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20 February 2009

Dear Ms. Johansen,

Subject: Project Update and request for Extension to "wrap up" DDRR Final Phase in Liberia

I have the honor to inform you that the Norwegian funded DDRR Residual Caseload project, one of the most crucial programmes of the Liberian peace process is about to be completed. Your government generously made available an amount NOK 39 million through the UNDP to support the implementation of the reintegration programme for ex-combatants in Liberia -*the Reintegration Assistance to Liberia DDRR Programme Residual Caseloads Beneficiaries (DDRR Final Phase)*. This programme was implemented under a cost sharing agreement between the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme. I am further pleased to share with you, the latest update on the significant progress that has been achieved in supporting the reintegration of over 5,000 ex combatants in Liberia under the DDRR Residual Caseload project.

I would like to highlight that the implementation of activities under the final phase of the reintegration programme, though led by the NCDDRR, has been and continues to be a joint close undertaking with UNDP and UNMIL in line with project aims and objectives. Indeed, drawing on lessons learnt under earlier phases of the reintegration effort, the final phase has taken into account the highest consideration of the interests of the beneficiaries, the Liberian ex-combatants. Our approach entailed a careful match of the profiles of beneficiaries with the type of training they would receive, and various employment opportunities available in the communities where they would be reintegrated. Special attention was therefore placed on providing skills for available jobs and future sustainable income opportunities.

As the sole objective of the programme was to serve the best interests of the beneficiaries, and equip them with skills that would facilitate a smooth reintegration into their communities, UNDP, UNMIL and NCDDRR spent considerable amount of time and effort to first counsel the trainees on available job opportunities and then engage the 34 training partners that would provide training, in line with the training needs that were identified during counseling.

At the end of the training on 30 April 2009, the final phase of RR programme will be completed. We are in the process of initiating a transitional arrangement, as a first step of the exit strategy, in collaboration with other development partners and our national counterparts. The exit strategy is at two levels both political and administrative. On the political platform, the mandate of the NCDDRR expires on 18th April 2009. In this regard, UNDP and UNMIL are working closely with the Office of the Vice President to set up an inter-ministerial transition committee that will work to ensure an effective exit and wind down of DDRR programme. In addition, we are building on ILO technical Advisory services that focus on employment opportunities which interface within the wider framework of employment creation in Liberia.

Ms. Hilde Johansen
Senior Advisor Southern and West Africa
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Oslo, Norway.

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On the administrative side, there will still be a need to wrap up outstanding activities and close the programme by key staff. These activities will include disbursing all final payments, ensuring the registration of beneficiary cooperatives and NGOs (for those who have chosen this option), transferring of all assets under the programme to Government institutions and line ministries according to UNDP Rules and Procedures, tendering and implementing an external financial audit on the close programme, conducting a programme evaluation among other issues which need closure.

In order to address these issues, there is a need to extend the programme for a final 12 weeks period beyond 30 April 2009 to enable these crucial terminal activities to be carried out. A budget to facilitate this extension is hereby attached and can be accommodated comfortably from the project savings.

I will also like to bring to your attention that our office received an appeal from the Ministry of Education and supported by the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General (Governance and Recovery) UNMIL, for additional financial support to provide scholarships for the continuation of 1,523 beneficiaries in colleges and Universities around the country. These groups had received scholarship assistance under the former DDDR programme. For your information, between 2004 and 2007 RR programme, over 37,000 male and female youths benefited under the Formal Education component. In this regard, 1,523 DDDR beneficiaries in Colleges and Universities received scholarships assistance, in addition to another 211 beneficiaries with unpunched identity cards (proxies). In the interest of peace, our office has pledged an amount of \$ 100,000 as additional support to the Ministry of Education efforts. We do hereby seek your approval that the pledge of \$ 100,000 be covered from savings under the DDDR Residual Caseload project.

In the meantime we are pleased to submit the end of year report for 2008 and the combined third and fourth quarterly activity reports of the project.

In closing, I should like to take this opportunity to renew our sincere appreciation to the Government of Norway which has facilitated the implementation of this crucial chapter of DDDR in the history of Liberia. I sincerely hope that you will be able to travel to Liberia for the launching of the final graduation ceremony in early May 2009 as this programme has contributed immensely to the enhancement of an enabling environment for peace and security to continue blossoming in Liberia.

Sincerely Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DSC'.

Dominic Sam
Country Director

Cc: Mr. Jordan Ryan, DSRSG (Governance & Recovery) / RR/RC/HC
Mr. Boye Thorvald, Senior Advisor, Norwegian Embassy, Abidjan, C'ote D'ivoire.

**BUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS FOR THE 12 - WEEKS EXTENSION OF WRAPPING UP THE FINAL DDRRP
(May - July 2009)**

A. Programme Management	Duration	
1) Project Manager (L4)	12 Weeks	51,000.00
2) Field Coordinator (A3)	12 Weeks	36,000.00
3) Project Support Officer (ISSA)	12 Weeks	21,000.00
4) ILO Technical Support		
ILO International Consultant		
ILO National Consultant		20,000.00
5) National M&E Staff (x4) (SC)	12 Weeks	10,096.70
6) Drivers (x2) (SSA)	12 Weeks	4,558.91
Sub - Total		142,655.60
b) Operations & Maintenance		
1) Technical Evaluation & Financial Closure	12 Weeks	9,875.43
2) Vehicle Running Costs	12 Weeks	19,026.97
3) Printing Stationery and Supplies	12 Weeks	3,193.63
4) Premises & Maintenance	12 Weeks	8,322.35
5) Communications	12 Weeks	1,050.00
6) Security	12 Weeks	500.00
Sub - Total		41,968.38
Sub - Total		184,623.98
GMS (7%)		12,923.68
TOTAL REQUIREMENTS		197,547.66

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