

# **Liberia Community Infrastructure Project**

## ***Phase 1 Quarterly Report***

**Summary Report on Phase 1 Grants,  
April 2004 – June 2006**

**SUBMITTED TO:**

**THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL  
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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| AITB   | Agricultural Industrial Training Board   |
| CDC    | Community Development Committee  |
| COP    | Chief of Party   |
| CPA    | Comprehensive Peace Agreement  |
| DAI    | Development Alternatives Incorporated  |
| DD     | Disarmament and Demobilization   |
| DFID   | Department for International Development   |
| IDP    | Internally Displaced Person  |
| INGO   | International Non Governmental Organization  |
| IP     | Implementing Partner   |
| IR     | Intermediate Results   |
| IRC    | International Rescue Committee   |
| IRI    | International Republican Institute   |
| JIU    | Joint Implementation Unit  |
| LCIP   | Liberia Community Infrastructure Program   |
| LFA    | Liberia Football Association   |
| MAP    | Monrovia Micro-enterprise Apprenticeship Program                                     |
| M&E    | Monitoring and Evaluation  |
| M&R    | Milton & Richards  |
| NCDDRR | National Commission of Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration |
| NDI    | National Democratic Institute for International Affairs                              |
| NGO    | Non Governmental Organization  |
| NTGL   | National Transitional Government of Liberia  |
| PDE    | Person Days Employment   |
| PTA    | Parent Teacher Association   |
| RAP    | Rebuilding Artisans Program  |
| RR     | Reintegration and Reconstruction   |
| SO     | Strategic Objective  |
| SOW    | Scope of Work  |
| STTA   | Short Term Technical Assistance  |
| UN     | United Nations   |
| UNDP   | United Nations Development Program   |
| UNHCR  | United Nations High Commission for Refugees  |
| UNMIL  | United National Mission in Liberia   |
| USAID  | United States Agency for International Development                                   |
| USD    | United States Dollar   |
| WAP    | War-Affected Person  |
| XC     | Ex-combatant   |



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## **Introduction**

During this reporting period LCIP's focus shifted considerably in response to new funding and new directions from the USAID/Liberia Mission. For this reason, DAI has reorganized the MAC Task Order Contract into phases:

Liberia Community Infrastructure Project (LCIP): *Phase I*

Phase I covers USAID-funded activities that initially focused on supporting the reintegration of ex-combatants (XCs) and other war-affected groups into their respective communities. It concentrated on the economic and social rehabilitation of communities and the reinforcement of community structures. Activities included vocational training, education, priority public work projects and psychosocial counseling. A second objective was added to LCIP during this reporting period, to support the new elected Government of Liberia's "150 Days Action Plan" for recovery and economic development. The ultimate goal of LCIP is to facilitate effective reintegration and reconciliation among communities in the targeted areas throughout Liberia.

**LCIP Phase 1** – incorporates activities and accomplishments from March 2004 through the end of June 2006.

**LCIP Phase 2** – includes activities and results from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2006 through July 31<sup>st</sup> 2007.

In summary, all current targeted programs for Phase 1 were concluded by the end of June: staff were downsized, all field offices with the exception of Zwedru in Grand Gedeh were closed, and the warehouse was closed. During this quarter preparations also began for Phase 2 of the LCIP.

This Quarterly Report includes:

1. A narrative report on Phase 1 progress, achievements and challenges;
2. A synopsis of the LCIP employment „actuals' data to the end of Phase 1 implementation;
3. A summary reporting of Key Indicators per the Phase 1 project PMP.
4. Summary of next quarter's planned activities.
5. Annexes that include: a list of all LCIP grants; lessons learned (originally presented to USAID in the Spring of 2006); and a summary of key issues.

## Accomplishments during 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter (April – June) 2006

The third quarter was a dynamic and evolving time for the LCIP project and DAI staff. LCIP Phase 1 ended, including grant activities. LCIP Phase 2 started. Additional project funding and objectives were discussed, budgets and work plans were developed, and concomitant staff issues were handled. Throughout, the LCIP staff and DAI worked to maintain continuity in activities, relationships with various stakeholders in the transition underway in Liberia, and to produce results and impact.

### Phase 1: Project Accomplishments

During the quarter LCIP Phase 1 ended, with a total of 9,458 people graduating from our programs during the quarter. A total of 3,074 of those receiving vocational training graduated in this reporting quarter. Of these graduates, 809 participants in the vocational training were women and over 1,980 were ex-combatants. During this quarter, 6,384 persons participated in employment opportunities for a total of 119,884 Person Days of Employment. Of these, 1,632 participants were women and 2,816 were ex-combatants.

| <b>IR2 (Employment Generation)</b> | <b>Male</b>  | <b>Female</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>Excs</b>  | <b>WAPs</b>  | <b>Total</b> | <b>PDE</b>     |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| APRIL                              | 2536         | 792           | 3328         | 1510         | 1818         | 3328         | 65,612         |
| MAY                                | 2216         | 840           | 3056         | 1306         | 1750         | 3056         | 54,272         |
| JUNE                               | 0            | 0             | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0            | 0              |
| <b>SUB-TOTAL</b>                   | <b>4,752</b> | <b>1,632</b>  | <b>6,384</b> | <b>2,816</b> | <b>3,568</b> | <b>6,384</b> | <b>119,884</b> |
|                                    |              |               |              |              |              |              |                |
| <b>IR3 (Vocational Training)</b>   | <b>Male</b>  | <b>Female</b> | <b>Total</b> | <b>Excs</b>  | <b>WAPs</b>  | <b>Total</b> | <b>PDE</b>     |
| APRIL                              | 1214         | 456           | 1670         | 1,079        | 581          | 1,660        | 34369          |
| MAY                                | 772          | 252           | 1024         | 643          | 391          | 1,034        | 21585          |
| JUNE                               | 279          | 101           | 380          | 260          | 120          | 380          | 7981           |
| <b>SUB-TOTAL</b>                   | <b>2,265</b> | <b>809</b>    | <b>3,074</b> | <b>1,982</b> | <b>1,092</b> | <b>3,074</b> | <b>63,935</b>  |
|                                    |              |               |              |              |              |              |                |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>                 | <b>7,017</b> | <b>2,441</b>  | <b>9,458</b> | <b>4,798</b> | <b>4,660</b> | <b>9,458</b> | <b>183,819</b> |

Although LCIP Phase 1 activities were winding down throughout the reporting quarter (as evidenced in part by the lack of new employment generation in June), there were still significant rehabilitation and construction projects completed. This included the rehabilitation of a dam in Grand Gedeh which supplies 250 acres of paddy rice fields, and the following activities in Monrovia:

- Rehabilitation of 10 roads (including the Twelve Houses and Duport Roads)
- Rehabilitation and repair of 4 bridges
- Construction and/or repair of 58 hand pumps
- Construction and/or repair 24 latrines

### Phase 1: Management Accomplishments

The project's focus shifted considerably during this quarter, primarily due to USAID and LCIP's desire to ensure that suitable and sustainable exit strategies were designed and delivered to assist DAI's implementing partners and beneficiaries of Phase 1 programming. Activities have primarily focused on the demobilization of staff, both international and local, and the closing of all grants activities, five of

the six regional offices, and a large warehouse. These actions have required large amounts of planning and have proven almost as challenging as the initial program start up activities.

The demobilization of staff this quarter has included three expatriates – the program Chief of Party (COP), the Monrovia Program Manager and the Social Reintegration Coordinator – and 64 local employees, 11 of whom were contract employees. In addition, the majority of the program’s regional offices have been closed (only the Zwedru office remains open) and the staff employed in these offices have also been demobilized. It is hoped that some of the previous Phase 1 local employees will be able to return as existing positions become available, but we anticipate the creation of new positions as well in order to respond to implementation needs. Short term staff used in this reporting period has been limited. An editor was hired to assist with preparing this report but no other STTA was required.

The majority of the LCIP’s Phase 1 grants have been closed during this quarter (grants initiated during Phase 1 total 365). A small number of grants are still outstanding due to activities in the field being incomplete. Some of the road programs have been hampered by the heavy rains in May and June making reconstruction difficult. Further delays have been experienced on the Monrovia program due to social and political complications. The road construction in Westpoint was delayed due to a store encroaching on the road and the owner refusing to move, despite being ordered to do so by the Ministry of Public Works. This situation has now been resolved. The engineering team will continue to work closely with the Ministry of Public Works to resolve these issues so all Phase 1 projects can be completed by the end of July.

## **Phase 2: Project Accomplishments**

Activities under Phase 2 were initiated during this reporting period, focusing on seven infrastructure rehabilitation projects. The following LCIP Phase 2 activities were selected by the Liberian Government as important requirements to have started under the “150 Day Action Plan”:

- Capitol Building renovations
- Zwedru Multilateral High School
- Basic grading – Ganta to Sanniquellie Road
- Basic grading – Buchanan to Rivercess Road
- Basic grading – Rivercess to Greenville Road
- Executive Mansion security enhancements
- Drilling of 15 deep well boreholes at key school locations in Monrovia

The progress of these projects over the last quarter has been heavily focused on design work to ensure effective implementation. Assessment work has started on all seven projects. Physical renovation works have only been carried out at the Executive Mansion. It is anticipated that all projects will be in full operation other than the roads by the end of August. The roads will be under reconstruction after the rainy season ends in October.

### Progress on the Capitol Building

Through the months of April, May and June several meetings were held between the LCIP, the Legislature, the Ministry of Public Works and USAID. Staff from LCIP and Milton & Richards (M&R), a local subcontractor grantee, tried to accommodate as many of the requests and requirements for the building as possible. A final design was produced in early May which required final endorsement by representatives from the Legislature. Unfortunately this was not granted, and many

other changes were requested which were beyond the project budget and original terms of reference. A letter was issued to the Speaker of the House from the US Ambassador requesting that the original agreement be adhered to.

The current options that are available and fit within the budget are as follows:

- Renovate the building to its original status (excluding power supply and elevators)
- Close in the ground floor parking area to provide additional office space and renovate the building to its original status

Representatives from the Legislature have not yet issued a written agreement to proceed with either of these options. Once a letter is issued to the LCIP the process will take approximately six weeks before work will start on the building. This will be dependent on approvals from USAID.

An expression of interest was jointly issued by the LCIP and the Ministry of Public Works. Responses were reviewed by a committee consisting of representatives from the Ministry; M&R; ACE Planning and the LCIP. 11 potential contractors have been short-listed at the time of writing. Two are still in contention and are pending the committee review and agreement.

#### Progress on the major road links

A contract was issued to M&R on 1 May for the pre-construction services of the three road segments. M&R and the Ministry of Public Works conducted an initial survey of all three roads during the month of May. A final survey was conducted in June and draft scopes of work and bills of quantities were submitted to the LCIP by M&R at the end of the quarter. These will be finalized in the next quarter.

During July, the LCIP and the Ministry of Public Works agreed on budgetary implications of what can be accomplished. The tender process will follow shortly thereafter.

During the rainy season the LCIP is planning to run a sensitization campaign to engage the communities and make them fully aware of the work to be conducted by the LCIP and the Ministry of Public Works. This will be conducted with the DFID funds, once the LCIP budget modification has been approved by USAID. We expect that repair and renovation of the roads activities will start around 15 October (1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of FY 2007), after the rainy season.

#### Progress on the Zwedru Multilateral High School

M&R began an assessment of the school in April. A contract was issued to M&R in May and the LCIP and M&R have been working closely with the Principal of the school to ensure that the key buildings are repaired. Final assessments have been completed and M&R submitted final reports to the LCIP for the bidding process to take place in July of next quarter. Work should commence in August.

#### Progress on the Executive Mansion security enhancement

Final agreement of the scope of work was confirmed at the beginning of April and the works tendered and completed by 17 April. The contract was awarded to the Liberian contractor Team Technical Inc. on 3 May 2006. Work started at the mansion on 8 May. The project duration is 150 days, approximately 20 weeks, and is due to complete on 30 September 2006.

#### Progress on the Deep Well Borehole Program

15 schools have been identified to benefit from this program. The schools have been selected by the LCIP Monrovia team in conjunction with the communities of Paynesville and Bushrod Island. They are as follows:

#### Paynesville

1. Church of God Junior High School (Bassa Town Community)
2. School of Christ (Soul Clinic)
3. Calvary Chapel Mission School (Rehap Community)
4. Sarbil Christian Community School (Parker Paint Community)
5. Pipeline Community School (Pipeline Community)
6. Dyufarter Ecumenical School System (12th houses Community)
7. Living Hope Christian Institute (LHCI/ Peace Island Community)

#### Bushrod Island

1. Carr's Community (Caldwell)
2. Bishop Doe Elementary School (New Kru Town)
3. Elizabeth Pratt Memorial School (St Paul Bridge)
4. Marvin Sonii (Clara Town)
5. St Martha Institute (Logan Town)
6. Mombo Town Elementary (Duala)
7. TBA (Free port)

An expression of interest for the wells to be drilled was release in May and all responses gathered the same month. Living Water International (LWI) is the IP selected to carry out the work. A grant was processed in June and has been approved by USAID. Funds were dispersed to LWI at the end of June for work to start in the next quarter.

### **Phase 2: Management Accomplishments**

Staff changes over the next quarter include the arrival of a new Finance Manager who will complete a full handover with the Phase 1 Finance Manager in order to ensure a smooth start up for Phase 2 grant activities.

Program activities expected in the next quarter include the tendering and commencement of projects to undertake road reconstruction in Buchanan, Greenville and from Ganta to Sanniquellie. Work is also expected to start on rebuilding Zwedru Multilateral High School. In addition, following this quarter's negotiations with the Legislator, the design on the Capitol Building will be finalized and confirmed. Work on the Executive Mansion is also expected to be completed in the next quarter.

### **Phase 2, DfID: Preparations**

A very positive outcome during this quarter has been the confirmation by DfID that they will provide funding of GBP 800,000 to be spent on Phase 2 related program implementation activities. The LCIP COP and Deputy COP have been in discussion with DfID about this funding since July 2005 so this outcome is a very positive step for LCIP and it is hoped it will mark the start of more active funding of RR and development projects in Liberia by the UK government. USAID signed the MOU on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2006 and we are now waiting for DfID's signature and the approvals of the work plan and budget by USAID.

The start up for the DFID program will also commence in the next quarter once the modification of the budget is approved. A formal work plan is being developed for the project being funded by DFID and was due for submission on 31 July. This document covers full detailed planning of the DFID program.

## LCIP Phase 1: Impact and Accomplishments

As the activities undertaken during this last quarter also mark the end of Phase 1 of the program, this report provides an ideal opportunity to look back over the LCIP's impacts and accomplishments thus far, along with any lessons learned to see what can be improved upon for future implementation. The following section summarizes the program's achievements by USAID/Liberia's SO and by IR, providing data to confirm the volume, location and thematic focus of the various activities undertaken. Both success stories and setbacks are also described in an attempt to highlight the various lessons learned and to ensure that these are fed into planned activities for Phase 2, in particular.

### *Background*

The Liberia Community Infrastructure Program (LCIP) was established as the US government's leading partner in the international effort for the Reintegration and Reconstruction (RR) of Liberia as outlined in the 2003 Ghana Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The program was initiated as a national effort supporting the reintegration of ex-combatants and other war-affected groups into their respective communities. Its 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 non combatants to work together. The LCIP also focuses on the economic and social rehabilitation of communities and the renovation of community structures. Activities have included agriculture, education, public work projects, vocational training, and social counseling.

At the start of the program it was agreed with all the stakeholders that the LCIP would work in the counties where the greater numbers of XCs were most likely to be or wished to return.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the LCIP has implemented projects in eight of Liberia's 15 counties – Grand Gedeh, Nimba, Bong, Lofa, Gbarpolu, Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, and Montserrado (minimal inputs were also carried out in Margibi and Grand Bass but were not areas of focus). The program's outputs fall within three key Intermediate Results (IR) categories which are under the country's Special Objective of *Community Revitalization and Reintegration*:

- IR1: Peace process and good governance enhanced
- IR2: Economic and social conditions exist at the community level to facilitate reintegration and rehabilitation of infrastructure
- IR3: Increased formal and non-formal learning opportunities

The program translated the three IR categories into three associated components as follows:

- **Psychosocial Counseling and Reconciliation** – this component includes community-based counseling and reconciliation activities conducted in conjunction with employment programs as well as public awareness and reconciliation services. A sports program, in particular soccer, for all participants and communities was a key psychosocial activity to engage communities and build peace between ex-combatants (XCs) and war-affected persons (WAPs).
- **Employment Generation** – this was the central effort to create jobs and employment opportunities through reconstruction activities for XCs and WAPs.

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<sup>1</sup> The program's key stakeholders are the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (NCDDRR) and the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

- **Formal and non-formal education** – the LCIP used its reconstruction component to create or enhance access to formal school and accelerated learning programs, associated on-the-job training opportunities, vocational and skills training.

The LCIP has been under continuous implementation since April 2004, during which time the program team has established offices in Monrovia and six outlying counties; hired over 100 national staff; procured vehicles, equipment, and critical materials; initiated collaboration with local NGOs, government agencies, and the private sector; developed an overall implementation strategy based on the evolving character of the UN Disarmament and Demobilization program that it supports; and initiated a broad range of field activities across the country. The project has successfully launched over 380 economic and social reintegration support grants (that total just over USD \$25,380,000) that have engaged over 25,000 participants (largely former combatants) in its public work jobs and training programs to date. It has developed integrated associated peace and reconciliation activities undertaken in communities around the country and has surpassed its annual targets.

### **Summary of Accomplishments**

A summary of LCIP Phase 1 accomplishments follows, organized by USAID's Strategic Objective and Intermediate Results that are relevant to LCIP activities. Each section is organized by a short introduction, followed by tables and charts to graphically depict accomplishments and outcomes (including a short analysis of key findings), and then by a section on key lessons learned as they relate to the SO and/or IR. The first section reviews the LCIP grants management results, and is included because grants were the key implementation mechanism to achieve the IR and SO results.

#### ***Grants Management***

The values of a small grants program such as the LCIP include being able to move funding into the field quickly; having time for the testing and vetting of implementing partners (IPs); and allowing for private sector capacity building and participation. Although it is recognised that 380 grants is not a large figure for many USAID-funded transition/humanitarian programs, the LCIP is a development program in a post-conflict country that poses unique challenges.

In order to address the various risk management issues associated with a grants program such as this, the LCIP established a "challenge grant" design, where funds were awarded to IPs in increments based on the attainment of interim performance milestones defined in the grant agreement. While this increased the LCIP's management burden, it reduced the burden on USAID and mitigated risks of lack of capacity and corruption to a large degree. All 380 grants awarded by the LCIP were completed during Phase 1, apart from a handful that had to be withdrawn. Withdrawn grants were typically due to continued or entrenched inadequacy or lack of capacity on behalf of the IPs, and an unwillingness or inability to change.

Another large risk management issue relating to grants was the payroll for the vocational training participants and work programs. The program undertook payroll for an average of 9,931 people every month. When the LCIP was at its highest capacity in May 2005, a total of 43 payrolls were completed for 17,324 participants. All these payment had to be made in cash, on a regular basis, and in regions where access was not always easy and posed certain security risks (particularly at the start of the program). Despite these challenges, the majority of the program's IPs were paid on time, as were the training and work program participants. In addition to grants payments, clear policies were also put in place with regards to the processing of payroll. All IP timesheets were checked and signed off by the

relevant LCIP Program Manager and checks were made with regards to the duplication of names and listing of possible ghost workers.

Out of a total contract budget of just over USD \$35 million, approximately 70% was allocated to grants and 30% went on program operating costs. Operating costs includes salaries for six expatriate staff, over 100 local staff, project office running costs, IT equipment, 25 vehicles, 5 motorcycles, travel and transportation costs, a warehouse and six regional offices. Phase 1 of the LCIP therefore had comparatively low operating costs compared to the overall value of grants issued and this is seen as a major achievement for a project of this size and scale.

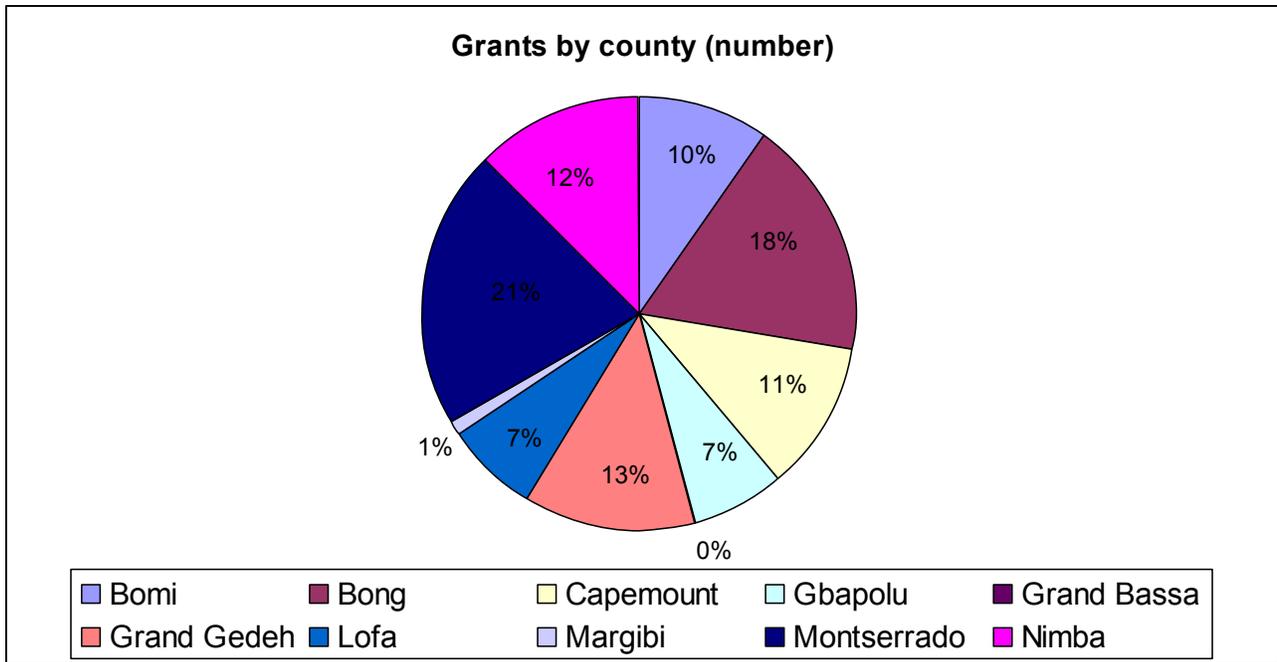
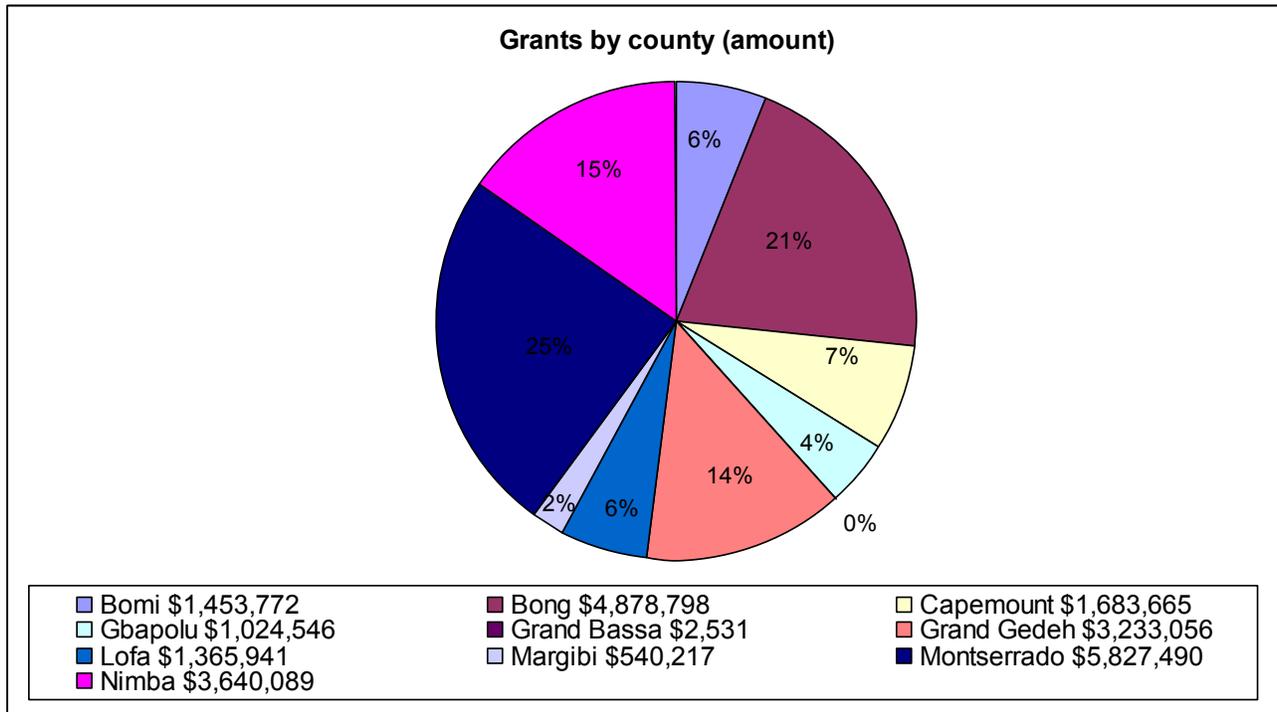


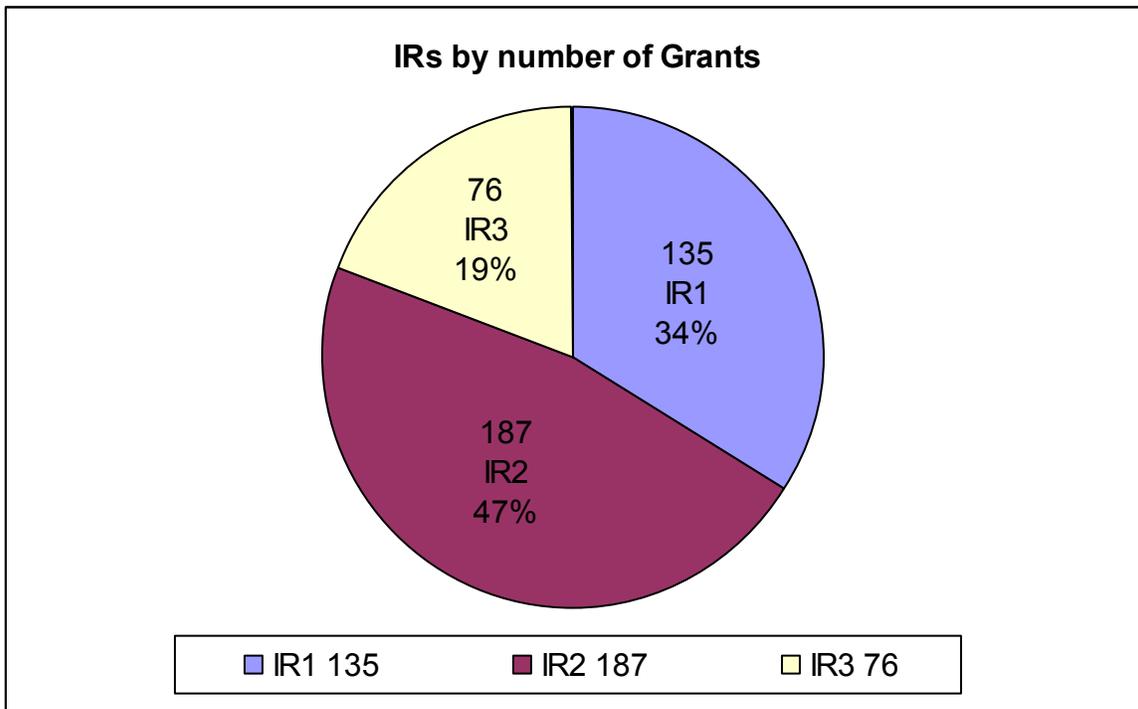
Figure 1

As can be seen in Figure 1 above, the LCIP managed to spread its distribution of grants evenly across the counties of focus. Minimal inputs were implemented in Grand Bassa and Margibi as these two counties were outside the geographical focus of the program.



**Figure 2**

Figure 2 depicts that the majority of funding was focused on Montserrado and Bong counties, followed by Grand Gedeh and Nimba. This was due to higher population numbers in these counties and therefore the higher concentration of ex-combatants based there.



**Figure 3**

Figure 3 shows that the majority of grants were issued under IR2, which constituted the jobs creation section of the program. At the start of the LCIP there were very few vocational training institutions available in the targeted counties. As institutions became available larger numbers of people were put through the program. Therefore grant interventions under IR3 were, as a result, smaller in total number compared to the numbers of grants under IRs 1 and 2.

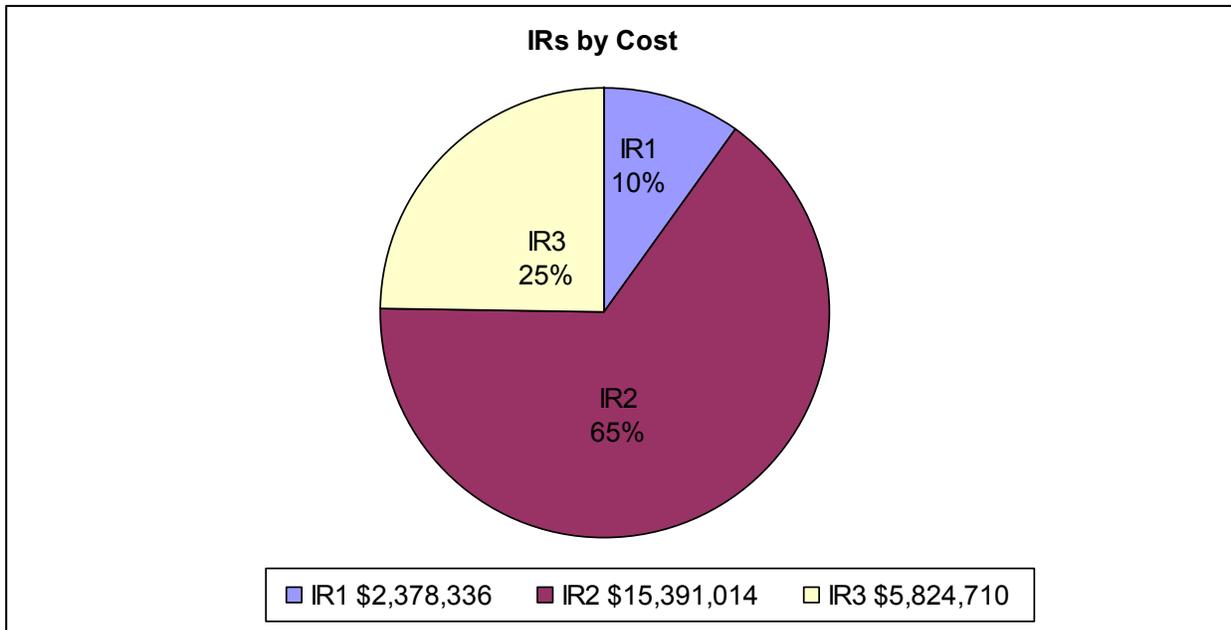


Figure 4

Figure 4 is indicative of the work of the LCIP. Over \$15 million was issued under IR2 creating jobs across Liberia. These programs included the payrolling and feeding activities of the project.

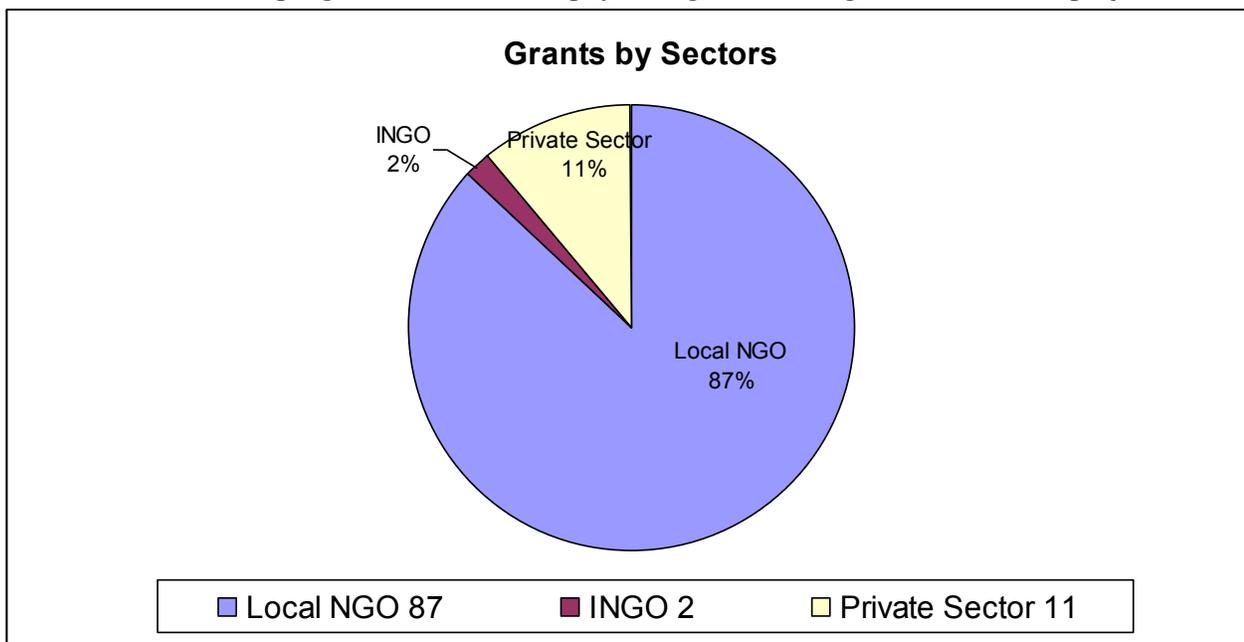


Figure 5

The LCIP's Phase 1 focus included the issuing of grants to local NGOs and the Liberian private sector. Figure 5 above clearly shows this is how the LCIP operated, with only 2% of all its grants going to international NGOs.

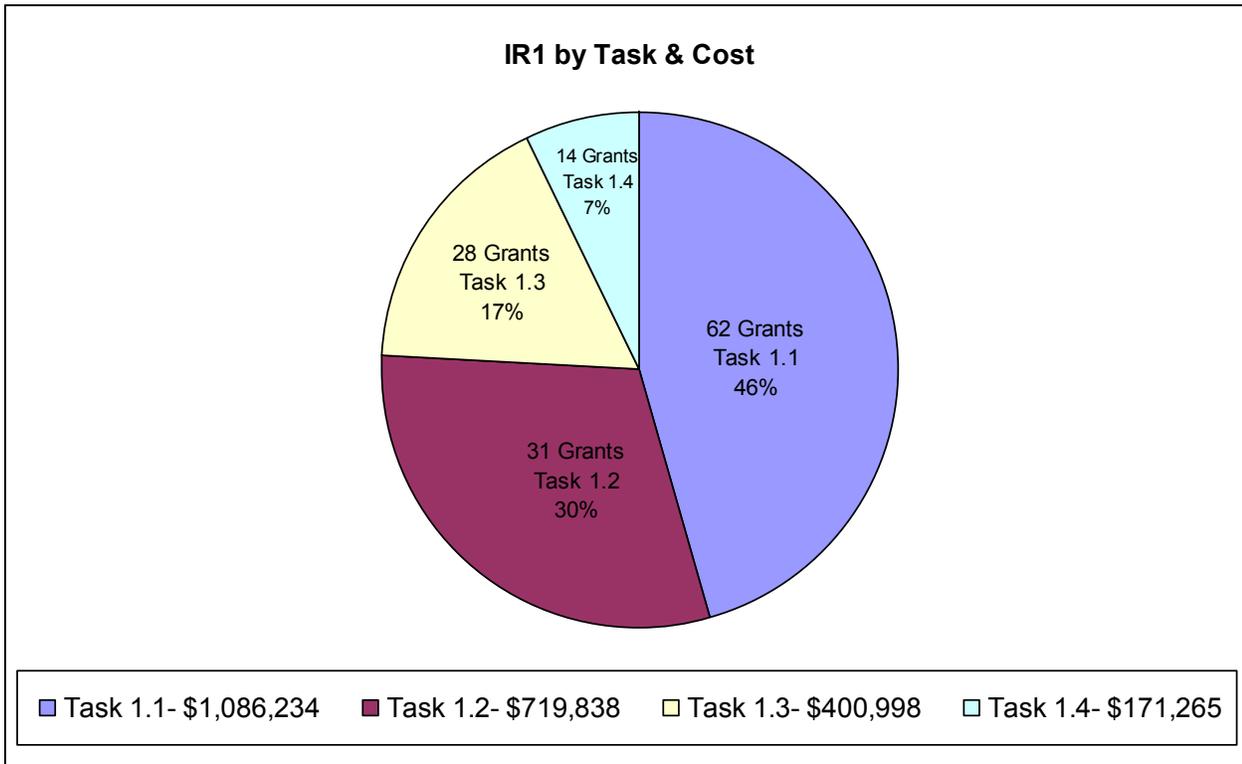
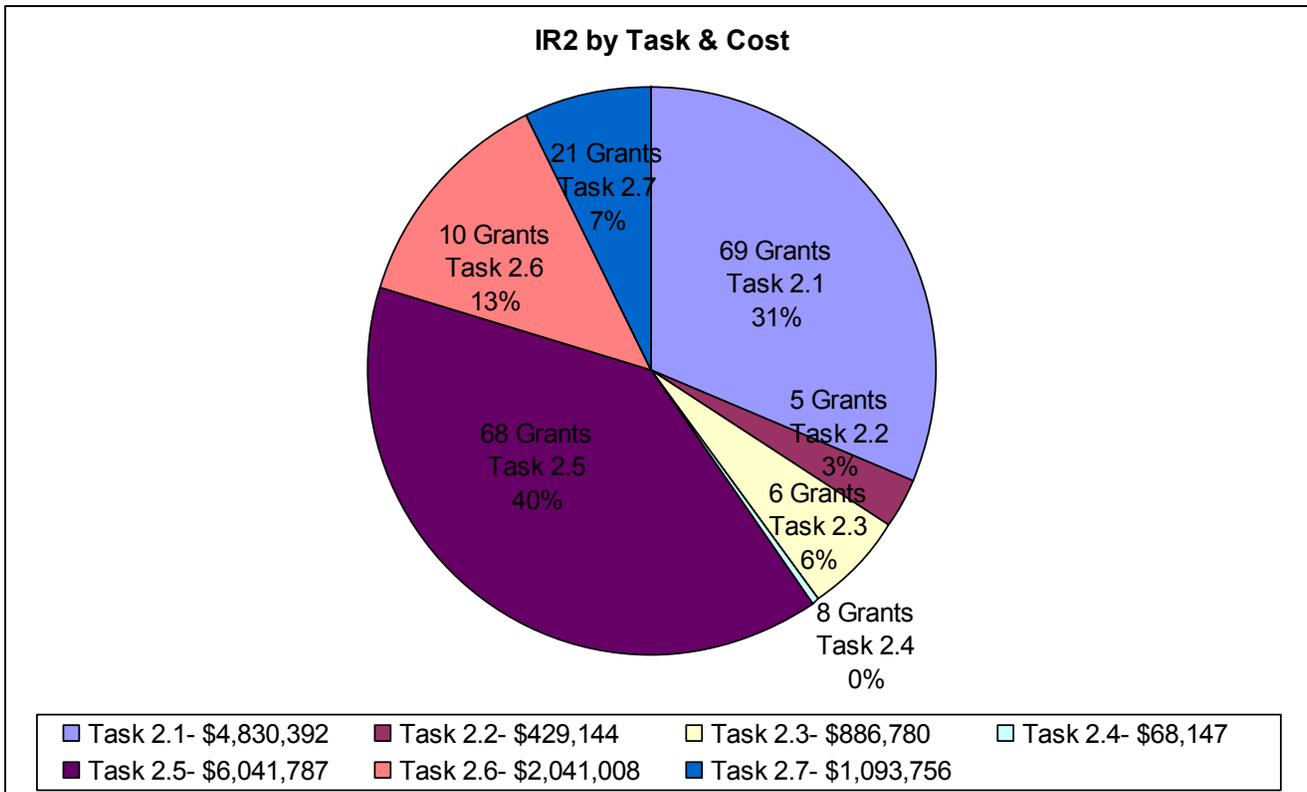


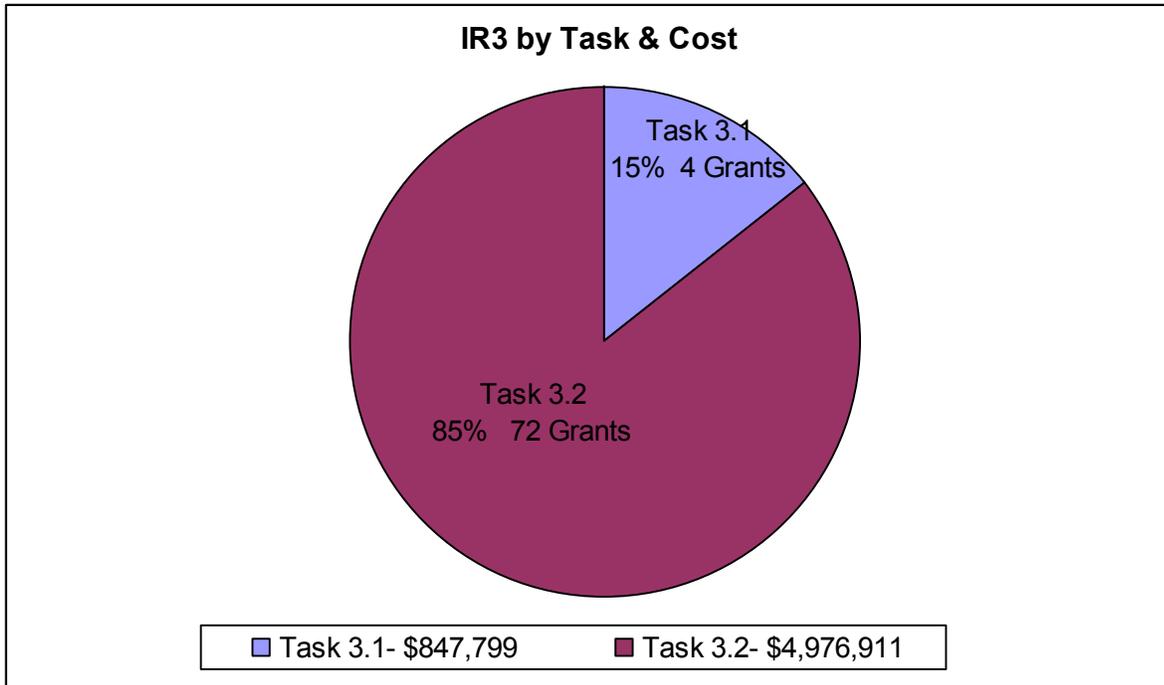
Figure 6

Under IR1, the LCIP concentrated the majority of its focus on community level counseling systems for ex-combatants to support the IR2 activities. Over \$1 million was spent on providing these services. A significant focus was also provided across the spectrum of IR1 activities however.



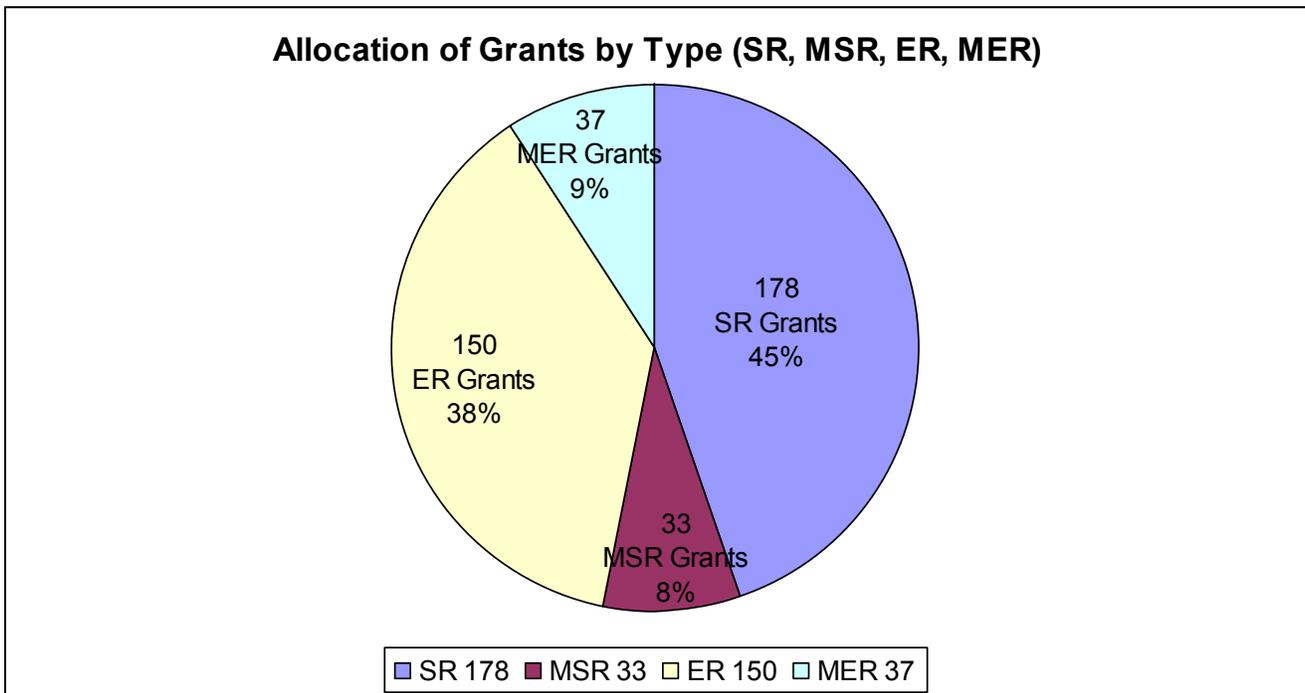
**Figure 7**

Liberia’s major source of sustainable employment in the immediate future is in agricultural based systems. For this reason, the LCIP invested over \$6 million into this activity. Due to the 14 years of civil war many of the road networks were covered by bush and in a state of major disrepair. The LCIP utilized vast numbers of ex-combatants in the engagement of clearing of bush and providing temporary road repairs. Just under \$5 million was used in the provision of this task.



**Figure 8**

The main focus of IR3 was to provide increased formal and non formal learning opportunities. Nearly \$5 million was allocated to vocational training while just under \$1 million went on the repair of educational facilities.



**Figure 9**

The LCIP issued grants under two major areas of focus: social reintegration (SR) and economic reintegration (ER). These two areas of focus were also prefixed with “M” for the Monrovia program, or no prefix for other parts of Liberia. Through the strength and diversity of the team, the spread of SR

and ER grants is relatively equal across the program. Although dollar value of the ER grants was higher, the above Figures indicate that a high amount of project resources were put into SR activities, which was crucial to the overall success of the project.

### **Lessons learned**

The private sector was a lot more responsive in terms of delivery of DDDR than was initially anticipated. The original focus at the early stages of the LCIP in 2004 was the utilization of Liberian NGOs as grant recipients. These were very effective in rapid mobilization, but represented lower value for money in terms of activity results and sustainable impact. In the later parts of 2004, the LCIP dedicated its infrastructure activities to utilizing the private sector exclusively.

A lot of the programming was based on LNGO and LCIP assessments. Therefore some of the activities were not always indicative of the needs of the ex-combatants and communities, but focused more on what the IPs could deliver. Understanding the status of Liberia in 2004, this was the most viable form of operation for rapid mobilization. A slower implementation of programming would have enabled the LCIP to engage more fully with IPs, building their capacity and the capacity of relevant GOL institutions, and laying a stronger foundation for sustainability.

### ***Rehabilitating Infrastructure (SO 6 Goal)<sup>2</sup>***

The Ministry of Public Works is the program's primary partner for infrastructure projects. The main goal under this Strategic Objective (SO) has been to train and establish labor intensive construction brigades, to rehabilitate roads, water systems, community buildings, clinics, homes and government offices that were destroyed or neglected due to 14 years of civil war. By June 2006, over 25,000 people have participated under this strategic objective.

LCIP has broken new ground in Liberia by working with Liberian-owned private sector entities to deliver DDDR-based infrastructure rehabilitation programs, and to great success. Liberian private construction companies were asked to participate in public bids on contracts for the renovation of buildings and roads, provided that the firms utilized ex-combatants for the majority of the labor. As per LCIP internal policy guidelines, all companies were Liberian-based and managed, and they were all fully registered with the Ministry of Public Works for the activities they performed.

The program 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. Also, many local companies improved their capabilities and capacities through effective project mentoring and monitoring by LCIP staff and core IPs. A secondary benefit has been that some of the ex-combatants that have been employed on these projects have gained permanent employment with their local construction companies. Although to date this permanent employment has been for only a relatively few beneficiaries due to the overall economic environment in Liberia and the fact that most businesses are still operating largely around the donor community, it is believed that these opportunities will continue to grow in the future.

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<sup>2</sup> As defined by USAID, Strategic Objective 6 relates to community revitalization and reintegration.

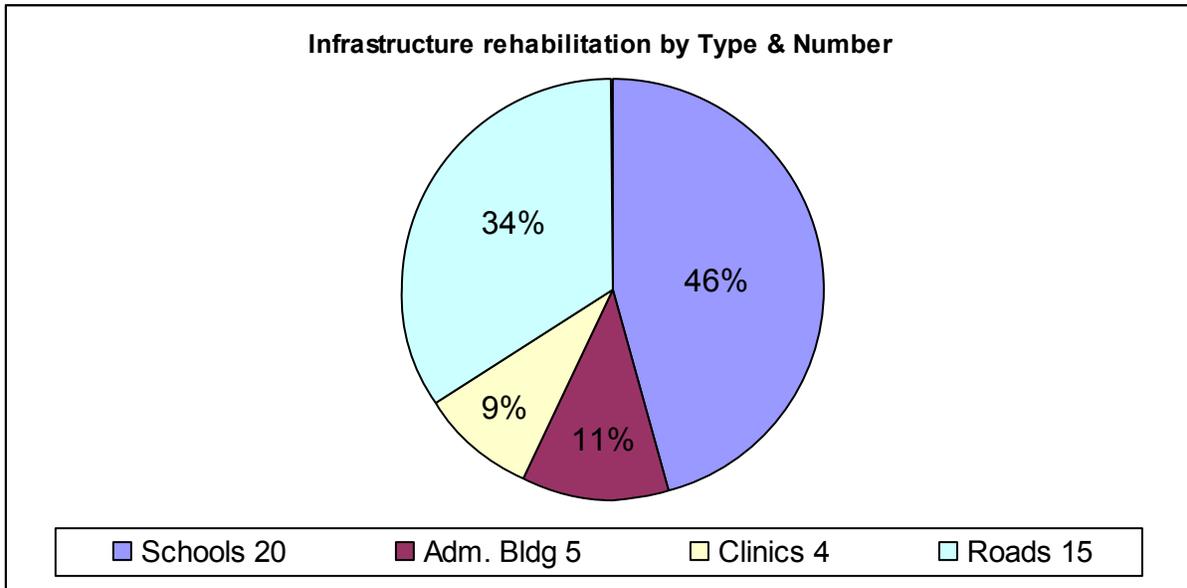


Figure 10

A total of 20 schools, five administration buildings, four clinics and 15 roads were opened during the LCIP Phase I. Although not included in Figure 10, a high-profile project undertaken by the LCIP was the painting of the Capitol Building in time for the inauguration of the newly-elected President in January 2006. A grant was provided to Living Water, one of the program's IPs, who employed recently graduates from their vocational training program to undertake the work.

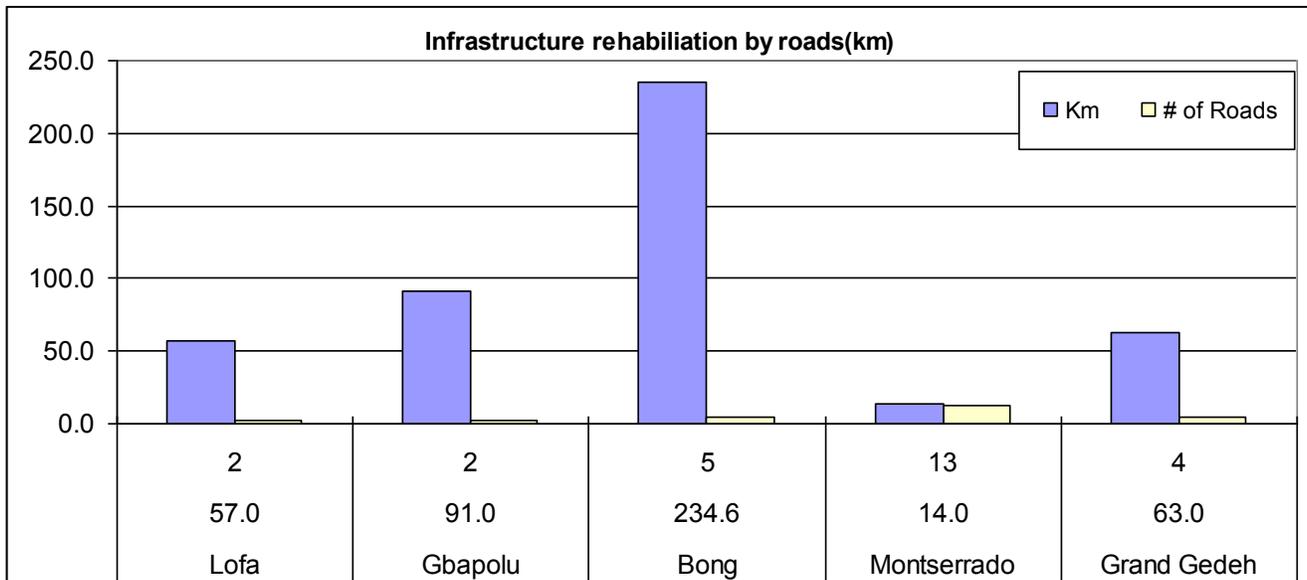
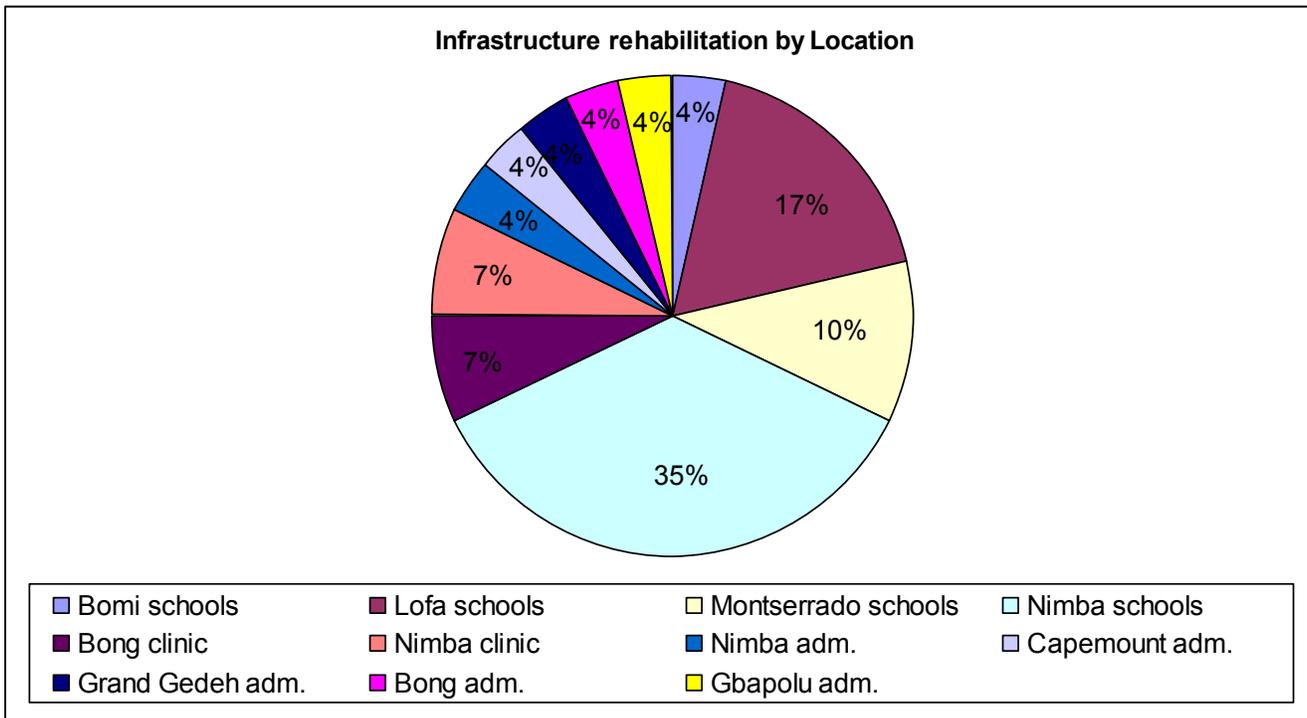


Figure 11

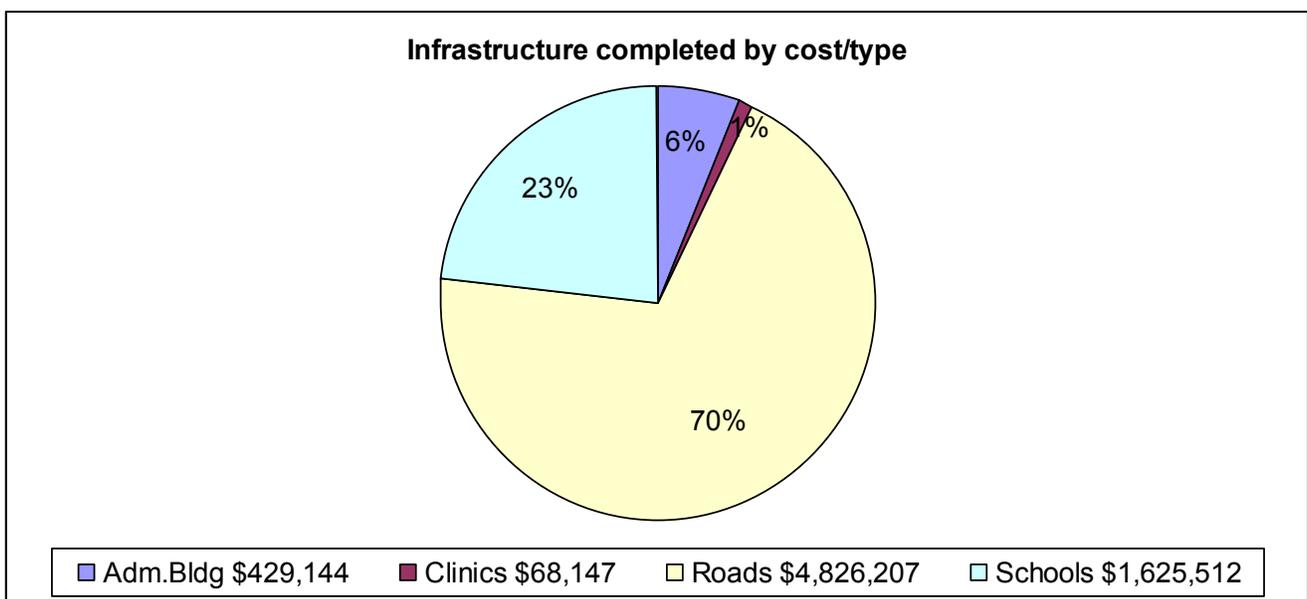
The LCIP worked on roads in five different counties. It rehabilitated a total of 26 roads for a total of 459.6 kilometers. Work undertaken included roadside brushing and pot hole repairing (both manually and mechanically). Bridge work was also undertaken, both repairs and construction, but is not shown in the chart. The largest road project, in Bong County, was officially opened during this quarter. The project received a grant of over \$1.4 million and was undertaken by three different contractors who

each worked on different sections. The road has linked over 40 rural communities together and was successful in getting former combatants and non combatants to work together.



**Figure 12**

During Phase 1 the LCIP rehabilitated a total of 20 schools, four clinics and five administration buildings. The counties where these public work projects were implemented are shown above. The high figure relating to schools in Nimba is because there were not sufficient rehabilitated government schools in the county so the Ministry of Education recommended that the LCIP focus in that region in particular. The LCIP undertook the work in Nimba in collaboration with the IRC who provided the „software’ for the schools (teachers, equipment, books, establishing PTAs, etc.).



**Figure 13**

Road rehabilitation projects cost the most as a total percentage of this type of activity, but resulted in large numbers of “person days employed” (PDE), one of the key performance indicators for LCIP Phase 1. The many development benefits of rehabilitating roads are described below. In addition to roads, the LCIP rehabilitated a high number of schools. Schools are less costly to repair than roads and were considered a key project deliverable by communities as the demand for education in post-war Liberia is high, both from XCs and WAPs of all ages.

### **The Impact of Road Rehabilitation on Communities**

The impact of road rehabilitation, particularly in rural communities, should not be underestimated. A poor road network is detrimental as it can make travel both expensive and extremely time consuming, and can result in higher death rates due to lack of access to basic services. This means that communities become isolated, have limited opportunities to earn an income, and mix less with their neighbors, which can result in increased levels of distrust and in turn, increased isolation. A well-maintained road network means that not only can RR focused projects access these communities more easily, therefore enabling and facilitating their work, but it also encourages people to return home. Roads bring new life to communities by allowing access to a greater network of services including schools, markets, small businesses, healthcare and local NGOs. Roads therefore facilitate the breaking down of social barriers and allow people to not only receive more help but encourage them to help themselves, for example by providing access to a weekly market, people are able to sell their produce and earn a regular income.

Where possible, the LCIP's partners renovated roads to a standard that was superior to their former condition, thereby allowing access during the rainy season. Similarly, culverts and bridges are of a sturdiness and quality that allows the passage of small trucks in order to encourage construction and market activities. Surveys and assessments were conducted by project staff in advance of any road maintenance operations, and the work was approved by local authorities and supported by UNMIL wherever possible.

### **Lessons learned**

Infrastructure and agriculture projects require hard labor and a well-fed, active workforce. A lot of the infrastructure projects relied on manual labor in large quantities. Providing laborers with a hot lunch, often their only meal of the day, proved very effective in ensuring they remained committed to the projects and turned up for work. Also, the sharing of a meal between ex-combatants and WAPs was instrumental in breaking down the social barriers between the two groups.

Do not underestimate the capacity of local private sector contractors to implement large infrastructure projects. Despite initial reservations, the decision by the program to only work with Liberian contractors did not cause many problems. In general, they had the capacity and skills required and delivered work of reasonable quality. The benefits of working with Liberian contractors included building the capacity of local organizations, which allowed them to compete with international contractors and employ significant numbers of Liberians, thus helping sustain the economic revitalization of the country.

A national shortage of equipment and materials needs to be taken into account when planning interventions in post-conflict countries. With so much construction and rehabilitation taking place throughout Liberia, locally available equipment and materials began to be depleted. This caused delays in infrastructure activities and/or significant increases in prices for materials. For example, the price of concrete increased during Phase 1 of the LCIP project. The possibility of importing the required items from other countries needs to be considered at the program planning stage so there is sufficient budget available.

A parallel and simultaneous social reintegration component is necessary for the success of post-conflict reconstruction projects. This helps to depoliticize the project activities which may risk becoming associated with a specific group. It also encourages open and honest discussion, therefore breaking down any social barriers that might otherwise inhibit the progress of reconstruction projects.

Community infrastructure projects require community outreach from implementers to encourage success and acceptance. Organizations need to show willingness to work with the community and local NGOs where they are delivering project activities as this assists with encouraging communities to accept the infrastructure project as something beneficial for them and to take ownership of the projects once they are completed.

Short-term construction is best included in Phase 1 of any RR activities as many of the construction projects provide temporary employment and last only 3-4 months. Longer-term construction activities (minimum 8-9 months) can produce positive results through job placement and on-the-job training for vocational training programs.

### ***Economic Renewal (SO 6 Goal)***

The most effective way of encouraging economic renewal is by providing employment. Beyond the immediate benefits – keeping a potentially disruptive group gainfully employed and reconstructing basic public services – employment helps to break a culture of dependency and encourages the renewal of struggling communities.

#### **Encouraging Economic Renewal via Apprenticeship Programs**

In order to respond to the growing need to both jump-start the private sector and also provide long-term skills and job opportunities for former combatants in Monrovia, the LCIP developed the Monrovia Micro-enterprise Apprenticeship Program (MAP). The program was designed to provide training for ex-combatants in a business environment, while at the same time providing added value to the participating businesses by replacing critical tools and equipment that was damaged or destroyed during the war.

MAP differed from other skills-related initiatives by providing the opportunity for training within an operating business rather than in a classroom environment. A total of 59 businesses were chosen to take part in the program. They took a combined 447 apprentices in seven sectors of concentration: bakeries, hair dressing, beauty salons, electronics repair shops, car maintenance, metalworking shops and tailoring shops. These are business sectors in which there is a vibrant and growing level of demand, and which will provide the opportunity both for future employment and for starting up new businesses in almost any county in Liberia.

The apprenticeships took place on the business premises and under the supervision of experienced business owners in the different sectors over a period of seven months. Recognizing that many such businesses were largely destroyed during the war, MAP provided a range of support including repair of the business premises, the supply of a range of tools and raw materials, and a generator if required. In addition, they were given a series of trainings on small business management, including how to keep financial records. In return, the owners agreed to provide food each day for the apprentices, and to keep 10% of the businesses' monthly revenue to give to the apprentices at the end of the program. The apprentices also received a set of tools and were awarded a certificate upon successful completion of the program syllabus.

With the additional labor provided by the apprentices, the businesses in this program thrived during the training period. By February 2005, they were reporting combined gross sales of USD \$32,200, or an average of \$545.75 per shop. Considering that the average government salary for teachers and policemen at this time was roughly USD \$30-50 per month, these businesses generated a great deal of income for themselves during this program. This is a tribute to the level of impact a small intervention in the private sector can have.

In the winter of 2004 the LCIP conducted an informal survey of 14 rural towns in Liberia, in order to establish a baseline for determining the impact of stability and recovery on the economy. The survey was designed to ask demographic and economic questions – including rural credit, basic infrastructure, and the perception of ex-combatants. The survey results were also used to assist in the design of LCIP reconciliation and reconstruction activities. Two villages/towns were selected in each county where LCIP was active, including:

- Gbarpolu county (Gaynimah and Bopolu towns)
- Grand Gedeh county (Zleh and Tuglor/Ziah towns)
- Lofa county (Beyan and Borkeza towns)
- Nimba county (Zuluyee and Kpein towns)
- Bomi county (Sawmill town and Sasstown)
- Capemount county (Zaway and Sinje towns)
- Bong county (Raymond and Palala towns)

Then in the summer of 2006, the LCIP team conducted a second informal survey in the same rural towns in order to document the changes that have occurred in the intervening time, and to help design follow-on activities for LCIP, including the DfID funded Phase 2 activities. Overall, there was marked positive change in the surveyed communities, particularly in the towns and villages in Bong and Capemount counties. In three out of the four villages in these counties, this improvement seems to be strongly correlated with an improvement in the roads near or in the village. Across the board, all villages experienced an increase in population (an increase greater than 63%). This data could indicate both that war affected populations desire to return to their villages of origin and that community members are generally open to the return of ex-combatants and other persons. While findings from the 2006 survey also demonstrates that there is economic recovery occurring in the rural villages, the data suggests that economic recovery is not a sufficient explainer of the return of the war affected populations – the population increase is far greater than the economic recovery would suggest.

One community in Bomi did not accept ex-combatants back into their community prior to 2005 – but now accept them as brothers and sisters, as their children, and as community members.  
-- Sawmill Town representative (2006)

A second strong trend is that the numbers of NGOs (both International NGOs and local) has fallen by over a third since 2004 across all the villages and towns surveyed. In 2004 there were a number of INGOs, in particular, working to reconstruct housing, improve the water supply, and reconstruct other village infrastructure. Since then, this reconstruction effort has fallen off, where significantly few new houses and reconstructed housing have been built in the intervening period of time. This finding, in combination with the huge increase in population, has resulted in the prioritization for more housing expressed by almost all village representatives surveyed. It will be critical over the next year to continue and perhaps ramp up the reconstruction of infrastructure in order to support the returned populations – and to build incentives to remain instead of moving to the overburdened areas around Monrovia.

Other key findings include:

- *A 93% increase in the numbers of functioning schools.* This is a clear improvement, and was a significant need expressed in 2004 within all communities surveyed. It also warrants well for families in the rural areas, as schooling is critical to the recovery of the country.

- *A 41% increase in the numbers of functioning hand-pumps.* Never-the-less, the communities surveyed in 2006 suggest that there is still considerable room for improvement, in order to maintain the recovery at the rural village and town levels.
- *An overall 37% increase in the numbers of commercial organizations* (shops, stalls, and roadside sellers). In particular, the number of operating shops showed the greatest improvement (almost 40%) while the numbers of sellers (without physical infrastructure of a shop or stall) improved at a lower level (only 28%). This could be a proxy indicator of the community investment in the continued recovery.
- *Nearly a 12% increase in local manufacturing.* While this is a good overall indicator of the recovery at the local level, several villages experienced a significant reduction in the numbers of local manufacturing outfits (particularly in Bopolu Town, Zleh Town,, and Sasstown). This should be investigated further to test the findings from the survey and explore whether a response is required.
- *A 6% increase in the numbers of pit latrines.*
- *Over a 3% decrease in functioning/usable housing* (as measured by new zinc roofs). In part, this finding is due to the huge effort to rebuild housing in 2004, at the same time of the DAI/LCIP survey. In part, the data shows that there was a serious deterioration in housing in Palala Town and Beyan Town. This finding should also be investigated further.
- *Unclear changes in electrical supply* – a very few communities showed improvement, but others demonstrated a deterioration of electrical supply. This suggests a critical need within rural population centers.
- *No change in the numbers of functioning health clinics.* The 2004 survey found that most communities had one functioning health clinic accessible by community members; it is likely that additional health centers are not required given other community priorities and needs at this time.
- *No positive change in the availability and sources of credit.* Indeed, in many of the villages and towns surveyed in 2006 the informal networks that were operating in 2004 seem to have disappeared, resulting in a further degradation of the availability of credit.
- *Evidence of significant changes in the supply sources for goods and products,* but no clear trend in the changes. This suggests that people are freer to move around the country (and outside the country as well) in order to procure goods and products.

Overall, the DAI/LCIP 2006 survey suggests that the economic recovery and reconciliation process underway in Liberia is on a positive trajectory. However, it also suggests that this improvement is still fragile, that there continue to be serious unmet needs within rural community populations. With the decline in the numbers of NGOs and relief organizations working with these rural communities, it is critical for development-oriented organizations to step in and work with community members to continue to build for the future.

### **Lessons learned**

The timing of all interventions is critical to the success of economic renewal projects within RR programs. This includes knowing when the rains will occur, growing season cycles, and movement of peoples.

Access is of paramount importance. A priority focus on the (re)construction of roads and bridges increases access to markets, education, and other developmental activities, therefore encouraging economic renewal.

Supporting the rural private sector is the key to economic renewal. Programs in a vacuum will not help the rural economy recover. There must be a business platform for training people to allow them to apply their trade and make income that is not supported purely by donor funding.

Urban and peri-urban centers should be the areas of focus for small business recovery. This is an obvious lesson learnt but rarely noted. The recovery of the small business sector occurs in the urban centers first and then spreads further into the rural environs.

Economic renewal needs to work on existing platforms. The program should not create new businesses but build on existing ones and help them develop and train others. An artisan or a business owner who has run a business for some time knows there is a market and can advise others on how to access it.

The market is the single most important aspect of economic renewal. The training of skill sets in RR programming must be inline with market need or possible future needs. The support of businesses needs to also reflect market attitudes and trends.

### ***Communities/Participants (IR1)***

The program approach practiced in this IR entailed talking, listening, and engaging XCs and WAPs in order to allow them to share their experiences in a safe environment. This was an approach where the social, physical, and psychological needs of the XCs and WAPs were addressed holistically. The LCIP ensured that all of the persons and communities targeted had access to the social reintegration opportunities available through the project. The LCIP also organized community support groups which were encouraged to develop joint community and livelihood ventures, 1,100 of which were financed through the project.

As a pre-cursor to the reconciliation activities, LCIP staff conducted conflict assessments at the village level in an effort to ensure that the program was responding to the appropriate communities and the most pressing issues of concern. The program then trained project staff who in turn trained community members to assist in these assessments in the subsequent community reconciliation work to be carried out. Most of these participants came through the local partner NGOs staff, community groups and associations and the ex-combatants working in the core focus of the program.

The creation and development of Community Development Committees made up a key part of this IR. They were active in identifying project activities in their communities and worked closely with the IPs as projects were being implemented. The establishment of CDCs was important as it led to a degree of sustainability of both social and economic activities once the LCIP withdrew from these communities.

### Utilizing Cultural Traditions to Revitalize Communities

While the core focus of the LCIP involves rebuilding community infrastructure through paid labor, in Western Liberia's Grand Cape Mount County, the program opted to employ a local tradition that had flourished for generations prior to the civil war. Known as the *kuu* system, village members contributed free labor to projects for the benefit of the entire community. In this case, NWDA (a local Implementing Partner) organized the beneficiaries from the villages into mini *kuu* groups where they helped each other to re-build their houses and build a community cultural center where a traditional shrine had previously existed. More than 100 ex-combatants worked together along side 45 non combatants, three from each of the 15 affected villages, to rebuild these structures. The ex-combatants represented different religious and ethnic groups, and approximately 25% of them were women. Everyone in the villages participated according to their abilities. The unskilled young men dug the foundations for the shelters; women fetched water to make the blocks as well as did the cooking; local qualified masons and carpenters were hired to lay the bricks, to do the roofing, the plastering and to install the doors and windows. Some of the skilled laborers were recent graduates of LCIP vocational training programs in carpentry and masonry. Working together, these community members embody the spirit of post-war community reconciliation and rehabilitation.

Communities Participating in LCIP by Location & Number

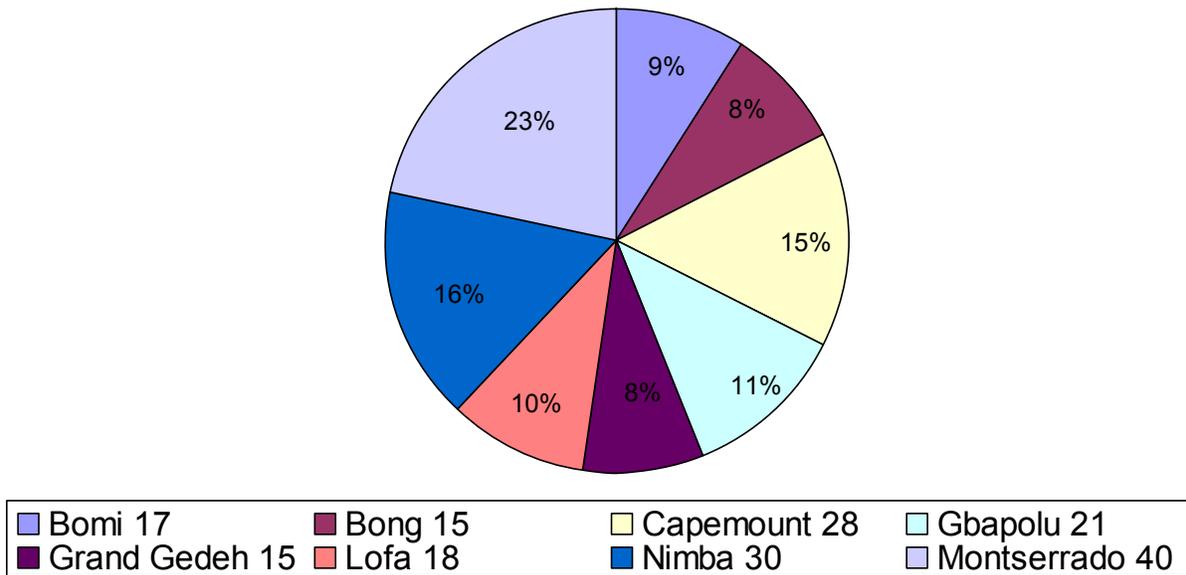
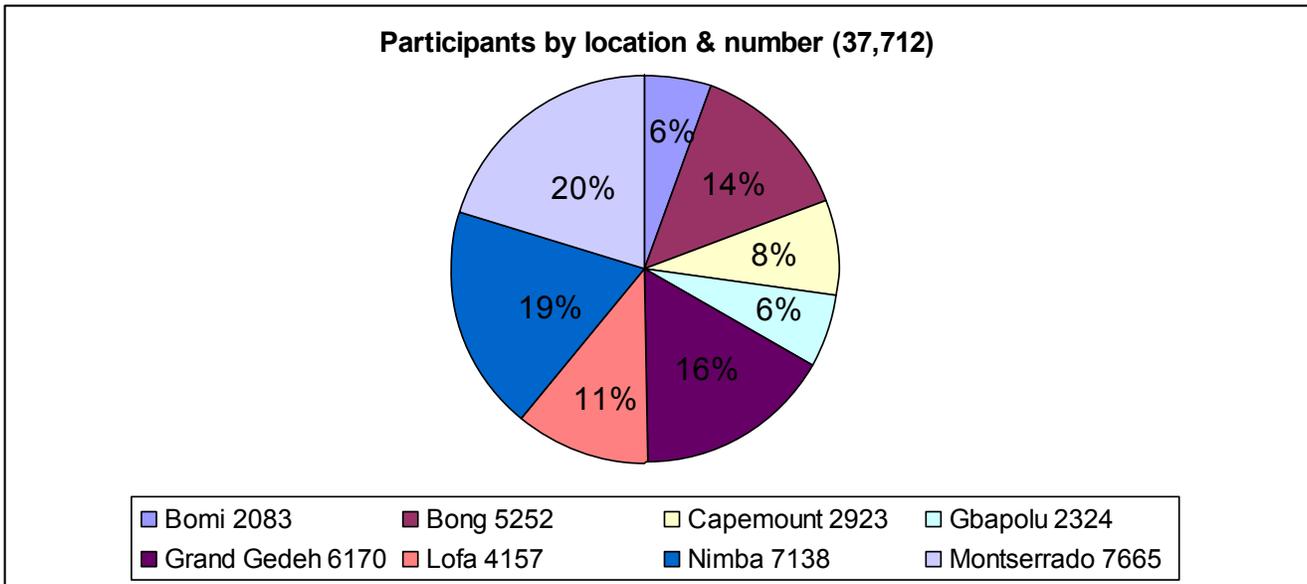


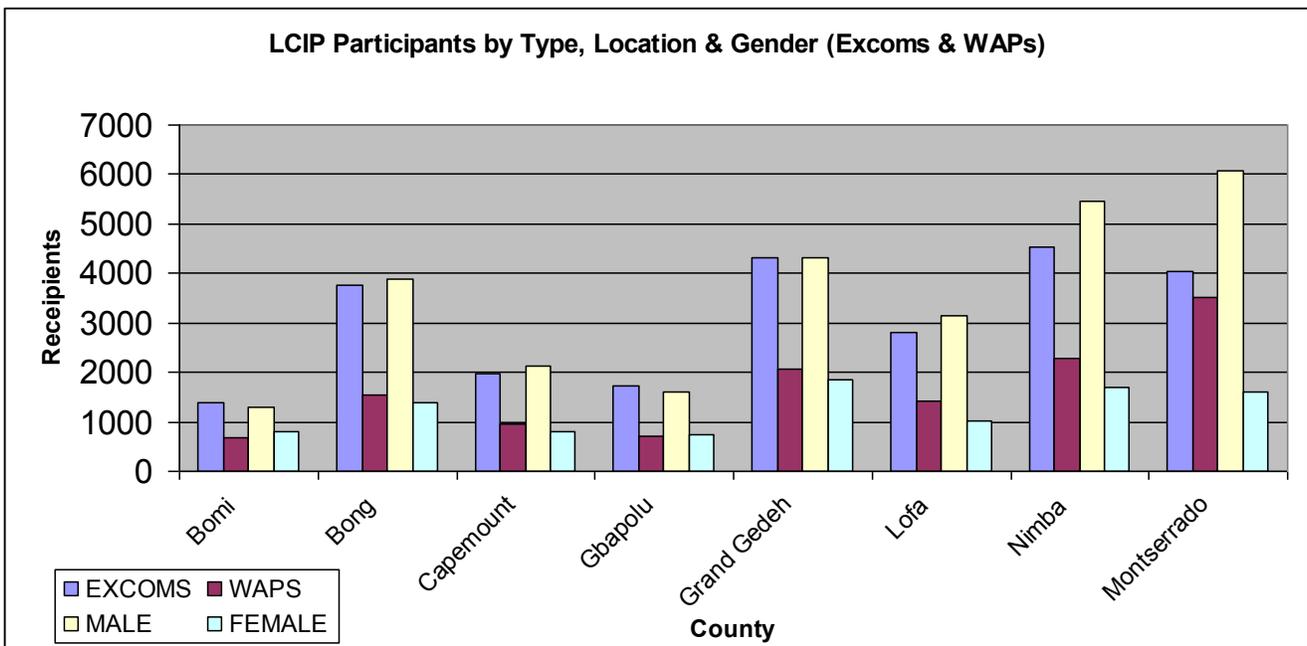
Figure 14

These communities were actively involved with LCIP activities for the duration of Phase I. The communities were chosen either because they had a high number of former combatants living there or wishing to return there; or because they were ideally located for work or training programs and could be easily accessed by participants.



**Figure 15**

People participating in LCIP projects worked from 30 days up to 365 days. They would not be counted as participants if they had not worked or undertaken training for a minimum of 30 days.



**Figure 16**

The higher ratio of ex-combatants participating in projects in Bong, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Nimba, and Montserrado is due to the location of initial fighting. There remain a higher number of ex-combatants in these counties therefore. Montserrado has a high number as many XCs have decided to remain in Monrovia rather than return to their home communities for fear of reprisal. The low number of female participants is due to the majority of the projects being very labor intensive (roadside brushing, swamp digging, etc.) and women would not traditionally be involved in these activities. Also, from the LCIP's total number of 25,000 participants, 18,000 were supposed to be XCs and 7,000 WAPs. This focus on

XCs, the majority of whom are male, meant a limited number of women were involved in the program from the outset.

#### **More than M&E – the LCIP Evaluates and then Adapts**

In April 2005, one year after DAI began implementing the LCIP, the program carried out an independent appraisal involving interviews with community members, religious and ethnic group leaders, and the excombatants themselves of the project's social integration component. The evaluation team concluded that this project component was not delivering adequate results. LCIP decided to be far more proactive in social reintegration and chose 33 volatile communities that have a high number of excombatant residents as well as a history of violence to focus their reconciliation and social reintegration efforts. With LCIP funding, two social implementing partners, Liberian Democratic Institute (LDI) and the Buchanan Child Community Based Care (BUCCOBAC) have focused on encouraging interaction between the excombatants and war-affected people, leading the communities in developing conflict mitigation techniques, as well as planning reconciliation, sports and recreation events. Initially, excombatants kept to themselves, rarely interacting with other community members. But through public forgiveness and reconciliation ceremonies, communities have allowed them to socially return to be a part of the larger group. This community-based approach shows how, with a consistent intervention over a period of months, fractured communities with frayed social capital can begin to meet on issues of common interest, and can begin to repair their damaged relationships.

#### **Lessons learned**

Focus on pre-existing community mechanisms and structures and utilize them as far as possible. Not only does this assist with familiarizing people with the kind of activities the program is focusing on but it encourages involvement and ownership as recipients will find the approaches easier to relate to.

Ensure that communities participate in the planning and execution of activities. Not only is this very rewarding for program staff working with these communities but it also instills a sense of hope and ownership of the activities, therefore encouraging support for them.

Combine social processes with tangible economic and livelihood activities. This combination assists with enforcing social processes that contribute to psychosocial healing and reconciliation among communities.

#### ***Counseling (IR1)***

Based on the needs and realities on the ground, the LCIP developed a psychosocial counseling approach based on sensitization and community-based interventions, including cultural and sporting activities. A key component of the approach was to include Liberian reconciliation traditions in the program's activities. This included inviting the "zoes" (spiritual healers), elders and traditional healers to provide 'wise counsel' to deserving ex-combatants to encourage behavior change among both the community members and ex-combatants and to advance integration into civilian life. In addition, the LCIP worksites, skills training centers, "Palava" (grassroots conflict resolution), sports and cultural activities provided the space for mainstreaming psychosocial support and providing counseling to former combatants and war-affected persons.

As work brigades were established, the LCIP conducted psychosocial assessments of the groups with which it was working. This included principally the XCs and others participating in the public work programs and initially took place during the lunch hour. It entailed basic counseling and aimed to promote reconciliation among the participants, helping to lay the foundation for follow-up activities at

the community level in which the ex-combatants were returning or are intending to return. Participants in the public work programs were encouraged to join in the recreational activities, particularly soccer matches, which were seen to help foster a sense of community and break down the existing divisions and tensions. As the LCIP expanded more broadly into the communities in 2006, it was able to support the establishment of similar recreational activities to encourage interaction not just among program participants but among the communities themselves.

There are many stories told by the elders that point in the direction of healing and forgiveness. In an effort to ensure effective integration of ex-combatants, the LCIP has taken the initiative to adapt traditional spiritual healing practices such as “Zalakai/Zalayei” in Lofa, “Heenagee” in Bomi, and the “Homecoming” in Bong County. These practices provide an arena where ex-combatants can be forgiven and accepted back into the community.

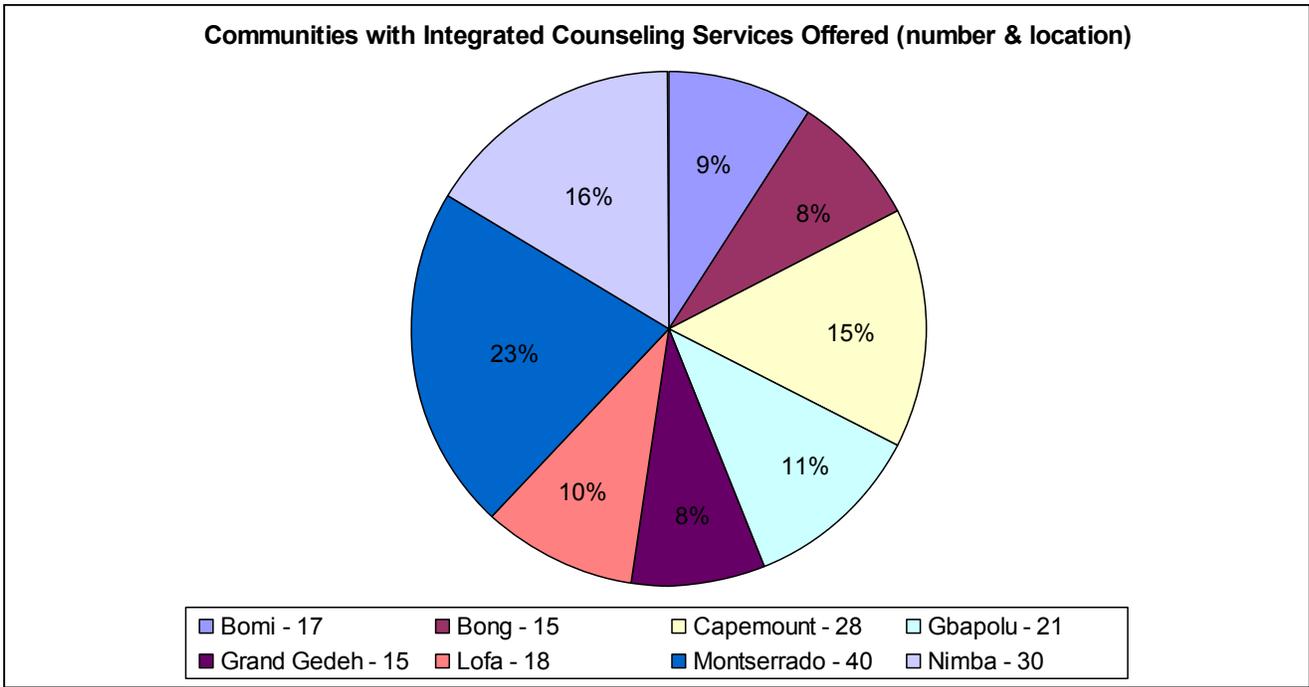
#### **Reconciliation through Traditional Cleansing Ceremonies in Lofa County**

Many traditional control systems that guaranteed the sense of safety and co-existence in Liberian community life were destroyed during the war. In pre-war Liberia, ceremonies were used by different tribal groups to honor the dead, settle disputes and to unite family and community members. All 16 tribes in Liberia practice these traditions which involve activities such as drumming, dancing, weeping, forgiving, animal sacrifice and sharing a sacred meal of reconciliation.

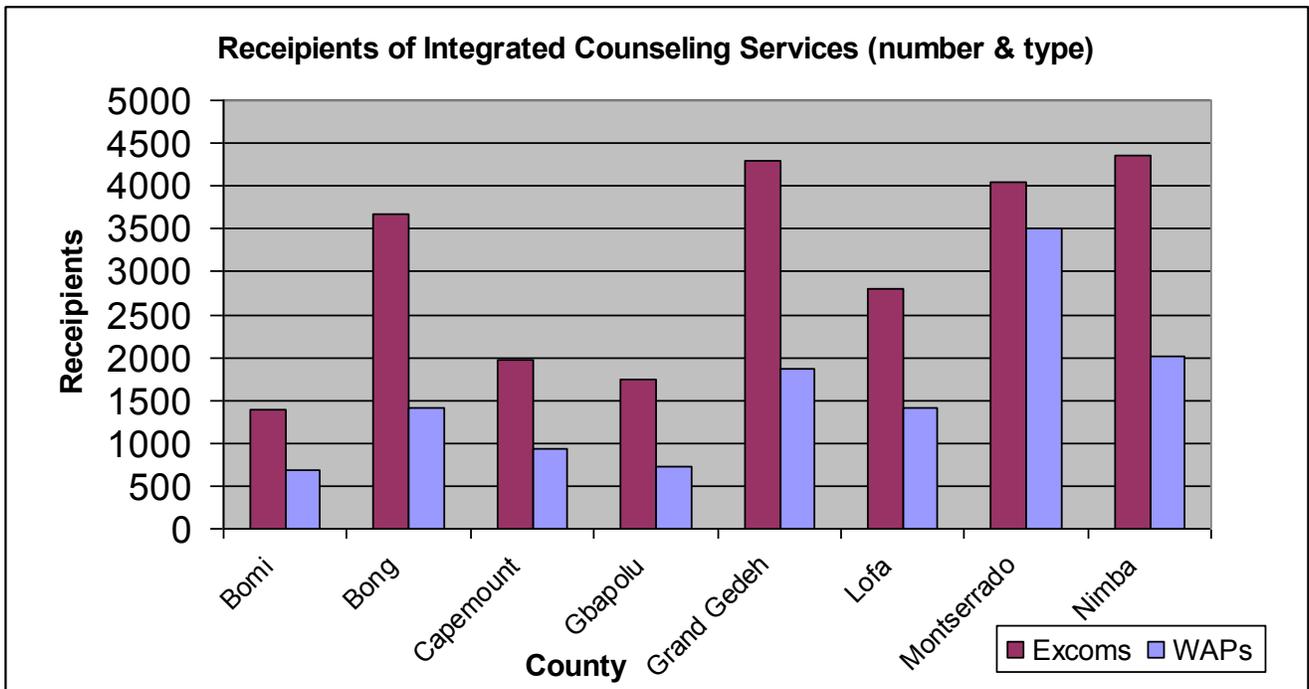
The general consensus from those who participated in the LCIP conflict analysis exercise was that failure to perform these ceremonies was holding people back from moving on to peace. The LCIP therefore decided to support the undertaking of reconciliation and cleansing ceremonies, or *Zalakai/Zalayei*, in an effort to encourage the reintegration of ex-combatants and peaceful co-existence. Ex-combatants saw the process as an opportunity for repentance for the wrongs they committed, which were the main barriers to their return and reintegration into their communities.

Lofa County was selected as the starting point for these ceremonies due to the intensity of the historical conflict between the Lorma and Mandingo ethnic groups. The ceremonies entailed appeasing tribal ancestors and cleansing the land and desecrated holy sites. IPs, elders and community representatives encouraged people to participate and the events were widely publicized. Various events took place in the respective communities and a final peace festival was held involving both Lorma and Mandingo leaders. More than 8,000 people turned out to witness the sacrificing of a sacred cow at the bank of river Lofa, where the waters are believed to carry away all the impurities from the communities. The festival concluded with a written Peace Declaration. After the ceremonies, the relaxed atmosphere among citizens was noticeable and was demonstrated by the willingness of ex-combatants and war affected persons from different ethnic groups to engage in joint livelihood ventures.

The UNHCR filmed the various ceremonies and the final peace festival and screened the film in Liberian refugee camps in neighboring Guinea. Following the screenings they reported a high influx of voluntary returnees.



**Figure 17**



**Figure 18**

All the communities in which the LCIP implemented projects were offered counseling services. These included group counseling, one to one sessions, and traditional memorial, healing and cleansing ceremonies. In total, it is estimated that 36,406 people have benefited from some form of psychosocial counseling. As the LCIP supported several „training of trainers’ workshops for IPs and other USAID support NGOs providing psychosocial services, it is felt that this number could be greater due to replication in other communities where the LCIP may not have implemented programs.

Program counseling services were initially provided during the lunch period while former combatants participated in the various public work programs. This was found to be a relatively short time, however, so in order to improve the impact of the scheme the LCIP established community-level counseling services instead. To assist with planning and implementing these services, an experienced psychologist was invited to train LCIP staff, program partner NGOs and other USAID partners focusing on psychosocial interventions at the community level.

The participating communities and representatives were selected based on the numbers of XCs and others participating in the work projects. By using local NGOs, the LCIP was able to complete a first course on reconciliation, conflict resolution and psychosocial healing by mid-August 2005. The second level of equipping community animators with skills in conflict resolution and psychosocial counseling began in September, when a total of 90 community animators (three per community) were trained. The communities initially chosen for the detailed counseling services were those with the highest levels of ex-combatants. Approximately 12,000 people from 92 communities are estimated to have benefited from this intervention as the average population of the villages identified is approximately 400.

### **Lessons learned**

Counseling services need to be implemented in an integrated manner from the start of any DDRR program. Donors need to take the psychosocial aspects of these programs into account when drafting the initial Scope of Work and provide specific funding for related activities.

There needs to be a deliberate effort to train and equip program staff with the basic skills required. There is a general lack of suitably experienced staff in this field and this was compounded by the lack of capacity on the ground which meant the LCIP team had to train locals from scratch. This was time-consuming and program staff had not been adequately prepared to do this.

#### **Memorial Ceremony at Massacre Site Paves the Way for Community Reconciliation**

In July 2002, a militia group arrived in a community in Western Liberia's Bomi County with the stated purpose of transferring community members to a safer area. Instead, en route to a new area the militia carried out a massacre – killing 90 percent of the community in cold blood. When the LCIP program entered Bomi County two years later to assess the status of reintegration and reconciliation in the area, the resentment and grief among the residents and returnees was so fresh and overpowering, narrated by communities as if the incident happened yesterday. LCIP staff realized their first intervention needed to address that loss and grief before any reconciliation could begin. So the program team and the Maher River community residents planned a series of events in order to allow the citizens to begin to face what happened on that fated day. The activities allowed each sector of the community to have their own day to make peace with their ancestors according to their own spiritual beliefs. Over four days, Christians, Muslims and tribal groups shared stories, anger, sadness, and ultimately significant forgiveness for the massacre. Since that week, the Bomi County communities have worked together to rebuild their community infrastructure, undertake vocational training, and began entrepreneurial activities – the benefits of a re-emerging peace.

### ***Sports (IRI)***

The benefits of sports being included in RR programs such as the LCIP are enormous. Organized sports activities helped to break down the barriers that had been built between XCs and WAPS, groups who had previously refused to socialize together but who readily agreed to participate in mixed sports teams when invited. Although it is hard to quantify these benefits, the enthusiasm displayed by participants

was consistently high in all the counties where the program was working. The passion for soccer in Liberia certainly helped, along with the donation of 5,000 soccer balls from the US Embassy. The LCIP has worked with more than 24 local NGOs who focus on social reintegration in each of the eight counties. Each NGO had two designated sports facilitators who were responsible for organizing sports and recreation activities at the community-level after working hours. These activities have proven to be an extremely successful initiative, with both men and women taking part. Those who were not physically able to participate were eager spectators, and often traditional songs and drumming were performed at the end of matches and during the presentations of cups. Sports activities were therefore also a way of encouraging communities to come together and practice other traditional recreational activities.

By the end of 2005 there were over 9,500 people participating in sports such as kick ball, soccer and volley ball, with over 200 teams formed, many of which were playing in locally-organized leagues. The program worked with the Liberia Football Association (LFA) in Zwedru, Bopolu and Gbarnga to establish the LCIP soccer league. After matches were over, the LFA facilitators engaged the competitors in peace discussions and counseling on how they could use soccer to promote reconciliation and psychosocial healing among the community. Sports therefore became a significant and high profile public awareness vehicle for showcasing the LCIP’s achievements.

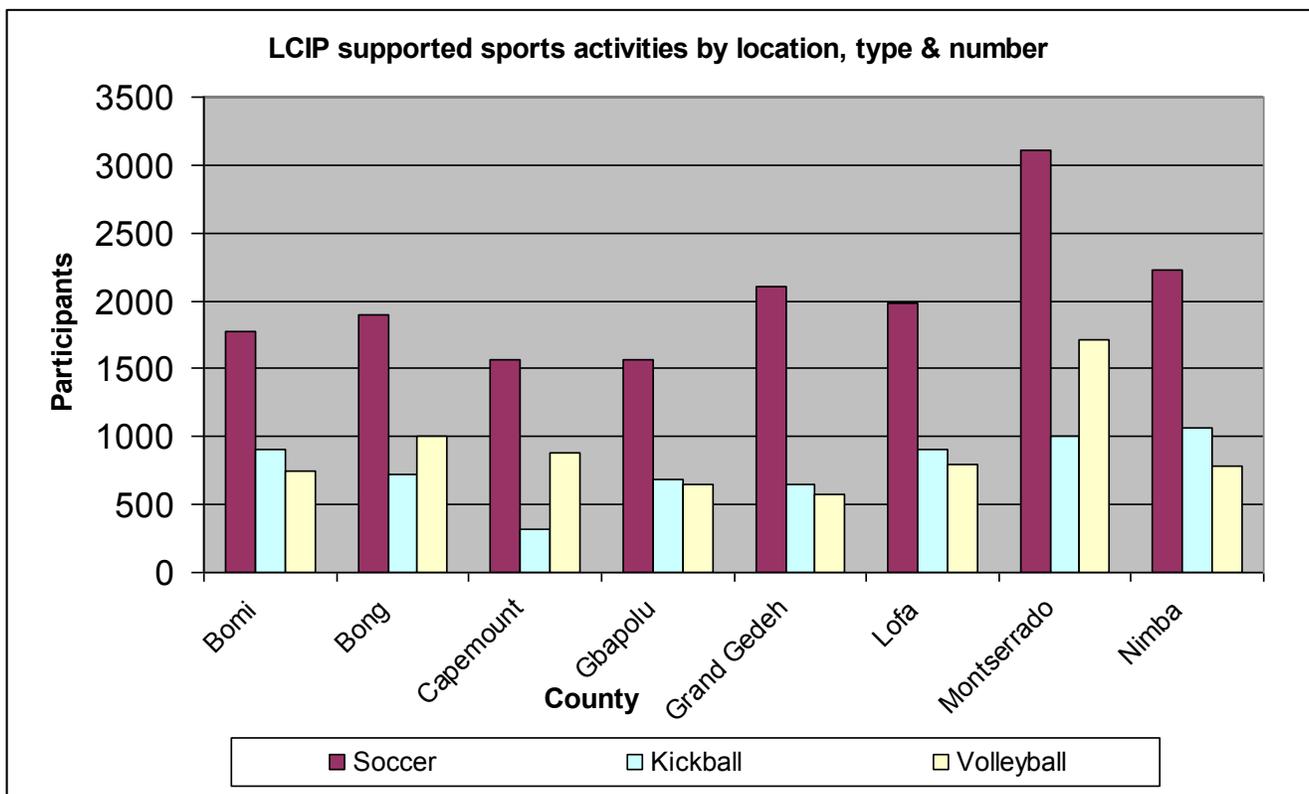


Figure 19

Sports activities not only provided recreational facilities but also acted as an informal counseling service as they increased interaction and dialogue between XCs and WAPs. Soccer was particularly popular and was also inexpensive to facilitate.

**Lessons learned**

Sport is a very useful activity for „breaking the ice’. Encouraging alienated communities to participate in a sporting activity together proved surprisingly easy and was no doubt assisted by the universal popularity of soccer throughout Liberia.

Everyone can participate in sporting events, either as participants or spectators. Men and women, children and the elderly attended the program’s sporting events, with traditional dances and drumming performed at the presentation of awards. The sports activities therefore turned into traditional cultural events as well and this was very much encouraged.

### ***Media (IRI)***

Print and electronic media has played a key role in sensitizing the public about the LCIP. Many rural communities in Liberia are already within range of radio transmitters. As a result, LCIP was able to use rural radio to reach out to thousands of ex-combatants and hundreds of war-affected communities with peace messages across the targeted counties. In order to achieve this, project staff worked closely with the local radio stations to publicize LCIP reconstruction and reconciliation activities.

The impact of mass media outreach activities reinforced and was deepened by follow-on community-level educational and informational events. These events were participatory, provided additional media content, and were adapted to local needs and circumstances as necessary.

Local media promotion was the principal vehicle for distributing LCIP success stories. Members of the LCIP staff, including the media expert, the program development officers, the Chief of Party and the Social Reintegration Manager gave a number of interviews on community radio stations funded by Mercy Corps and UNMIL.

The LCIP charged certain Implementing Partners to spread public information and awareness messages about the program’s work, along with more general peace messages. Many of these IPs were former cultural dance troops who assisted in raising awareness about the program’s aims and therefore encouraged the mobilization XCs and WAPS to participate in LCIP public work activities.

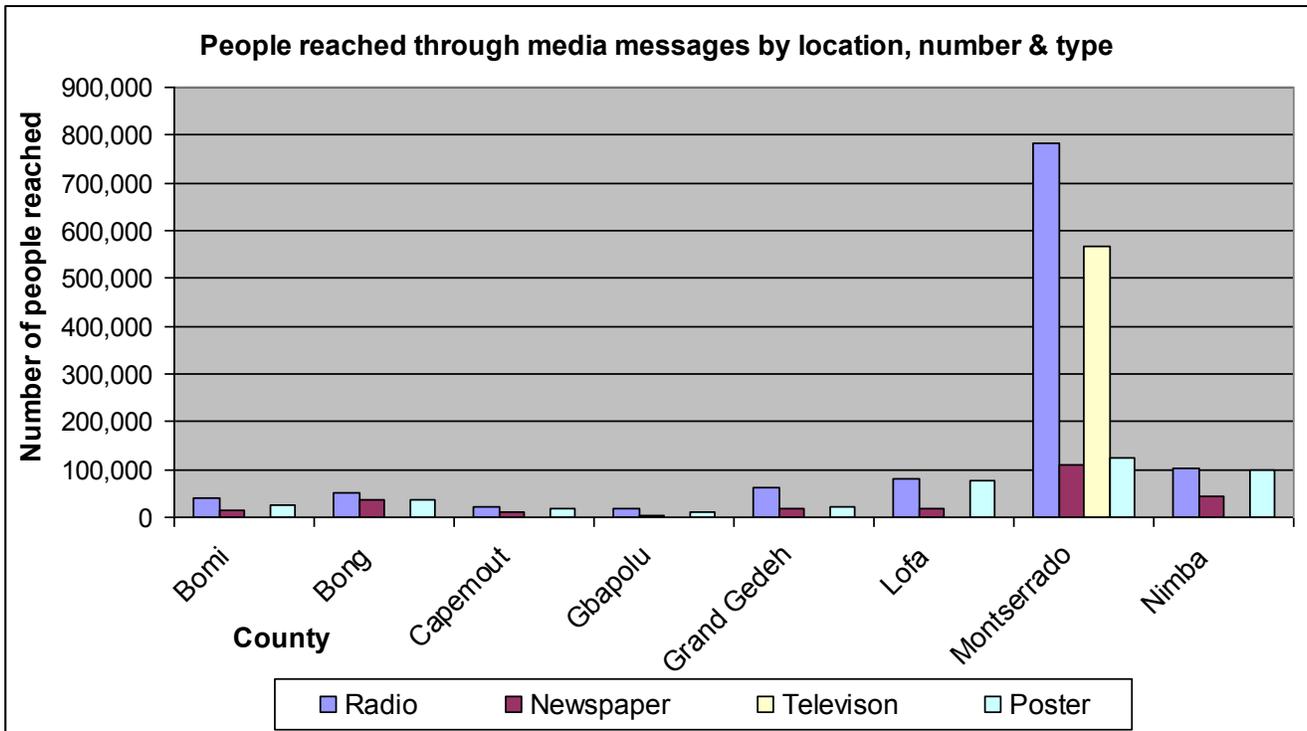


Figure 20

A higher number of people were reached through media messages in Montserrado because the region has better access to radio, television and newspapers. Television is limited to Montserrado County only, and newspaper coverage is limited outside of Montserrado and Bong Counties. At the beginning of the program, not all rural areas had access to radio. It is hoped that media coverage will be improved during Phase 2 however, as radio access is now available throughout Liberia.

### Lessons learned

It is important to train and involve all staff in media techniques and how to work with the media. For DDDR programs of this scale, it is likely that a lot of staff will be expected to plan and execute media events, participate in interviews and make statements to the press. If staff have been trained on how to do this it greatly assists with getting out program „key messages’.

The media should be actively encouraged to report on the program. In post-conflict societies, the media is often not very active and may not undertake much investigative journalism. Program staff should be encouraged to feed information directly to journalists therefore, taking them on field visits, drafting story outlines for them and even paying them if necessary.

Radio stations and local theatre groups assist with reaching out to rural communities. Radio airtime proved important to the program due to the low literacy levels in Liberia, particularly in rural communities who may not have easy access to newspapers. The use of local theatre groups also helped reach out to these communities, particularly those who speak local languages.

## ***Employment Generation (IR2)***

Certainly the best way of increasing ex-combatants access to economic opportunities is by providing them with employment. This helped to demonstrate to the non combatant populace that the ex-combatants were starting to rehabilitate some of those structures that they were responsible for destroying. Beyond the immediate employment and reconstruction benefits, the program kept ex-combatants gainfully occupied, helped to break a culture of dependency through significant self-help activities and aided enormously in restoring disrupted rural communities.

The main problems associated with establishing widespread work programs in rural Liberia are the extensive geographical area and sparse habitation; a total lack of logistical equipment and support for reconstruction or transport; ensuring equitable treatment to the various factions; as well as being evenhanded given the large numbers of non combatants clamoring for similar treatment. The LCIP realized along with its partners that for any long term commitment to the work brigades improved access to logistics, particularly transport for the work brigades, would be essential. In Monrovia, the concentration of ex-combatants and other non combatants in a metropolitan area caused added security issues from the program, along with the same equity concerns found out in the counties.

### **Utilising the Private Sector to Generate Employment**

Having successfully won one of the three contracts available to rehabilitate a road in Bong County, Westwood Corporation were aware that they would be expected to employ unskilled ex-combatants and non combatants on the project. At the pre-bid stage, the LCIP had suggested the laborers could be gainfully employed in activities such as roadside brushing and the digging of trenches and that they should be paid USD \$2 per day for this work. The General Manager of Westwood had agreed to this requirement, although he suspected that once the project was underway the reality would be that he'd get very little productive input from the laborers. In fact, he expected that his own team would have to undertake this work in order to ensure that the project was completed on time; so although Westwood had agreed to work to the letter of the agreement, they were not expecting to be able to achieve the spirit of it. In addition, they were concerned about how the XCs and WAPS would interact; the theft of company equipment; and finally, having to supply tools to the workers which could possibly be used as weapons.

The project worked with an Implementing Partner, an NGO called Oneness, who undertook the recruitment of 245 laborers in total and worked closely with them throughout the course of the project. Within a matter of weeks of project commencement, Westwood's management team felt able to delegate responsibility to the laborers, who had quickly shown their enthusiasm for the work and were proving to be reliable employees. This delegation of responsibility encouraged an atmosphere of mutual trust which on occasion resulted in some of the laborers reporting their colleagues to management, for example if they had stolen some tools.

Westwood's contract for the Bong County project was initially for 9 months. It was then extended for a further 2,5 months and at this point a decision was made to retain 40 of the laborers, although this was not stipulated in the contract extension. The company's General Manager, Mr. Sam Cooper, said that despite his initial reservations, his experience of the project was positive overall and he remains personally in touch with over 30 of the laborers. He also said that, as a result of his exposure to this group, his perception of ex-combatants had changed, partly as a result of the way they behaved during a 'hit and run' incident that resulted in one of the laborers being killed. Once the workers had caught up with the driver, rather than resorting to vigilante tactics they escorted him to the local police station and reported what they had witnessed. It soon became clear that the police did not intend to take any action however, so the laborers held a peaceful demonstration outside the station and requested that the driver be charged. Their demands were eventually met by the police.

Given these imperatives, the LCIP designed a package of employment interventions that purposely targeted the XCs and included other war-affected individuals as and wherever possible. They were grouped in the major areas of:

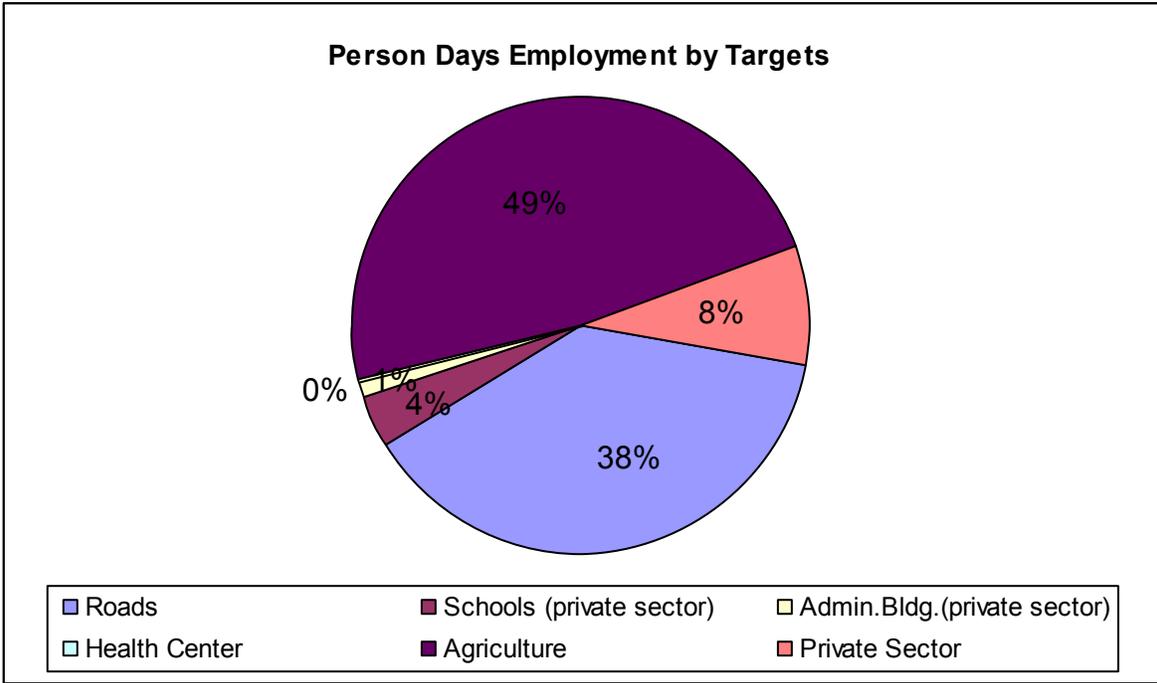
- Roads and bridges rehabilitation
- Schools renovation
- Agriculture and agribusiness
- Environmental sanitation/drainage
- Renovation of administrative buildings
- Rehabilitation of health centers
- Micro-enterprise development

Our activities reached participants through a combination of direct intervention by the LCIP project and through a mix of grants and/or subcontracts with reliable Liberian organizations that could execute the work required with the requisite accountability and reporting. While the seven areas identified above formed the main focus for the LCIP interventions the flexible nature of the program, which has been one of its major strengths, did not exclude support to other initiatives which have achieved the same objectives.



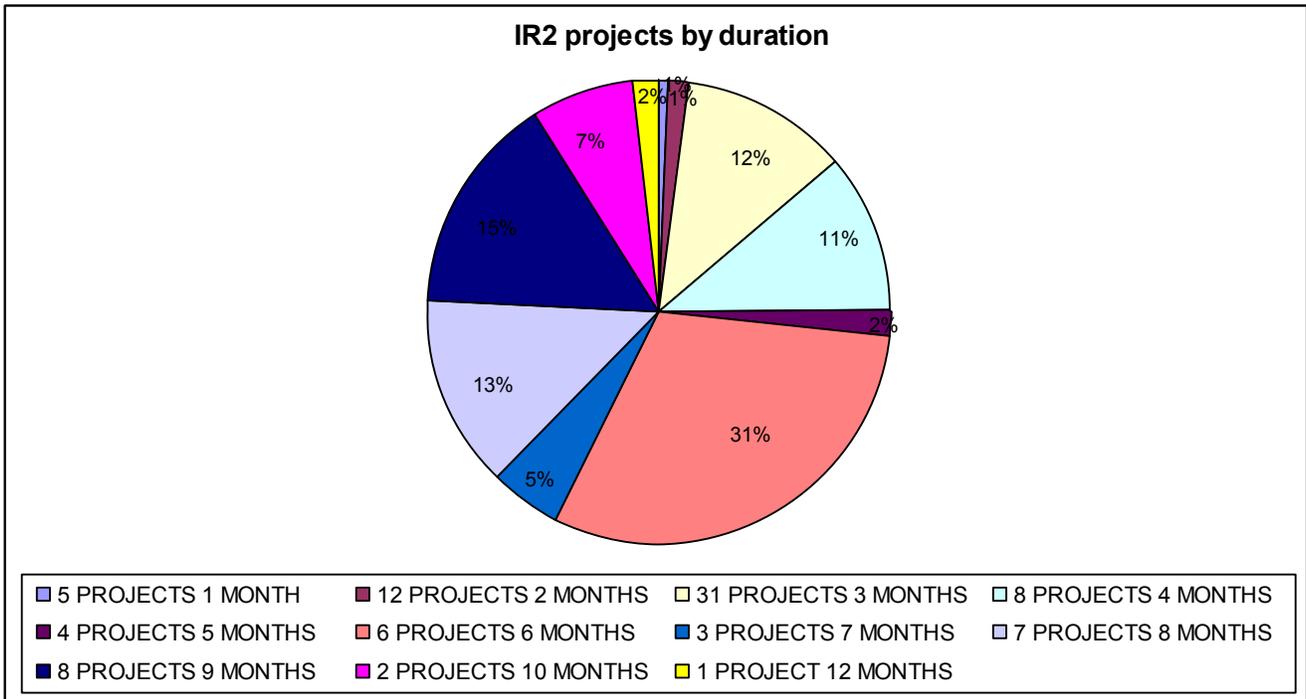
Figure 21

The targets were set in the LCIP Work Plan approved by USAID, and in later months the program exceeded these targets. The initial slow start was primarily due to security issues and the difficulties of accessing rural areas, coupled with a lack of capacity with regards to Implementing Partners.



**Figure 22**

The higher number of PDE for agriculture and road projects is due to the longer length of these assignments and the high levels of manual work required.



**Figure 23**

Not all of LCIP beneficiaries received their full benefits from the LCIP alone (other donors were funding similar programs around the country), but all LCIP beneficiaries were enrolled in at least one

of the LCIP activities and therefore contributed to the total number of person days reported here. A total of 4,490,638 person days have been registered in this project.

### **Lessons learned**

Infrastructure and agriculture projects provide an easy way to employ large numbers of workers. With a high percentage of the working-age population unemployed, coupled with the lack of heavy plant machinery or the skills to maintain or repair such equipment, it was usually more financially viable to utilize manual labor on projects. Providing laborers with an agreed weekly salary, a hot lunch, access to healthcare, and organized sports activities after work proved very effective in ensuring they remained committed to the project activities.

Keeping workers busy and engaged reduces the incentive to go and fight. Workers preferred to stay in their communities as long as they had employment, even if their salaries were lower than other opportunities. They did not want to cross into neighboring countries to fight, despite the larger salaries offered there. Also, by encouraging community members to work side by side every day, they became more trusting and respectful of one another.

### ***Private Sector Engagement (IR2)***

As previously mentioned, CDCs were developed in all the communities in which the LCIP implemented social and economic reintegration activities. The development of these CDCs has been part of the LCIP Phase 1 exit strategy and it is hoped that they will remain functional when the LCIP moves to Phase 2. These CDCs have been and will continue to be instrumental in the identification of income generating activities in the form of community-based joint ventures such as baking, weaving, tailoring, shoe making and a myriad of other micro businesses.

The CDCs have also been instrumental in creating space for various ethnic groups, religious groups, ex-combatants and non combatants to meet together and to begin working together around areas of common interest. This process has created and reinvigorated a sense of community where people who have had antagonistic relationships during the war years have begun to trust each other again. If these efforts continue to be successful, then the social relationships created through the CDC process will remain into 2006. In addition, the CDC process will also be a way to allow the communities to use their talents and ideas to eventually be able to lobby their local government or other future donors for resources or for answers to issues that come up in the future.

CDCs have also been formed with farmers groups with a focus on agri-business. Where possible, processing equipment has been purchased and distributed which should help establish these groups as small to medium sized businesses. Palm oil processing equipment, cassava graters, ground nut processing equipment, rice threshers and mills have been purchased and provided to these groups.

Although initially the LCIP did not have the engagement of the local private sector on any meaningful scale, it has been able to engage this sector in the final two quarters and have some impact. Small businesses in the rural areas are now beginning to recover as the flow of cash into the country increases. The LCIP has been able to kick start some of the key trades by supporting businesses and placement of trainees; in its commitment to get ex-combatants back to work the LCIP has encouraged artisans to employ apprentices. Through this engagement the apprentices have been able to learn a trade

and the artisans have been given increased access to tools; labor and materials. These programs primarily were in and around Monrovia and in Bong and Nimba County.

Furthermore the artisans have been encouraged to support and supply project materials to other programs within LCIP Phase 1 and beyond such as furniture for LCIP rehabilitated schools. It is felt that this program will assist in further business development and recovery throughout 2006 and beyond.

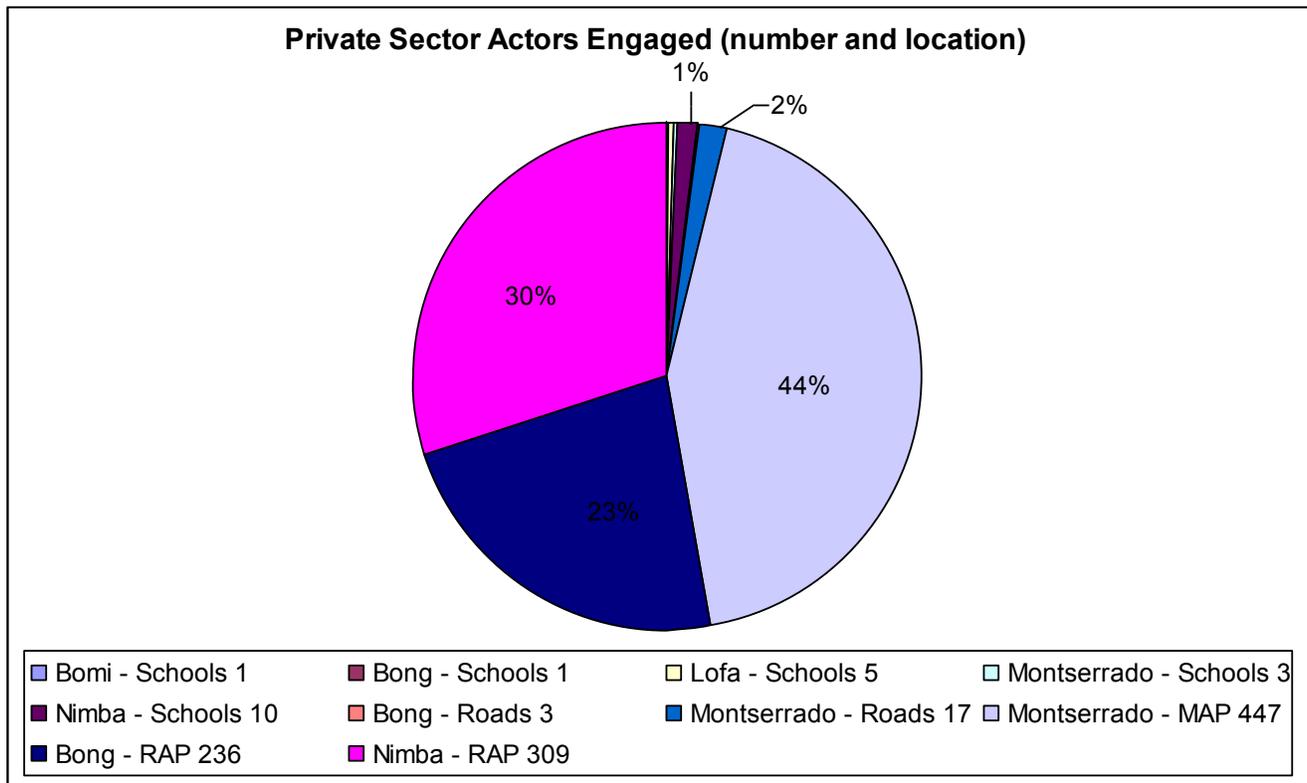


Figure 24

A total of 1,032 private sector firms were engaged over the course of Phase I. This figure includes both individual firms that existed prior to LCIP engagement, and those businesses established by apprentices that graduated from the LCIP project activities. The high number of firms engaged in the Montserrado area is due to the size of the MAP program, which involved 447 firms in total.

### Lessons learned

Do not underestimate the capacity of the local private sector in post-conflict societies. Private sector participation in LCIP was effective; and transparent, public bidding was important to that success. Despite initial reservations, the private sector was more effective at delivering projects than initially expected.

Encourage the private sector and NGOs to work together on projects. There were doubts as to whether the private sector would manage to engage with NGOs, but the project staff managed to forge fruitful partnerships between these two groups, with the private sector focusing on infrastructure activities and the NGOs focusing on social activities. Similar partnerships should be actively encouraged during Phase 2 of the project.

### ***Vocational Training (IR3)***

Vocational training provides a solid option for upgrading the skill levels and employability of the targeted beneficiaries, while also providing a means for constructively engaging a segment of the population which has the potential to serve as a „spoiler’ of the still tentative peace process. A work force with improved skills is also able to improve the general social and economic development of war-affected communities. Vocational training is therefore a key component of reintegration activities.

Throughout LCIP Phase I, a serious attempt was made to closely associate vocational training with the work brigades which offered economic opportunities for XCs and WAPs. Multiple small enterprise vocations were identified and training offered along with other subjects based on demand and interest. The LCIP supported a number of local NGOs that provided training in fields such as carpentry, masonry, blacksmithing, auto mechanics, tailoring, soap making, ceramic arts, rattan furniture making, baking, and shoe making – all of which qualified as micro-enterprise development. The duration of the training programs varied depending on the course structure. They took the form of either on-the-job training or more formal training in institutions like the Booker Washington Institute or the Zwedru Multilateral School.

The Monrovia program undertook a dedicated vocational-technical training component in the capital, called the Monrovia Apprenticeship Program, or MAP. In addition, the Rebuilding Artisans Program (RAP) was established, initially in Bong and Nimba Counties. The RAP involved the setting up of 25 sites with an average of 25 apprentices per workshop. The artisans taught the apprentices carpentry, masonry and blacksmithing with the support of a trainer while still operating their business. This was the key to this program as the LCIP did not pay the artisans; instead, each workshop was encouraged to develop its business and sell what the apprentices made.

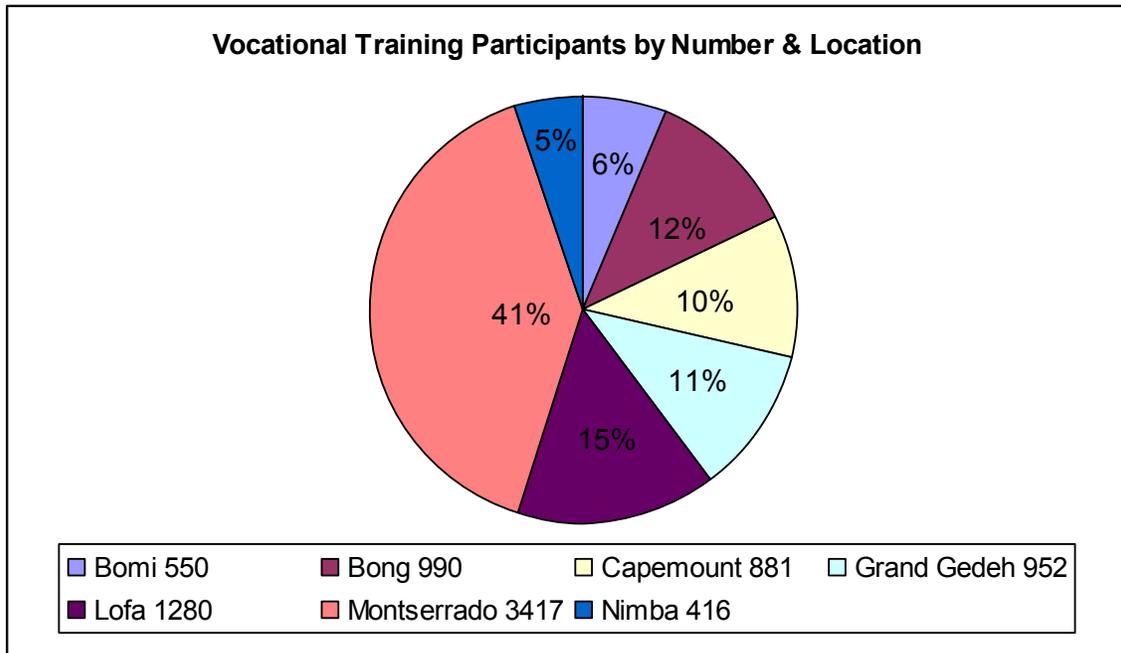
All the participants who completed vocational training programs were offered start-up kits, comprised of materials and equipment that will enable them to put their acquired skills to use and start their own business or joint ventures. For example, carpenters received a tool kit containing a saw, hammer, chisel, and plane. Hairdressers were provided with a comb, rollers, hairnet, handheld drier, and a bucket. Both the RAP and MAP programs led to the graduation of approximately 1,038 trained apprentices who should potentially be able to open small enterprises related to the reconstruction industry.

#### **Encouraging the Growth of Micro-Enterprises through Skills Training**

Amodu, a 30 year old refugee, recently completed an eight month traineeship in metalwork as part of the LCIP’s Rebuilding Artisans Program. He chose to study metalwork as he had previously been employed in this field before he and his brother were forced to flee their home in Nimba County due to fighting. Amodu was enthusiastic to participate in the RAP as he hoped it would give him an opportunity to obtain some formal qualifications and experience. “Although the work is very physical and tiring, I enjoy it as I am learning new skills and there is demand for the things we are making. In five years time my dream is to set up my own business with my brother so we are able to provide for ourselves and our family.”

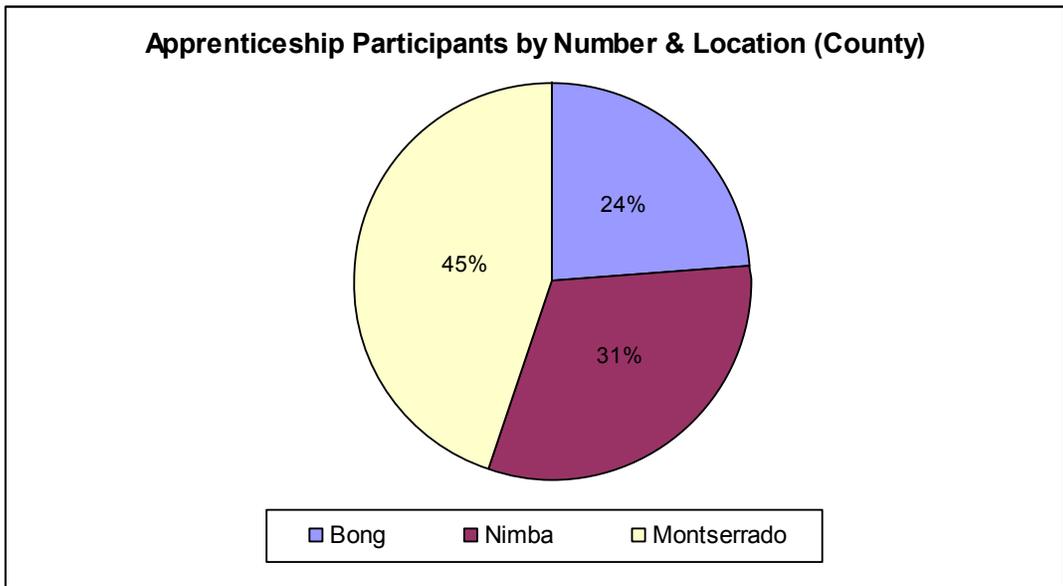
On graduating, Amodu received a certificate confirming that he had successfully completed the course and he was allowed to keep the tools he had been using – a hammer, tongs, chisel and a hacksaw. He is still employed at the Hamadee Konneh United Blacksmith Shop where he trained and is currently finalising an order for the Food and Agriculture Organization of rice bells – warning bells that scare birds away from the rice fields. He is also taking new orders from local residents for hoes, shovels and scythes. Amodu says he will stay in the community where he trained as he and his brother feel welcome there and they are already earning a living and managing to save money for their own business.

Potential new activities may include some form of vocational training will continue to be offered which will give the beneficiaries the ability to support themselves economically and eventually become self-reliant. With normalcy gradually returning to local communities after the disarmament process was completed and a new national government formed, it is expected these skills will quickly become marketable. Focus has been and will continue to be on carpentry, masonry, plumbing, welding, blacksmithing, brick-making, well digging and repair, and latrine building. Capacity for vocational training facilities is limited in Liberia, but the LCIP has taken advantage of existing facilities where available. Basic business management skills will also be imparted among the various groups for accountability purposes.



**Figure 25**

Throughout the course of Phase I, the LCIP has benefited a total of 7,180 people who were engaged in some form of vocational training or skills training. A total of 1,670 of those receiving vocational training graduated in this reporting quarter.



**Figure 26**

The Rebuilding Artisans Program began in Bong and Nimba Counties with a total of 545 apprentices graduating this quarter. The Monrovia Apprenticeship Program also graduated 447 apprentices during this reporting quarter. A total of 992 apprentices received their certificates and either continued to work with the same artisans where they were trained or went on to open their own shops. Both the RAP and MAP were considered highly successful and, as stated in the lessons learned, it is felt that their impact was greater than that of the LCIP vocational training. This is due to the „hands on’ nature of the program versus the more classroom-based approach.

**Lessons learned**

Training programs need to be of an appropriate length. The program’s vocational focus needs to be taken into account when deciding how long training should be provided for. It is not satisfactory to allocated one timescale to a variety of training programs if their focus is different. For example, an electrician may take a minimum of a year to train properly, but a hairdresser could be trained more quickly.

The apprenticeship programs have been highly successful. The inclusion of apprenticeship programs was felt to have had greater impact than stand-alone vocational training programs. Government certification for these programs is critical and national standards should be met and approved by a relevant board or organization.

**Annex 1: List of LCIP Grants**



## **Annex II: Lessons Learned**

### **Program Strategy and Challenges**

The original LCIP Statement of Work addressed the objective of reaching 10,000 ex-combatants and 10,000 other individuals over a three year period. The program strategy has been community based and aimed at the direct social and economic integration of these individuals in targeted urban and rural towns, villages, and counties. In the longer term, our critical assumption is that the LCIP will equip communities to manage their own development and the eventual peaceful and sustainable absorption of ex-combatants and other displaced persons.

The LCIP Phase 1 strategy entailed a phased approach for program implementation that addressed short and longer-term goals of a sustainable peace and development process – one that was open to emergent opportunities, generated immediate measurable results, and continuously coordinated with USAID, the UN, other key donors, and international and local NGOs. This phased approach involved three key stages. Phase 1 focused on a rapid response which offered XCs immediate productive cash-for-work opportunities through organized reconstruction brigades focusing on quick-impact projects near demobilization sites. Phase 2 integrated internally displaced people (IDPs) and other WAPs into the work brigades, which shifted to working in targeted communities. Phase 3 has focused on community-led rehabilitation and economic recovery through extensive use of local labor and resources.

### ***Challenges***

One of the main challenges during program start up was the prevailing security situation on the ground. Trips up-country posed security risks, making it difficult for program staff to establish regional offices and visit potential Implementing Partners (IPs). These initial security issues gradually improved as the UN deployed more peacekeeping forces to rural areas and decommissioning activities increased.

The issuing of grants and subcontracts was another initial challenge. The key problem was starting from scratch with limited capacity, especially with regards to the program's IPs. The first grants were originally issued for a period of three months which meant they had to either be cancelled or sent in for re-approval once this period ended. One positive outcome from this was that IPs capabilities could be vetted before the program committed major funds. By November 2004, USAID were able to re-visit the approval process and get larger, longer-term grants approved by the Mission in Liberia.

Another major challenge for the program was its increased case load. By the summer of 2004, the number of XCs exiting under the disarmament and demobilization (DD) process rose dramatically to 103,000, vastly outstripping the estimate of 35,000 upon which the original RR program had been planned and the framework in which the LCIP had been founded. The National Commission of Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration, the NCDDRR, was not ready to begin RR programming however. As a result, the LCIP was asked to accept more participants into its programming as soon as possible. USAID provided further funding for a program in the metropolitan Monrovia and Montserrado area, bringing the LCIP case load to 25,000, and increased the obligations for funding to essentially the contract ceiling. As a result, the LCIP continues to be one of the largest and most advanced RR programs undertaking reconstruction activities in the country.

### ***Combining economic reintegration with social reintegration***

During the first year, the program purposely drove the balance towards significantly higher XC participation. This imbalance in participation failed to address the longer-term issues of community-level reintegration and reconstruction however. In the short term, dealing with XCs expectations for training and immediate employment was acceptable, but the longer-term challenge was to transition towards a more holistic approach to the national RR effort in a way that satisfied entire communities.

In order to gain a better understanding of how long term reconciliation might be accomplished the LCIP commissioned two conflict assessments. These assessments identified that the program's targeted employment of XCs against a backdrop of high unemployment was deepening public resentment and rejection of this group rather than the intended aims of facilitating their integration in to civilian life. As a result, it was agreed that the social component of the program should be strengthened and that communities should be more sensitized to social reintegration. By supporting not only economic but also social interventions, the program encouraged XCs and WAPs to reconcile with one other and to thus have a greater possibility of truly reintegrating into their pre-war communities.

### ***Focus on communities***

As outlined in the conflict assessments, the problem the LCIP encountered was that project activities were being conducted largely by XCs and the recipient community had no involvement in identifying, planning, or implementing tasks. Compounding this, one commonly cited form of XC exclusion was that they are not permitted to participate in community discussions and activities. Furthermore, the Monrovia-based XCs that were interviewed all expressed their desire to return home. A major barrier to this was the fear of reprisals and the feeling that they had nothing to offer the community.

The LCIP attempted to address these issues by orienting the focus of funded activities towards community development initiatives. Community Development Committees (CDCs) were established and projects became developed and driven by them. The criterion for supporting such activities was that their planning and implementation involved the participation of XCs and WAPs, therefore promoting the integration of these two groups. To encourage this shift in attention, the LCIP began developing partnerships with local NGOs specializing in civic education activities. The CDCs were instrumental in creating space for various ethnic and religious groups to meet and begin working together around areas of common interest. This process will hopefully reinvigorate a sense of community where people can begin to trust each other again.

### ***Exit Strategies***

Over the last quarter, the program's focus has shifted to the establishment of suitable exit strategies for all on-going programs as grants finished and XCs and WAPs moved out of the LCIP-supported employment and training activities. Talks among LCIP staff and USAID concentrated on moving from a transitional RR program to one of development, with sustainability becoming a critical issue. As a result, an assessment framework was developed for the IPs so they could analyze each project individually and assess its viability prior to the LCIP ending its support. The Monrovia program was able to set the tone for this transition. In the 33 communities where it has implemented programs it had already met its target case load of 5,000 – aided primarily by some of its larger programs such as “operation pot hole” – and had begun to strengthen the CDCs it was working with, assisting in the identification of community driven projects which will lead the way for Phase 2.

#### **Promoting Longer Term Reconciliation and Reintegration**

Through the course of Phase I, the LCIP team learned that referring to program beneficiaries as ex-combatants and war-affected persons poses a hindrance to long-term reconciliation and reintegration. For Phase 2 of the program it is recommended that these terms should be replaced by „community member”, and a more neutral and community-driven development approach is used in order to be able to achieve longer-term reintegration. Future program activities should also continue to support traditional and cultural interventions that will allow XCs and WAPs to reconcile with each other and to thus have a greater possibility of truly reintegrating into their pre-war communities. Community-based reconciliation activities need to be tailored to be culturally appropriate to their specific locations, they can then be a vehicle for a renewal and

## **Program Highlights and Lessons Learned**

After two years of programming, with a newly elected democratic government in place, an improved security situation and the RR program for the LCIP coming to an end, the program management team has taken time to reflect on program highlights and lessons learned in preparation for the next phases of implementation.

### ***Program Highlights***

The program's key highlight was the way the LCIP team responded when asked to dramatically increase the number of participants in the program from 20,000 to 25,000. The team's flexibility and responsiveness to this USAID and UNMIL request meant that the LCIP was able to meet the target numbers quickly and its primary aim – to employ former combatants and other unemployed Liberians in useful, community-focused rehabilitation activities – was met. The program managed to encapsulate the spirit that it was time for change in Liberia and despite the various pressures, it has generally been successful in forcing local community leaders and governments to engage, its various projects acting as a catalyst to bring alienated communities together.

Another highlight was the program's consistently high media presence. A continued media campaign has been an integral part of the LCIP programming and has been seen to contribute positively to peace building in all the communities where it has worked. A private media consultant was hired to assure that successes were shared with the local and international community, with both print and electronic media playing a key role in sensitizing the public about the program. This has resulted in the LCIP becoming one of the most high-profile projects in Liberia, with participants displaying genuine pride in being associated with it.

This enthusiasm for the program is also partly a result of the high level of trust obtained from former combatants. In general, the program delivered what it said it would deliver, on time and as promised and this meant the LCIP's partners felt valued. This trust from IPs and program beneficiaries, along with the continuous managerial and financial support received from USAID, undoubtedly helped with the smooth running of the LCIP.

Another key highlight was the way in which the program has successfully worked with Liberia's private sector. This sector was initially seen to be limited and lacking the capacity required to support the LCIP's planned activities, but these perceptions were soon disproved and some very effective partnerships were forged during the course of the program. The Monrovia Micro-Enterprise Apprenticeship Program (MAP) was particularly successful in engaging private firms, who reported a marked improvement in sales as a result of their involvement in the LCIP and demonstrated the success that can be achieved in skills trainings in business environments.

### ***Key lessons learned***

The lessons learned from Phase 1 of the program are numerous. The key highlights are detailed below. It is important that they are taken into consideration not only for future phases of LCIP implementation but also for future DDDR projects which will undoubtedly encounter similar issues. One of the key lessons is that programs such as the LCIP need to focus on three core activities simultaneously – psychosocial healing, reconstruction and skills training.

The importance of including psychosocial activities from the very start of the program was not a key focus of the LCIP implementation, but soon proved to be a critical component of the program's

successes to date. By addressing the rehabilitation of communities holistically and not just focusing on work and training programs, disrupted communities were encouraged to come together and discuss difficult issues honestly and openly and then address them in an appropriate way. This led to more productive relations within the community, therefore facilitating the economic component of the project and encouraging groups to cooperate and work together. Traditionally, psychosocial work is very often limited in DDDR programs due to lack of capacity and skills on the ground. Future DDDR programs should include specific training in basic psychosocial counseling skills in an attempt to overcome this capacity problem.

Other important lessons learned are:

**Ratios of Ex-combatants to War-Affected Persons – a one to one approach based on equity will be a critical component for future Reintegration and Rehabilitation programming.** This approach is more inclusive and representative of the community. Ratios greater than one to one can reinforce existing command structures and exacerbate marginalization of ex-combatants from the rest of the community.

**A phased approach to Reintegration and Rehabilitation works best.** The phased approach moves from short term to long term programming and can adjust as highly transient populations (such as former combatants) move and settle.

- *Phase 1:* Targeted short term work and sports programs contribute to overall security; these are successful if both economic and psychosocial support is provided to ex-combatants simultaneously. Such support can enhance the immediate security situation in the country, and can provide rapid income generation; these interventions, however, are best if not considered part of the 8 or 9 month RR benefits allocated to each individual ex-combatant. Due to the short term nature of this work and the transient nature of the ex-combatant population, the benefits for each individual are difficult to track and verify at that time. In addition, the capacity of Implementing Partners needs to be tested at this time; as a result, shorter-term interventions are most appropriate in this phase.
- *Phase 2:* Longer-term economic rehabilitation and vocational/skills training mixed with other psychosocial interventions that emphasize the use of traditional practices and social structures are included during this phase. These programs, which are longer term in nature, can be counted as key RR benefits for individual ex-combatants.
- *Phase 3:* Focus includes private sector development and long term participatory community development in order to consolidate and strengthen reintegration. This phase is critical to sustainability; the focus moves away from benefits for ex-combatants as individuals and towards benefits for communities that include ex-combatants.

**Social programming is crucial to success throughout the RR phases.**

- *Phase 1:* Typically, social IPs capacity is weak during Phase 1 implementation. RR success cannot rely on a major social reintegration component or in-depth psychosocial counseling during this phase therefore. Rather, a Phase 1 focus on generic psychosocial interventions that will keep beneficiaries occupied while baseline information on existing IP capabilities is collected is most appropriate. Once the baseline information has been collected, programs can then be designed to provide necessary technical assistance and training in order to build local IP capacity for the next phases of psychological healing and reconciliation.
- *Phase 2:* During this phase community-based reconciliation activities begin to be implemented, as well as counseling provided through strengthened and capable local IPs.

- *Phase 3*: Social programming may need to continue from the outside using capable socially-oriented IPs, but in many circumstances can be phased in using existing local facilities and structures supported through other inclusive civil society development programs.

**Agriculture activities work best as part of the phased RR approach.**

- *Phase 1*: Initially, agriculture activities for Phase 1 RR results should be focused on food production and food security.
- *Phase 2*: During this phase, the focus moves from individual farms and farmers to working with cooperatives and associations. In addition, the focus shifts from mainly food production into value-added food processing. To maximize success, this phase should include activities which establish land tenure status up front; if land tenure is not clear, project interventions could be undermined by land disputes that exacerbate local conflict.
- *Phase 3*: Private sector development in agriculture is a fundamental part of Phase 3 activities to build sustainability in this sector and in the program in general.

**Donor coordination needs to assimilate and integrate different approaches.** Competing (parallel) programs caused tension and confusion among IPs and the target communities. There was a definite need for consistency with regards to how each approach was communicated and integrated. Communication and coordination is needed at the national level; however, UNDP/NCDDRR was seen as ineffective or incapable of facilitating this process. There should be donor confidence in the institutions and systems in place; donor confidence in the UNDP/NCDDRR relationship was observed to be low. Excluding USAID, donor support to the DDDR process was uneven over time and not at the anticipated (required) levels.

**Capacity of local partners is critical to initial program results.** The capacity of the Government of Liberia, the UN and IPs needed to be greatly improved from the onset of the program. The DDDR program would have met its objectives better if an IP capacity assessment and then targeted training and orientation activities to build local capabilities had been included early in the program. Positive results were obtained by the NGO community which implemented the “Ministries in a Box” program.

**Monitoring and Evaluation should have been conducted by the LCIP from the beginning and then integrated into the UN’s efforts.** The UN Monitoring and Evaluation department (supporting NCDDRR) was not effective. The LCIP’s project records were not effectively utilized by them. The program should have established its own database from the onset which would then have been shared with other RR entities.

**Both economic rehabilitation and social reintegration are crucial.** They should not be separated, but remain integrated in a more holistic approach in each project. This integrated approach mind-set is crucial for all RR partners.

**The LCIP’s apprenticeship programs have been highly successful.** The inclusion of apprenticeship programs was felt to have had greater impact than stand-alone vocational training programs. Government certification for these programs is critical; national standards should be met and approved by the Agricultural Industrial Training Board (AITB) or its equivalent.

**The LCIP/USAID increased its success by implementing rural interventions before urban activities began.** Rural programming began before most programming was initiated in the larger urban areas, for example in Monrovia. This helped to draw people out of the urban areas and return to their

homes up-country. The fact that the Monrovia program began later positively reinforced the movement of people back to their homes.

**Long-term exit strategies need to vary with length and type of intervention.** Some interventions require more time to build trust; if a program is only operational for 8 months then the intervention needs to be tightly focused and include relevant “individualized” exit strategies. If activities included the development of cooperatives and/or community joint ventures, they should be incorporated into longer-term interventions or those that will last one to two years in order to achieve success (especially to build the necessary social relationships). All interventions should be turned over to other donors, NGOs or locally-based actors for follow-up over the longer-term.

### **Annex III: Program Problems Encountered and Remedial Actions**

Through the course of its 28 months of operation, the LCIP has encountered numerous successes, and a few failures and problems. Many of the problems encountered are inherent traits of working in a post conflict environment and the political stresses that imposes on donors for action. This section of the report aims to identify key areas that have been problematic and possible solutions that could be incorporated into the next phase of the LCIP.

#### ***The National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL)***

The strength of the national transitional government has been an issue from the very start of the program and the LCIP has tried to work inside and outside its sphere of influence. Now a new and credible government has been elected, the program must try and work within the government sphere and help it achieve the goals and targets for the people of Liberia. The LCIP has completed the DDDR side of the program in the last quarter and is now fully focusing on the needs of the government through infrastructure support. A lackluster Ministry of Public Works under the NTGL has transformed into an organization that is attempting to deliver on its remit within the limited resources it has. Under the new government the LCIP is receiving more support from the Ministry and the program must learn to adapt and engage but also engage with a degree of caution.

#### ***Program selection***

The LCIP and the LNGO community can no longer be the selector and determiner of projects in Liberia. The program needs to focus on the needs of the Liberian people through two broad methods – priorities laid down by the Liberian Government and local administrations; and projects determined by the Liberian people. The latter could be by communities; farmers; businesses; or youth groups and the LCIP needs to help the government focus on the needs of these groups.

During the next quarter, the LCIP will work closely with smallholders in the rubber sector and try to understand their needs and deliver projects that will help this sector to recover. The program will utilize DFID funds to pilot this deepened engagement in this area and others.

#### ***International investment***

The crucial building block for Liberia's recovery is going to be international investment from the private sector. Under the DDDR phase of the program this was never a focus but this is something that the program can no longer ignore. Phase 2 of the LCIP must either help promote international investment by either developing stronger skills sets or by building on previous industries that will be attractive to international investors. The development of the oil palm sector is something that requires further investment and focus. The resources are large in Liberia and should be tapped for positive outcomes.

#### ***Short term results need to focus on long term solutions***

Many of the programs under the DDDR phase had short term results without any focus on the future. The program needed to deliver immediately and therefore had to have this focus to keep disgruntled ex-combatants busy. Phase 2 of the program needs to look beyond the quick fix and focus on productive investment for the future. Each intervention needs to be questioned on its impact not only for now but also for the future. The LCIP is carefully analyzing its program activities to ensure the most effective delivery of USAID funds.

### ***Ethnic and tribal conflicts***

Ethnic and tribal conflicts still pose a great risk to Liberia's security and stable future, particularly with regards to the Mandingo tribe. There is a prevalent perception that the Mandingos do not belong in Liberia. All the tribes in Liberia have a county of origin but this is not the case for the Mandingos, who reside in many counties to varying degrees of acceptance and tolerance. This tribal conflict is so deep rooted that the LCIP could not be expected to resolve it within the duration of the program, although attempts have been made to reduce the levels of conflict.

Although this is the main tribal issue causing tension in Liberia, it is not the only one. Many of the other tribes have been pitched against each other in an attempt to gain power and control in the country. This was primarily encouraged through Liberia's leaders in an attempt to keep their citizens in check while they plundered the country's resources.

The LCIP employed a consultant to investigate these issues and recommend program interventions that could help reduce tensions and conflict. These interventions have had a varying amount of success as they require a national effort and a commitment from the people for change. One of the LCIP's key interventions has been to encourage intertribal working environments, therefore demonstrating to communities that tribes can work together. The program will continue to strive to broach these issues through its work across the country and learn from the Phase 1 lessons learnt and the wealth of knowledge of the LCIP team. Interventions will be a continuing process of support and reconciliation for years to come, requiring concessions and understanding from all tribes based in Liberia and its surrounding borders.