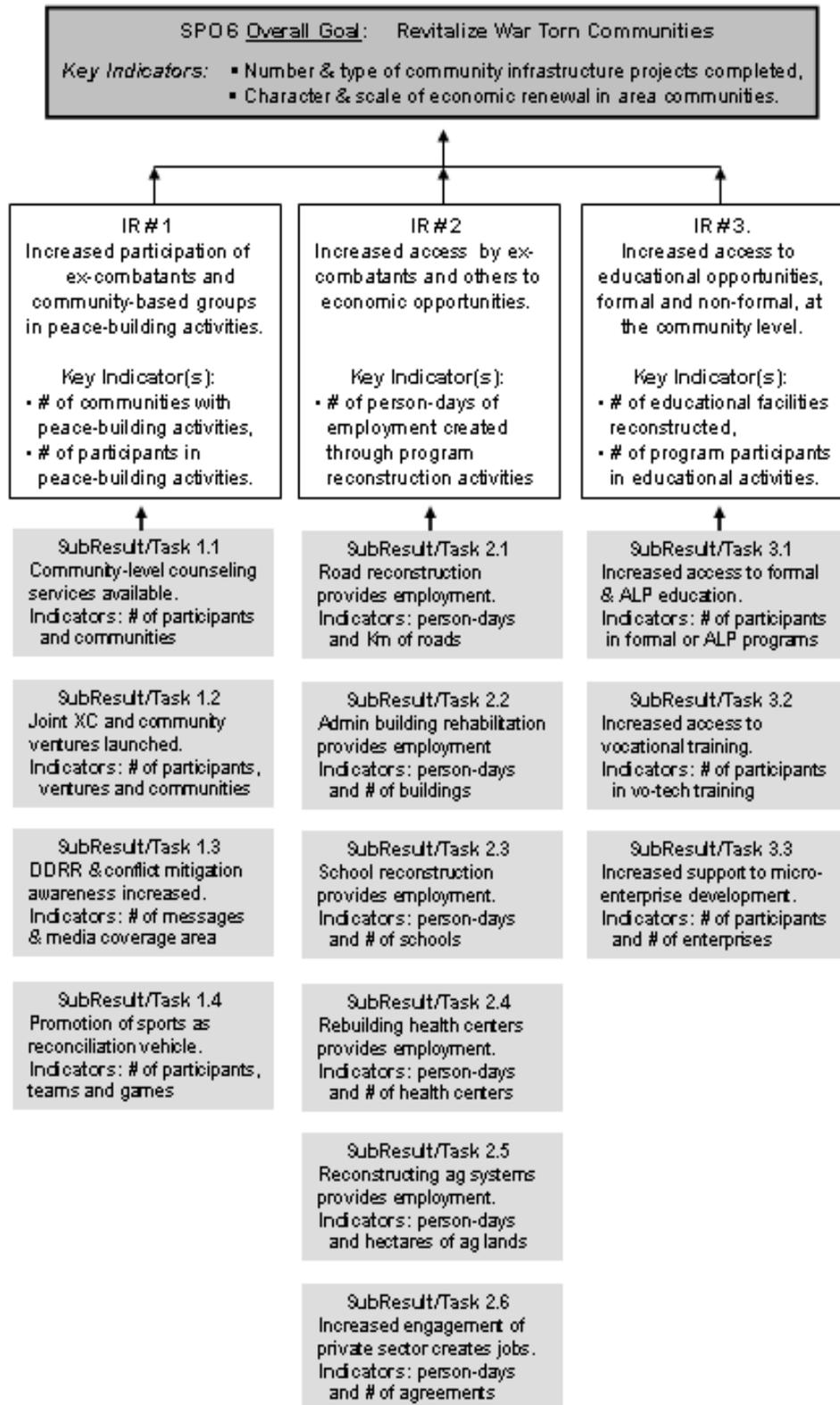


The targets, originally set in the June 2005 to June 2006 work plan over estimated the numbers that LCIP would engage during the period of August to December 2005. This overestimation is due to the programs slowing down more significantly over the rainy season and the election period than anticipated. As stated earlier in the report, LCIP is striving to move from programs which have a short-term impact to those which will have more long-term development orientated results. For example the program is designing apprenticeships instead of engaging in straight vocational training centers; it is setting up cooperatives instead of doing one planting-season farming; LCIP is also working to build relationships at the community level between ex-combatants and community members to assist the long-term possibilities for reintegration of the two groups. These types of programming take more attention and time at the developmental stages than previous programming. LCIP is also looking ahead towards more sustainable exit strategies for participants and their communities. These factors have all lead to the reduction in targets for the latter part of 2005.

### 3. Reporting of quarterly Key Indicators per the Performance Monitoring Plan:

Below is a summary of all project activities as per the LCIP results framework which is shown below:

**Figure 1: Liberia Community Infrastructure Program Results Framework**



**IR #1: Increased participation of ex-combatants and community-based groups in peace-building activities**

**Task 1.1.** Community-level counseling system developed for XCs and others.  
(Indicator = Number of participants and communities in the LCIP program)

Below is a summary of the number of people and communities that were reached under this IR. For the quarter, a total of 28,716 people were reached in 234 communities.

July:	103 communities; 9,703 people
August:	115 communities; 10,056 people
September:	133 communities; 11,237 people

**Task 1.2.** Community mobilization and support groups identify joint community and livelihood ventures.

(Indicator = Number of participants and communities joining identification and planning exercises with LCIP and launching joint ventures)

There were 39 joint ventures formed during this quarter.

**Task 1.3.** Increased awareness of demobilization, reintegration and conflict mitigation programs.

(Indicator = Number of messages (posters / flyers) distributed and media (radio) coverage service area includes and targets XCs)

Posters:	164
Radio Shows:	16
Cultural Activities:	173
Media Spots:	None
Success Stories:	18

**Task 1.4.** Promotion of sports activities as a reconciliation vehicle

(Indicator = Number of teams, Number of participants and Number of games)

For the quarter a total of 17,766 people, men and women, participated in sporting activities with 769 teams (kick ball, soccer, and volleyball) formed

July:	5,782 people with 279 teams formed
August:	6,020 people with 286 teams formed
September:	5,964 people with 204 teams formed

**IR #2: Ex-combatants and others from war-affected communities have increased access to economic opportunities**

**Task 2.1/2.2/2.3/2.4/2.5** Reconstruction work brigades dedicated to roads and bridges, administrative buildings, schools, health centers and agriculture projects activities provide short-term employment for project participants.

(Indicator = Number of person-days of employment generated)

There are currently 3,227 XCs and 1,367 WAPs in LCIP economic rehabilitation projects. IR2 has generated 2,115,485 person days since May 2004, of this amount 445,361 have been generated over this quarter.

**Task 2.6.** Increased engagement of private sector in creating economic opportunities for ex-combatants and other war-affected persons

(**Indicator** = Number of private sector agreements leading to jobs and training; and Number of person-days generated)

LCIP is working with 4 different oil palm plantations that will receive 2 sets each of oil palm processing equipment and should be able to enter into the private sector. LCIP will assist in palm oil production in Lofa, Bong, and Grand Gedeh Counties.

Possible opportunities in the rubber industry supporting the small stakeholder is being considered at this time with DFID funding.

**IR #3: Increased access to educational opportunities, formal and non-formal, at the community level**

**Task 3.1.** Increased access to formal and ALP education through restored local education facilities

(**Indicator** = Number of participants in formal and ALP programs in LCIP rehabilitated schools or using LCIP support)

As mentioned above five schools have been turned over to the IRC in Lofa County with another ten schools being renovated in Nimba County. All 15 of these schools will be providing ALP, primarily to women and children associated with the fighting forces identified by the IRC.

**Task 3.2** Ex-combatants and other persons have access to vocational skills training (**Indicator** = Number of participants actively enrolled in an LCIP vo-tech training activity)

LCIP currently has 3,755 XCs and 2,262WAPs in vocational skills training.

**Task 3.3** Project support and training provided in enterprise development in small enterprises related to reconstruction industries

(**Indicator** = Number of small enterprises created and number of participants developing small enterprises)

RAP has begun in Bong and Nimba Counties. This project supports approximately 591 beneficiaries. The MAP program which will have 559 beneficiaries.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF NEXT QUARTER'S ACTIVITIES AND EMPLOYMENT DATE:**

Next quarter will be the last quarter that large economic reintegration or large vocational training grants will be issued. This should bring the LCIP total number of people having benefited from its programs close to the target figure of 25,000; our goal is 18,500 ex-combatants and 6,500 war affect people. All LCIP's USAID funding will have been committed by the end of this quarter with focus being put on exit strategies and close out if no additional funding is forthcoming. LCIP will be downsizing at the start of 2006.

Some of the large on-going infrastructure projects will finish by the end of the next quarter. The only two large projects that will remain will be: the Bong Road project scheduled to be completed in January; the AMEU rehabilitation which is due for completion in December 2005.

The only new large rehabilitation project to begin next quarter will be a large dam project supporting a number of swamp rice projects in Grand Gedeh County. This project has an estimated completion date of May 2006.

All of the palm oil processing plants will in place and running at the Foya plantation in Lofa County, if road conditions allow, by the end of the quarter.

Subcontractor UMCOR will be nearing the end of its activities during this quarter.

The LCIP will be supporting one final traditional cleansing and spiritual healing program in Gbarpolu County. The focus of this will primarily be the reintegration of ex-combatants into their communities. A large number of shelters (195 distributed in 15 villages) will be finished in the next quarter, these act as an out-reach for the Cultural Centre in Grand Cape Mount County and will be used to continue traditional programs in these communities in future years. LCIP Psychosocial training work with the Network for Social Change will continue with Dr. Ben Harris.

Results from the social impact survey will be available in the next quarter and should greatly help LCIP in refining its exit strategies. The results could also be of interest to USAID in determining its strategic objectives for 2006.

LCIP is also considering utilizing the consultant Brian Brewer for a brief visit in late November/ early December to assist in strengthening agricultural assistance. The objective of his visit will be to identify ways of strengthen the capacity of farmers and the farming cooperatives in Liberia, providing LCIP in a position to assist with these types of intervention within this funding period with the available resources.

# Liberia Community Infrastructure Project

## Answers to USAID Desk Officer's Questions: Submitted October 29, 2005



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## **Background**

The Liberia Community Infrastructure Program (LCIP) is a critical component of Liberia's overall Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) program which was designed to support the transition from war to peace in Liberia through normalization and stabilization of communities affected by the 14-year war. The DDRR program aims to successfully reintegrate ex-combatants into communities through appropriate socio-economic programs. LCIP was specifically designed as a temporary employment and training program to keep ex-combatants gainfully engaged following disarmament and demobilization. LCIP is responsible for providing jobs or training for 25,000 individuals, 18,500 of which are former combatants who went through the disarmament process, and the remaining 6,500 are war-affected people from the general population.

LCIP's main focus is to keep potential spoilers of the peace process occupied during a critical transitional phase in the country's modern history and also to provide opportunities for ex-combatants and noncombatants to work together. As a result, long term tracking of each individual in the program was not intended at the on-set of the program. LCIP's impact for the first year and a half of its operation is more significant at the macro level in providing a sense of normalcy and stability and in allowing people to earn a living as the economy begins to pick up again. LCIP's activities have created tremendous community stability and economic recovery, especially in rural areas. Towns and villages that were only previously inhabited by ex-combatants are now thriving business centers. Excombatants and noncombatants are beginning to trust each other again and to recognize the necessity of reconciliation and cooperation in order for them to rebuild the country together.

In the 18 months that LCIP has been operating in Liberia, the program has evolved as the conditions in the country have changed. LCIP has grown beyond the short-term programs of 2004 and early 2005 and is currently implementing programs which are designed with longer term sustainability for its direct beneficiaries in mind. Road programs have progressed from clearing the bush from the shoulder of the road, to bridge repair and surface renovation. Vocational trainings implemented in training institutions are now being replaced by apprenticeship programs which have a more private-sector focus and clear business objectives. Agricultural development has moved beyond temporary work programs to agribusiness initiatives. LCIP is also engaging cooperatives and improving their management, business skills, and productivity through business training and the provision of agriculture processing equipment. These changes in program direction are providing increased micro-level long-term impact than the earlier programs.

LCIP is well-positioned to continue moving this process forward from relief to development in post-war Liberia. LCIP is widely known and respected in local communities, and has a good working knowledge of the logistical and programmatic challenges to implementing programs both in rural and urban settings. Because of a historical lack of trust within communities and between communities and government officials, LCIP is now designing programs which give mixed communities of ex-combatants and noncombatants the opportunity to organize and prioritize their own local development objectives together. These processes force communities to organize, reconcile and to advocate for their needs as one voice. Requiring communities to also include ex-combatants as a part of this process, ensures that the ex-combatants are locally engaged and feel a part of the broader community.

Detailed below are answers to the questions raised by Lydia Hall, Desk Officer for Liberia and Sierra Leone, USAID.

**1. They were very interested in the engineering and contracting firms that DAI uses for road rehabilitation, building reconstruction, etc. Can we get a list of the firms that have been used, the projects that engineering/contracting firms have been contracted for, and the overhead that the firms have:**

LCIP is uniquely using Liberian-owned private sector entities for rehabilitation and reintegration (RR) programs in Liberia to great success. Liberian private construction companies are asked to participate in open bids on contracts for the renovation of buildings or roads, provided that the firms utilize ex-combatants for the majority of labor of the work. LCIP has found this to be a very effective process, and it has produced excellent results. Buildings have been renovated to a high standard and ex-combatants have learned construction skills in a client-based environment. Some of the ex-combatants that have been employed on these projects have gained permanent employment with their construction companies. This has only been a small number due to the overall economic environment in Liberia and due to the fact that most businesses are still operating largely around the donor community, but following the elections, these opportunities will continue to grow.

The following firms have been used or are currently active with construction through LCIP funding. As per LCIP internal policy guidelines, all companies are Liberian-based and managed, and they are all fully registered with the Ministry of Public Works for the activities they perform:

Road Construction:

Westwood Corporation Inc.  
Atlantic Engineering & Construction Company Inc.  
Crossroad Enterprises Inc.  
National Engineering & Construction Company Inc.  
Meek Engineering Inc.

School & University Renovation:

Team Technical Inc.  
Rescue Africa Inc.  
Crossroad Enterprises Inc.  
West Coast Contractors Inc.  
Gilgal Construction and Engineering Services  
Sawyer & Associates Inc.  
"Do Your Best" Corporation  
St George Construction & Maintenance Services  
Cubes Construction Company  
Continental Construction Company  
Liberia Reconstruction & Development Company

Public Administration Buildings:

Cubes Construction Company

Continental Construction Company  
Crossroads Enterprises Inc.  
Triple WWW Inc.  
Liberia Reconstruction & Development Company

Small Business Renovation Under The Monrovia Apprentice Program:

Zorkpah Construction Company  
Linda Construction & Maintenance Company

As a general rule, in Liberian contracting, an average of 25% of the construction costs are for transportation, overhead and profit of the construction company. This varies slightly from contract to contract and from company to company. The element of open competition, however, usually keeps these costs to a minimum. The above-mentioned LCIP construction projects also differ widely from one another in complexity, in size and in the logistical requirements for rural and urban areas. As a result, these contracts do require distinctive inputs and logistical support which will affect the fee structures for each particular project.

**2. In the Annual Report, it states that 3,752 XCs and WAPs were given access to vocational skills training. I know that it probably differs, but is there any way to state how much it cost to give 3,752 people vocational skills training? If not, please feel free to say so.**

As with the construction contracts, vocational skills training design and implementation varies according to the sector of the training. Training beauticians requires less cost in tools and materials than training for carpenters. As a general rule, LCIP vocational training programs are budgeted at an average cost of \$800 to \$1,000 per person. This cost includes materials, the students' stipends as stipulated by the overall Liberian RR program, a package of exit tools for the trainees, the management of the programs as well as mainstreamed psycho-social counseling for the trainees, a necessary ingredient to ensuring the long term reintegration prospects of the individuals. The cost of the specific training programs highlighted in the annual report average \$800 per person.

**3. How much does it cost per person and what are the outcomes? How many people are employed due to the training they received from LCIP? How many people remained in the rural community? For instance, how many people are now literate? How many people are engaged in agriculture after receiving training?**

As mentioned above, LCIP has been using \$800 to \$1000 per participant to budget for 8 to 9 month training and work programs. This is a direct grant cost and does not include LCIP operational costs. The majority of that amount is the stipend and wages portion of the programs, paid to the participants based on their daily attendance records for work and training. For these programs \$400/\$240 of the participant cost is for wages or stipends respectively. Approximately \$5 million of the overall LCIP grant fund has been paid directly to the participants through daily wages and stipends since May 2004.

The employment market in Liberia is very frugal and however well skilled the individual is, employment is difficult to come by. LCIP tries to prepare ex-combatants with skills that will be useful as the market recovers and that can provide reliable livelihoods for them and their families. As the economy has begun recovering, LCIP requires their local implementing

partners to design and implement more thorough exit strategies for their students/workers. Examples of these exit strategies were discussed earlier and include cooperatives, apprenticeship programs, joint-ventures, and job placement/recommendation services to assist the participants once they leave the LCIP programs.

LCIP is currently engaged in a social impact survey of communities where LCIP interventions have and have not taken place. Data from this survey will help LCIP determine if the social programming has been successful in terms of reintegration and improved levels of trust between ex-combatants and noncombatants. Economically, the impacts are starting to be seen already. Rural communities are now thriving compared to the situation 18 months ago, and the numbers of people returning to the rural areas continues to rise. Not all of these trends can be attributed to LCIP, but there has certainly been some stabilizing impact noted from LCIP areas of operation. Simple food items such as rice which was in low supply eighteen months ago in Grand Gedeh, a county in the northeastern part of the country, are now freely available on the market. Taxi fares have reduced dramatically in rural areas where LCIP has begun repairing roads.

All of the LCIP literacy programs are still ongoing, and therefore no data is available yet as to how many participants are literate. At the end of these programs, LCIP's implementing partners will be issuing certificates to those who passed the courses, and recommendations for formal education programs will be made for exceptional students.

In terms of agriculture, from the monitoring and evaluation of LCIP programs and from discussions with implementing partners and communities, it has been found that many rural area participants have remained in agriculture either at the family household level or the cooperative level.

**4. In what ways does LCIP work within the formal sector versus the informal sector? In the Monrovia program, does LCIP work at all with the municipalities and county governments, in particular to rebuild infrastructure? If not, is there a plan to?**

In the informal business sector, LCIP is currently implementing programs which place apprentices into local informal businesses. These programs both build the capacity of the local business-owners by renovating their business structures, providing them with improved quality or badly needed basic tools, providing them with consumables to jumpstart the business, training in bookkeeping and accounting, as well as providing them with free labor in the form of work that the apprentices will do on the job. The apprentices will receive training that follows a predetermined syllabus, a set of quality tools to work with, daily interface with customers, a percentage of income earned by the business owner while the training is on-going, and ultimately, as a result, long-term potential to become entrepreneurs themselves. Some of the business owners will keep some of the apprentices in their shops when the training is completed, and some will assist the apprentices in either starting up their own businesses or joining other businesses in the same sector.

For all major construction and infrastructure projects, during the project design phase, LCIP works directly with the responsible government ministry and/or local government office in that sector. This allows the projects to be jointly designed and implemented by public and private sector as well as members of civil society, represented by the communities, beneficiaries, and workers hired to do the actual construction. This interaction with local and

national government officials is also necessary to ensure that all construction work meets the standards required by Liberian law for work in those specific sectors.

All of the road projects are designed and implemented in coordination with the Ministry of Public Works. Specifically, LCIP hires a Liberian-owned private sector architecture and engineering firm to conduct the project design. The design work is reviewed with Ministry of Public Works officials who accompany the design team to the field, and who ultimately sign off on the final drawings. Once the final drawings are completed, an open bidding process is conducted where Liberian-owned construction firms can bid. Once the bid selection is completed, the winning contractor then liaises with the Ministry of Public Works officials for the project duration. Any problems that arise during project implementation are dealt with jointly by the construction firm, the architecture/design firm, the workers, and the communities which are affected by the project.

A similar process is followed for school repair/renovation as well as the reconstruction of county administrative buildings. The schools are repaired in coordination with the Ministry of Education, and county administrative buildings are coordinated with the county superintendents, together with the ministry which they report to, the Ministry of Internal Affairs. For the schools and administrative buildings, LCIP also liaises with other donors who agree to provide the “software” such as furniture and school supplies.

The process with the Ministry of Agriculture is slightly different but still reflects a close partnership. Agriculture programs are designed to be labor intensive and thereby are driven by population density and the economic interests of specific communities. The main areas of focus have been on cultivation of low land rice and renovation of oil palm estates. Two oil palm estates are government-owned and through LCIP and the Ministry of Agriculture, local cooperatives have obtained written agreements allowing them access and production rights.

##### **5. And lastly, what part of the funding for LCIP is spent in Liberia on Liberians, versus overhead etc?**

The current LCIP budget total is \$35,679,635. Of this amount, approximately 70% is expended on grants in Liberia to implementing partners (local non-governmental organizations) to manage work and training programs for ex-combatants and war-affected people. The remaining 30% of the budget includes salaries for 94 Liberian employees, salaries and allowances for six expatriates who are full-time managers in Liberia, operating costs for the Monrovia and six field offices (including travel and transportation costs, fuel, rent, communications, office supplies, vehicle maintenance, etc.), minimal Bethesda, MD, home office support costs, as well as DAI's USAID approved negotiated indirect costs.