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LIBERIA CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA LEADERSHIP PROGRAM (CSML)

EDUCATION | INDEPENDENT MEDIA | CIVIL SOCIETY DEVELOPMENT



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### KEY ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

- Improve skills, performance and perceptions of CSOs through training, mentoring and small grants
- Engender professionalism in the Liberian media industry by improving the quality of information, injecting new skills and opening avenues for media, assisted by technology, to give citizens voice in national dialogues.



### IREX IN AFRICA

IREX is currently working to strengthen civil society and support independent media in **Liberia, Rwanda, and Somalia**. Through these projects, IREX develops the operational, advocacy, and outreach capacity of CSOs to more effectively influence public policy formation and implementation, provides technical support to media outlets and journalists to increase the quantity and quality of their work as well as the sustainability of media outlets, and trains on conflict transformation and development of media products to promote positive approaches to resolving conflict. Additionally, IREX provides an annual analysis of the media environment in 40 countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

### IREX/LIBERIA CONTACT

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### LIBERIA IN PROFILE

Liberia is situated on the west coast of Africa and shares boundaries with Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and Guinea. It has a democratic government under the leadership of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Her election in 2005 ended a transition period that began in 2003 following 14 years of devastating civil war.

### PROJECT ACTIVITIES

#### ***Develop Resource Partner Organizations***

IREX will select 6-10 Liberian organizations to work with as Resource Partners (RPs). It will provide each RP with a six-month, customized training program to strengthen the organizations and improve advocacy which will begin after organizational assessments are complete. RPs will also be supported through grants to continue institutional strengthening and to support the institutional strengthening of smaller CSOs. Finally, RPs will select 1-2 staff that will be trained in how to train (TOT) and developed into Master Trainers and as lead agents in their technical areas who will go on to train multiple CSOs throughout seven counties in Liberia.

#### ***Strengthen CSOs in Seven Counties in Liberia***

Together with the RPs, IREX and its partners will deliver training and offer grants to CSOs in seven counties in Liberia. Like the RP training program, the CSO training programs will be customized based on each organization's needs assessment but will focus on institutional strengthening and advocacy. Small grants will be offered to CSOs who have completed their training program. IREX will offer institutional strengthening grants, advocacy grants and networking grants.

#### ***Develop CSO Media Plan***

IREX will develop a media plan to broaden and deepen the impact of CSO activities. Live coverage of CSO workshops on community radio, promotion of interactive programming, use of SMS networks and new media will be explored as channels to reach and educate a broader audience in the target counties.

#### ***Strengthen National Traditional Council (NTC)***

IREX will work with the Carter Center to bring NTC staff into the institutional strengthening CSO trainings in Monrovia, also based on an assessment. Additionally, IREX and TCC will engage county-level NTC representatives separately and include them in its CSO trainings when there are synergies, particularly in the areas of leadership, responsibilities of community leaders during the electoral cycle and dispute resolution.



IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing leadership and innovative programs to improve the quality of education, strengthen independent media, and foster pluralistic civil society development.

Founded in 1968, IREX has an annual portfolio of \$50 million and a staff of over 500 professionals worldwide. IREX and its partner IREX Europe deliver cross-cutting programs and consulting expertise in more than 50 countries.

## **PARTNERS**



The US Agency for International Development (USAID) is an independent federal government agency that provides economic, development, and humanitarian assistance around the world in support of the foreign policy goals of the United States.



The Carter Center, in partnership with Emory University, is committed to advancing human rights and alleviating unnecessary human suffering. Founded in 1982 by former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, the Atlanta-based Center has helped to improve the quality of life for people in more than 70 countries.



SI provides a full range of innovative management consulting, technical assistance and training services to strengthen international development programs, organizations and policies. SI works across sectors to reduce poverty; improve health, education and the lives of women and children; promote peace and democratic governance; strengthen civil society; foster economic growth; and protect the environment.

### ***Conduct Roundtables***

IREX will organize joint roundtables between government officials (including county-level NTC representatives) and CSOs and individual constituents to enhance understanding of one another and build positive perceptions between government, CSOs and citizens.

### ***Conduct Media Development Forum***

The Media Development Forum will serve as a space for the discussion of issues facing journalism in today's Liberia and the best and most practical approaches to tackling them.

### ***Provide Specialized Training and Consulting for Targeted Media Outlets and Journalists***

IREX and partner Liberian Media Center (LMC) will provide technical assistance to target media outlets and individual journalists to improve their operations. IREX and LMC will offer specialized reporting training which will include regular workshops or seminars, lasting between one to three weeks, to selected journalists on how to cover specific issues. Additionally IREX will develop a 1-2 year comprehensive journalist training program.

### ***Develop Women's Media Initiative***

IREX will work with the Liberia Women's Media Action Committee (LIWOMAC) to design a comprehensive strategy on advancing women in the media. The process will begin with a mapping exercise – a needs assessment - to identify priority areas, existing programs, partners and expertise. Following the assessment and consultations, the comprehensive strategy for advancing women in the media will be designed and a one year plan of action developed.

### ***Assist Business Development and Sustainability***

To assist media outlets in becoming sustainable, IREX will offer business development training. Additionally, outlets will have access to a business development fund to produce content, thus employing their newly gained skills.

### ***Create Model Radio Stations***

IREX will support targeted stations to become models for others. This will be done through equipment upgrades, skills training – both editorial and technical – and an innovative mentoring program.

### ***Organize a Mobile Phone Innovation Conference***

At the Mobile Phone Innovation Conference, IREX will explore the development of mobile phone SMS technology in villages in the targeted counties. Voice SMS will also be considered given the high illiteracy rate in Liberia.

### ***Advance the Right to Access to Information***

IREX and TCC will strengthen the consortium that is actively engaged in advocating for the Freedom of Information Act by providing training on promotion strategies and post-passage activities.