



Social Safety Net Cash Transfers and Resilience Strengthening in Liberia

2015

Annual Work Plan

Programme Title: Ebola Crisis Response and Resilience Program in Liberia (ECRRP-L)

Country: LIBERIA

UNDAF OUTCOMES:

- O.2 The project will contribute to an inclusive and sustainable economic recovery at a household and community level as a contribution to national economic transformation
- O.4 The project will contribute to strengthening local governance structures and systems at the county, district and community levels.

EXPECTED CP OUTCOMES: Ebola-affected, labor-constrained, extremely poor, and poor households benefit from regular and predictable cash transfers to restore and strengthen their livelihoods. .

Country governance and development management structures and systems strengthened to provide effective service delivery (social safety nets).

UNDAF ACTION PLAN OUTPUT: O.2.1.3 (Productive) safety nets with focus on Ebola-affected, extremely poor and poor households, particularly small holder youth and women farmers.

O.4.4.3 Country service delivery (of social safety nets) informed by need and priorities of citizens.

EXPECTED PROGRAMME OUTPUTS : 3,000 Ebola affect and labor constrained households in extreme poverty benefit through regular and predictable cash transfer payments.

Participating counties will strengthen their capacity to address vulnerability and mitigate shocks including skill sets for planning, budgeting, management and citizen feedback on the safety net cash transfer assistance implemented in their jurisdictions

EXECUTING ENTITY: Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection

IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES: Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Ministry of Education and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Responsible parties:

- Ministry of Gender, Children and Social protection
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- National Apex of Village Savings and Loan Associations (NAPEX)

Implementing partners: UNDP Liberia

Narrative

This project seeks to provide a safety net for those households which have had a member succumb to the disease and on which quarantine has been imposed. It will extend a similar safety net to extremely poor and labor-impaired households which have been most vulnerable to the shocks that EVD has caused. Support will take the form of monthly cash distributions to qualifying households, which they will use to take care of their basic requirements for sustenance.

3,000 households in three targeted counties – Bong, Lofa, and River Cess counties to be determined by the Ministry and UNDP on the basis of an assessment of most pressing need – will receive cash transfers of up USD 50 for a period of 9 months, in accordance with government cash transfer guidelines. At the same time, the project will offer beneficiaries an opportunity to receive literacy (including numeracy) and enterprise skills training during the period of the project. Finally the project will support Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) in the participating counties with a capital supplemental of approximately USD 900 per VSLA to allow them to grant larger loans quicker to qualifying members who wish to make investments as they recover from the economic shock they have experienced during the EVD crisis.

In accordance with the Government of Liberia's (GoL) Social Protection Policy, the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MGCSP) will take the lead in implementing the social safety net cash transfers element, and will coordinate with key ministries and stakeholders which are able and willing to contribute complimentary support to beneficiaries in order to strengthen sustainable livelihoods and resilience against future shocks. Within the overall project framework, the Ministry of Education (MoE) will participate to organize adult literacy, numeracy and livelihoods training. The National VSLA Apex (VSLA NAPEX) will be an operational partner through which cash may be channeled to beneficiaries by way of their network of VSLAs in communities throughout the three counties, and through which beneficiaries will be able to build savings so as to obtain credit for productive investments. Implementation funding and capacity-building investments that will be made in support of all three partner institutions to ensure their ability to efficiently and effectively carry out their roles within the scope of the project and to enhance their effectiveness in carrying out their mandates over the long term.

The cornerstone of the project will be to strengthen the Liberian National Social Protection System as a nationally owned and implemented service which delivers coordinated and targeted protection programs to vulnerable segments of the population when and where they are required.

The first phase of UNDP support to the MGCSP will be for one year, and will entail USD 2,000,000 in total funding to the three partner organizations. 1,479,542 of this funding will come from UNDP internal funds for CY 2015, the balance being provided from a CY 2016 internal funding allocation.

Programme Period: May 1, 2015- April 30, 2016

Programme Component:
Ebola Crisis Response and Resilience Program in Liberia (ECRRP-L)
Programme Title: Sustainable Economic Transformation Pillar

Project ID: Social Safety Net Cash Transfers and Resilience Strengthening

Project Award: 00087545
Project ID: 00094502

Implementation Modality: National
Implementation Modality NIM

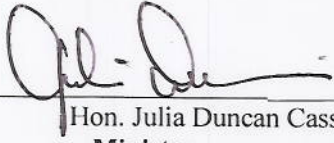
Implementing Agency: UNDP

Total Project Budget: **US\$ 2,000,000**

2015 Resources: **US\$ 1,479,542**

1. Regular Core –confirmed : **\$1,479,542**
2. Core Resources Available : **\$1,479,542**
3. In-kind Contributions (GoL):**N/A**

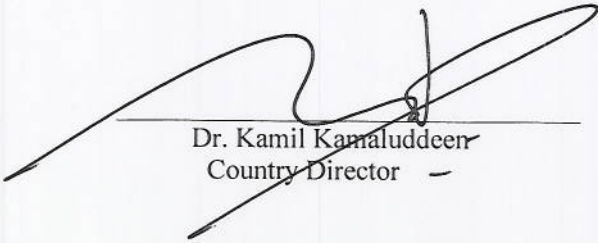
Agreed by (MGSP)



Hon. Julia Duncan Cassell
Minister

May 21, 2015
Date

Agreed by (UNDP in Liberia):



Dr. Kamil Kamaluddeerr
Country Director

20 May 2015
Date

Results and Resources Framework

<p>Intended Outcome as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resource Framework: n/a - Emergency</p> <p>Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets: n/a - Emergency</p>										
<p>Applicable UNDAF Action Plan (CAP) Key Result Area :</p> <p>i. Pillar 2: Sustainable Economic Transformation / Outcome 2: Natural Resource and Food Security / Output 2.1.3: Productive safety nets with focus on smallholder youth and women farmers expanded in selected target areas;</p> <p>ii. Pillar 3: Human Development / Outcome 3.4: Social Welfare / Output 3.4.3: The most vulnerable households and individuals receive appropriate safety net transfers</p>										
<p>Partnership Strategy:</p> <p>The principle partnership will be with the Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection (MGCSP) within the scope of the national Social Protection Policy, and the ministry's goal of scaling up of a social safety nets programme in all counties of the country.</p> <p>The project will also rely on partnership with the National Apex of Village Savings and Loan Associations, as a means of strengthening savings and loan support to poor, labor-constrained households in order to improve their livelihoods and strengthen their resilience to social/economic shocks.</p> <p>Partnership with the Ministry of Education (Department of Basic Adult Education) will build human capital within poor, labor-constrained households to provide added value to safety net assistance which contributes to longer-term livelihoods benefits.</p>										
<p>Related CP outcome: Economic transformation and poverty reduction</p>										
EXPECTED OUTPUTS A baseline associated indicators and annual targets	Planned Activities List activity results and associated actions	TIME FRAME				RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	PLANNED BUDGET			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		Funding source	Cash Transfer modality	Budget Description	Amount
<p><i>Activity Result 1.1: Ebola-affected, labor-constrained, extremely poor, and poor households begin to re-active and strengthen their livelihoods thanks to a reliable and foreseeable revenue stream in the form of safety net cash transfers.</i></p>										
OUTPUT 1: 3,000 households receive a "semi-conditional" cash	Activity 1: Sensitization, mobilization and planning with county	X				MGCSP	UNDP Core	DP	71600 Travel	Covered under Output 5

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<p>transfer of up to US\$50 per month for a period of twelve months. Baseline: The MGCSP currently provides cash transfer assistance in two counties to 4,000 households and individuals. With resources from this project.</p> <p>Indicators: # of households which receive regular monthly cash transfers</p> <p>Target: 2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,000 households in three counties (Bong Lofa and River Cess Counties) receive 9 monthly cash transfers or bi-monthly equivalents. 	<p>social protection sub-committees, as well as community authorities and stakeholders.</p> <p>Activity 2: Identification, screening, and selection of most-vulnerable households adversely affected by the EVD crisis.</p> <p>Activity 3: Delivery of cash transfers to approved/registered households via bank off-site distributions, through VSLA and/or mobile money.</p> <p>Activity 4: Conduct random Post Distribution Monitoring of beneficiaries</p>																					
		X	X	X	X																	

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Total: Output1:		Result Activity 1.2: Sensitization of beneficiaries so that they can model attitude and practices that contribute to prevention of further contagion of Ebola.							\$1,092,000		
OUTPUT 2: Beneficiaries of cash assistance will be strongly encouraged to spread the information/knowledge they receive from sensitization sessions by actively promoting actions/practices of Ebola prevention in their respective communities.	Activity 1: Coordinate with on-going Ebola prevention programmes in targeted communities to extend their promotion/training activities to project beneficiaries.	X					MGCSP	UNDP Core	DP	75700 Training, Workshop & Conference	Covered under Output 5
	Activity 2: Conduct sensitization/training activities in conjunction with cash transfers	X					MGCSP	UNDP Core	DP	72100 Contractual Services Companies	Covered under Output 5
	Activity 3: Conduct select Post Distribution Monitoring of CT beneficiaries to verify the extent to which practices are being adopted and modeled.						MOH	UNDP Core	DP	75700 Training, Workshop & Conference	Covered under Output 5
Baseline: There are a multitude of community awareness-building/training programs being conducted to promote appropriate health/hygiene practices designed to prohibit the spread of Ebola. Key for sustainable practices is to base promotion on active local modeling, in place of external promoters.			X	X	X		MGCSP	UNDP Core.	DP	72100 Contractual Services Companies	Covered under Output 5

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Management Cost Recovery Expenses	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	Core	DP	Publication 75100 F&A	2,000
Sub-total: UNDP													105,967
Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Protection													
Project Personnel (Regional Office)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	6000 Regular Staff Cost	45,375
Vehicle and motorcycle maintenance, repairs and spare parts	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	73400 Rental & Maint of Other Equip	9,625
Fuel for programme vehicle, motorcycles, and generator	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	72500 Supplies	15,583
Staff Travel Allowance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	71600 Travel	12,500
Office maintenance and cleaning	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	72100 Contractual Services Companies	1,600
Scratch Cards for staff and internet service	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	72400 Communic & Audio Visual Equip	4,267
Coordination, mobilization and training events & materials	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	72300 Other Materials and Goods	25,000
Public information and branding materials & events	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	72500 Publication	4,000
Purchase of vehicle and 3 motorcycles	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	72200 Equipment	48,500

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Purchase of generator for programme office 5.5KVA	X					UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	72200 Equipment and Furniture	1,500
Purchase of IT Equipment (3 Laptops & one printer)	X					UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	72400 Communic & Audio Visual Equip	4,400
Purchase office equipment, furnishings, supplies and renovations	X					UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	73100 Rental & Maintenance-Premises	12,000
Insurance of programme vehicle/motorbikes	X					UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	74500 Misc	500
Financial services (bank charges, guarantee costs etc.)	X	X	X	X		UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	74500 Misc	1,225
Advertising, production/printing of materials, IEC	X	X	X			UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	72500 Publication	4,000
Sub-total: MGCSP										191,775
Ministry of Education										
Literacy, numeracy and livelihoods training implementation costs	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	75100 Profession Fees	31,000
Sub-total: MoE										31,000
VSLA NAPEX										
VSLA Napex and County Coordinating Committee project management costs	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	UNDP Core	DP	75100 Profession Fees	17,000
Sub-total: VSLA NAPEX										17,000
Total: Output 5										314,742
Grand Total :										\$ 1,479,524

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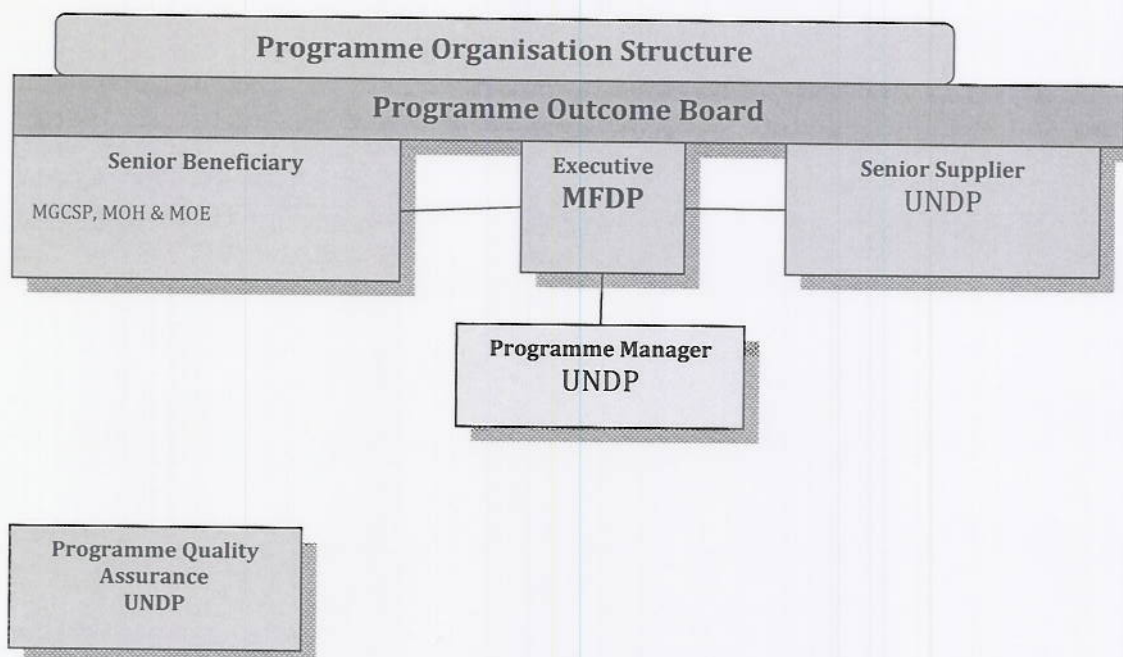
Implementation Plan:

Coordination and Operational Partnerships

The intent of the project is to bring together a range of national (public and private) and international actors, under the coordination of the MGCSP, to address the immediate needs of Ebola-affected, extremely poor and labor-constrained households for cash to meet their sustenance in the wake of the EVD. Through focused and multifaceted collaboration, the project will provide affected households with means by which they may recover and improve their livelihoods so as to strengthen their resilience to meet future shocks.

This project's actions and investments will be overseen, alongside other related interventions, by the National Social Protection Steering Committee, with a secretariat set up under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. It will be in that forum that this project's approaches can be harmonized and specific actions coordinated with similar interventions so as to form a coherent and comprehensive social protection programme which meets the needs of the most vulnerable segments of the population.

The project will also be implemented in concert with the Ministry of Education (MoE), which will coordinate the provision of literacy, numeracy, and livelihoods training in the communities targeted for cash transfers. In addition, the National Apex of Village Savings and Loans Association, will partner in coordinating the participation of VSLAs in targeted communities to provide the conduit for transferring and distributing cash to approved beneficiaries as well as potential beneficial financial to extremely poor households.



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Planning and execution in targeted counties will be coordinated with the Social Protection Sub-committees of the County Development Committees, under the chair of Development Superintendents.

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UNDP will support the MGCSP to establish its third planned regional office in Gbarnga, Bong County and to roll out safety net cash transfer operations in three new counties (Bong, Lofa, and River Cess). The project will provide MGCSP with a budget to establish its operational capacity in the region and counties.

UNDP will supplement the Ministry's capacity with the presence of one national (UNV) field monitor. The field monitor will support the MGCSP regional team's work in putting in place and implementing the necessary tools and processes (including information management) for monitoring and documenting the entire process of targeting, selection of beneficiaries, the distribution of cash assistance to designated beneficiaries, as well as complimentary support to beneficiaries (training) and VSLAs (capitalization).

Implementation will utilize the MGCSP's existing systems and procedures. The project will also take advantage of contributions by community-based social workers to be dispatched by the Department of Social Welfare. The MGCSP and UNDP will assess the existing regional management structure, systems/procedures/tools, and infrastructure and, based upon the results, UNDP will allocate programme resources to make the necessary strengthening investments to ensure effective and efficient implementation.

The MoE, with UNDP support, will implement activities of adult literacy and vocational and skills development in the counties and districts served by this project. The intention will be to utilize the services of teachers and other qualified persons to collaborate in their communities in conducting adult literacy classes and business skills to cash transfer recipients. The project will be based on existing curriculum, lesson plans and materials sanctioned by the Ministry. This project will supply financing to the MoE to ensure that adequate quantities and types of training materials are placed in the districts/communities where training will take place. If required, the Ministry will, with UNDP financial support from the project, organize training-of-trainers for those trainers with regard to scope, sequence and methods of teaching adult literacy and numeracy.

It is hoped that this initial intervention will be recognized in the communities and throughout the counties served for its important contribution to building essential human capital by the poorest, most vulnerable segments of the population, and that it will be expanded in scale and scope in the form of longer-term educational investments to ensure increasing access to an essential package of education to adult learners (two of the three counties report the highest incidences of adult illiteracy among in the country).

The VSLA NAPEX will participate as an operational partner with UNDP and the MGCSP for actually carrying out cash distribution by way of its network of established community associations. Those associations, comprising 25-30 members each, are positioned to provide front-line contributions in terms of: management of the cash transfer process in communities (facilitation of local banking, cash handling, and distribution to designated beneficiaries); and carrying out of first-level local accounting and ensuring that appropriately detailed support documentation on cash distributed and cash received is obtained and submitted). In addition the VSLAs represent the means by which longer-term livelihoods recovery and development will continue in the wake of this programme.

The project will coordinate with similar programmes which will be implemented by the World Bank and FAO, both bilaterally, as well as within the National Social Protection Steering Committee. It will focus particularly on ensuring that the investments made by the

three organizations are mutually supportive to meet the immediate and short-term recovery needs of targeted communities.

Safety net assistance should contribute to ensure that farming households plant to full capacity and improve their production/productivity. Through collaborative planning and coordination of interventions with FAO, it is hoped that complimentary assistance (material and technical) can be targeted toward communities and beneficiaries in support of the next planting season. Household livelihoods and resilience strengthening will also be supported through more active and stronger VSLAs which can effectively assist members accumulate savings and access credit for small-scale productive enterprises either from the VSLA or other sources of financing.

The project will invest in capacity building in support to the MGSP, the MoE, and VSLA NAPEX. This may include, but not necessarily be limited to support for: increased organizational capacity; development and training in systems and procedures (especially those associated with information management and accountability); and logistical support. In this regard, UNDP will be mindful to learn from, and build upon, prior UNICEF support to the MGSP for social protection cash transfers. Similarly, this project will be implemented to support and reinforce institutional capacity building foreseen in forthcoming World Bank safety net support to the Government of Liberia through the MGCSP.

VSLAs can serve as gateways into communities and households. They are voluntary associations that are set up to attract savings and grant loans to its members. As they are voluntary and self-governing, members can be from different socio-economic strata. However, as the poorest households have great difficulty accessing the formal banking sector (difficult access to banks located only in county capitals, prohibitively high fees for very small account holders, and an unwillingness of banks to lend to poor persons with little or no collateral).

As a conduit for cash transfers to poor households, VSLAs may offer several advantages within the scope of this project:

- ✓ Members of VSLAs are already organized and committed to the improving their lives and livelihoods;
- ✓ Most members are women (approximately 60% of VSLAs are formed as women's groups, the rest of the groups are mixed), who have been among the most affected by the EVD, and actively manage the well-being and needs of their families;
- ✓ VSLA members are committed to savings as a key element in building resilience; and through their savings gain access to credit for IGAs;
- ✓ VSLAs constitute an extensive network, present in all counties of the country; and
- ✓ VSLAs already possess bank accounts, and their members are versed in handling and accounting for funds entrusted to them.

Targeting

The effects of Ebola are not limited to the families who have unfortunately had members succumb to the disease or even those who have been obliged to be quarantined as a result of contact with sick persons. The economic effects caused by border and road closures, restrictions on market activities, job layoffs and reductions in earnings of the self-employed have occurred throughout the country, not just in counties with the highest incidence of the



disease. Safety net assistance can be provided in any county where the poorest households have had their livelihoods affected by the economic shock that the disease has brought about .

Mindful that a number of aid organizations will be providing social safety net and early recovery assistance in Liberia, this UNDP-supported and MGCSP implemented project should be implemented in a way that identifies gaps and fills them. In this regard, the Cash Transfer Working Group of the Early Recovery Cluster will serve as the forum for collecting, tabulating and diffusing information on “who is doing what where” (3W), ideally resulting in members collectively targeting their interventions in a coordinated manner to ensure that coverage is as wide as possible to meet all identified needs, while avoiding overlap/duplication. Likewise, the technical working group can be used to harmonize the amount and duration of cash assistance provided, as well as implementation modalities (i.e. eligibility criteria; identification, screening and selection procedures) among concerned actors, so that best practices are widely employed throughout the country.

County Targeting

This project will roll out in three counties that have been assessed on the basis of available data in terms of the following metrics: 1) level of Ebola infection, 2) percentage of the population living in food insecurity, 3) incidence of global acute malnutrition among children under 5, and 4) the presence (or lack thereof) of other aid organizations with livelihoods or social protection programmes. The degree to which Ebola has affected each country and the level of known programming coverage we accorded higher weightings. Having weighted each county against those criteria, and taking into account the MGCSP’s expansion plan for cash transfer assistance, the counties chosen for roll-out are:

- Bong
- Lofa
- River Cess

Gbarnga in Bong County will be the site of a new MGCSP regional office. Project funds will be used to establish and maintain the Ministry’s office in that location. Lofa County will fall under the responsibility of the Bong Regional Office. While Lofa may have been ranked in the mid-tier of counties, it is found to be among the counties that has been most affected by Ebola and among those relatively under-served. It has an extensive border with Guinea. River Cess has been selected by the MGCSP for roll out within the scope of this project in order to extend safety net assistance to a particularly under-served county.

District Targeting Within Counties

In partnership with the MGCSP and in close consultation with each county’s Development Committee and informed stakeholders (i.e NGOs, religious leaders, CBOs, among others) the most affected districts will be identified and prioritized. A first criteria should rightfully be those districts where there have been confirmed cases of Ebola and quarantines. Districts with high incidences of extreme poverty, food insecurity, and child malnutrition along with those which are under-served in terms of social assistance and development projects will be accorded targeting priority.

Ideally, once districts are identified for targeting, every possible effort will be made to conduct cash transfers to eligible households in all communities/villages of those districts. This should be undertaken to minimize misunderstanding and social tensions among

communities within the same district, so that the project does not adversely affect social cohesion.

Household Targeting Within Districts/Communities

The MGCSP has developed rigorous procedures and tools for surveying, registering and screening potential beneficiaries of safety net assistance. Those systems will be employed in the implementation of this project, though the ministry and UNDP will collaborate with the Ministry in assessing them to make them as cost-effective to implement as possible. The criteria/indicators used to select ultimate beneficiaries will be objectively verifiable so as to be the least subjective as possible, as well as clearly and easily understood to community members and their leadership. Eligibility criteria in order of priority/importance will be:

- A. Households with documented Ebola patients (present or past; deceased or recovered)
- B. Households on which quarantine has been imposed
- C. Households headed by a single female, an elderly (>60), handicapped, or young member (<18)
- D. Households with children <5 being treated for MAM/SAM
- E. Households with a dependency ration of 3 or greater
- F. Dry meat (bush meat) sellers and hunters who need to develop alternative livelihoods

Meeting any one of the above criteria would make a household eligible for assistance.

Care will be taken to liaise with organizations which already may be providing assistance to households with Ebola patients (i.e. in the form of food aid to quarantined households, solidarity kits to survivors, death benefits, etc.) to identify households already receiving assistance so as to avoid redundancy and to ensure that those not receiving assistance do so in the form of cash.

Before being used in first level community assessments, the criteria will be analyzed and validated with MGCSP staff and a representative sampling of informed local stakeholders in each county.

The beneficiary selection process will be inclusive. In each community, the project will bring community leaders and respected community stakeholders (including the chairperson of VSLAs) together as a cash transfer steering committee which will:

- ✓ Work with MGCSP field staff to inform community members of the project, raising awareness of its nature, purpose, methods, timeframe, and expectations of beneficiaries.
- ✓ Identify an initial list of community households which, to their knowledge, meet the objective eligibility criteria established by the MGCSP. The list presented by the community coordination committee will be subjected to screening by MGCSP staff, assisted by a UNDP field monitor .

- ✓ Participate in a final beneficiary validation process in which the results of the MGCSP's screening will be put forward for public scrutiny to identify any selection errors/omissions.
- ✓ Assist the MGCSP in making arrangements for orderly registration of beneficiaries and distributions (convoking chosen beneficiaries, arranging any required security measures on registration/distribution days, and helping organize associated awareness-building and training events).
- ✓ Serving as a first channel of reception of complaints for the attention of the MGCSP and, if the nature of the complaint warrants, UNDP.

One or more pre-implementation meetings will be carried out to orient and train community cash transfer coordination committees and VSLA committee members who may carry out cash distributions prior to commencing the process of beneficiary identification, screening, selection and registration.

Initial beneficiary lists provided by coordination committees will be screened and vetted by way of direct visitation to households by MGCSP, aided by UNDP field staff, utilizing standardized assessment tools. Duly screened/vetted community lists of beneficiaries who meet eligibility criteria will be submitted to a MGCSP/UNDP project management steering committee for final approval prior to formal registration.

Community VSLAs may be operating partners for actual cash distribution activities if deemed operationally viable/capable. The community steering committee will convoke approved beneficiaries for registration to be carried out by MGCSP field staff (or a cooperating NGO partner, when pertinent). ID cards will be issued to a designated adult female family member, unless compelling considerations warrant that a male member receive the transfer, in representation of the household. The beneficiary card will have a date of expiry and will contain the designated recipient's important information (i.e. national identification number, address/location, a photo, number of eligible family members, etc.).

At that time, key information will be gathered on beneficiary households to serve as a baseline for assessing the results/impact of the project on household welfare and livelihoods. In parallel, information will be collected from a sampling of other community households to establish a control group against which to measure and assess results accruing to beneficiaries. Such baseline information will include, among others: household demographics, food consumption levels and food diversity (by way of quick 7-day recall), off-farm sources of revenue (formal and informal) and income generated, agricultural production (acreage planted, last harvest amounts), household debt levels and sources.

After six monthly cash distributions, beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries will be re-surveyed to monitor changes in their status/conditions. Between the full surveys, monitors will randomly visit beneficiary households within the scope of a Post Distribution Monitoring (PDM) plan to check on how households utilize their cash assistance and the impact it has on their lives. Base line data will be collected on community economies. The same indicators will be monitored through PDM and analyzed to identify any "multiplier" or "ripple" effects of the cash transfers. Monitors will also seek out unforeseen difficulties or problems that will be addressed during the course of implementation.

On registration day, beneficiaries will be provided a standard orientation on the nature/purpose of the assistance, the terms and conditions associated with the assistance, the timing and procedures for the payment of transfers, how recipients will acknowledge receipt of payment, and mechanisms/channels that will be in place for beneficiaries to make complaints about improper treatment by staff (particularly incomplete payment, harassment, or solicitation of kick-backs) or quality of service. The number of disbursements and the anticipated end date of assistance will be very explicitly and clearly conveyed to beneficiaries and reiterated throughout the life of the project.

Cash Transmittals and Distribution

Safety net cash assistance will be provided to qualifying households on the basis of a family size in accordance with a scale adopted by the MGCSP for social safety net cash transfers. Those rates will be:

- 1 person household LD 1,700 (USD 20.00)
- 2 person household LD 2,550 (USD 30.00)
- 3 person household LD 3,400 (USD 40.00)
- 4+ person household LD 4,250 (USD50)

The rates have been established in consideration of the acute shock to households resulting from the EVD crisis. At the same time they are set at levels that avoid creating a disincentive to a household pursuing all available avenues for generating income to meet its needs. Likewise, the amounts should not dis-incentivize recipients from participating in livelihoods development initiatives. In the future, however, the government could elect to adjust lower safety net assistance levels to address household needs resulting from non-acute (structural/chronic vulnerability) shocks.

During the peak of the EVD crisis, VSLAs, as organizations, suffered along with their members. As members' livelihoods declined and they were forced to adopt coping mechanisms to provide for their sustenance, many suspended their regular savings and even stopped paying back loans. Capital for new loans was very tight.

While VSLAs now report resumption in regular savings in many cases, it will take time to recuperate the capital lost during the crisis. To accelerate the process so that VSLAs can make more/larger loans to their members to meet their investment needs, the project will provide capitalization to VSLAs operating in the counties where CTs will be conducted.

The amount of capitalization to be provided to VSLAs will be proportional to the savings rates of each association as established by their constitutions. New capital will be granted to VSLAs at a ratio to savings of 5:1.

The programme will utilize the existing bank accounts, cash handling, and cash accounting capacities of participating VSLAs. On the basis of approved lists, UNDP will deposit the allotted funding in the designated VSLA bank accounts. Prior to the first disbursement, the VSLA NAPEX and VSLAs will sign operating agreements with UNDP which will govern receipt, distribution and accounting for funds from this programme. Prior to beneficiary registration and orientation, UNDP and the MGSP will organize a series of regional and sub-regional

orientation workshops for VSLA leaders (executive committee members, especially treasurers) which will provide them with all they will need to know about the systems and procedures that will be implemented in the course of making cash transfers. Special attention will be paid to how “quasi-conditionality” will be carried out.

UNDP will make bank transfers into the designated bank accounts of participating VSLAs according to a pre-agreed beneficiary lists and calendar of distributions. Deposit confirmation documentation will be sent to participating VSLAs by way of the MGCSP field staff or designated NGO partner. VSLAs will be provided with standardized forms for documenting beneficiary receipt of allotted cash, which will be designed by UNDP and MGCSP, in concert with the VSLA NAPEX and cooperating NGO partners.

VSLAs will make payments from the funds deposited into their accounts to designated beneficiaries on dates and times to be officially established by UNDP and the MGCSP. VSLAs may recommend making cash distributions on multiple days if they believe that handling less cash is preferable to ensure security. With the assistance of the MGCSP or a cooperating partner NGO, and in concert with the concerned community cash transfer steering committee, each VSLA will be responsible for establishing appropriate security measures at an official distribution site. The MGCSP and UNDP will establish guidelines on distribution site security and provide VSLAs with the necessary training and guidance. Those VSLA members who withdraw and handle funds from association accounts will do so according to the rules and regulations stipulated in their by-laws and duly vetted by UNDP/MGCSP. Duplicate copies of signed cash receipt forms will be drawn up by VSLAs, one copy of which will be sent to the MGSP for inspection, certification and dispatch to UNDP for approval and accounting. Each beneficiary ID card will contain space to record and acknowledge each cash receipt.

During planning at the county level, an assessment will be carried out of conditions that might indicate the feasibility of the use of Mobile Money as a means of transferring cash (signal coverage, a critical mass of mobile phone users, adequate Mobile Money distribution capacity of the service provider – especially agents - and adequate liquidity). When conditions are deemed right, one or more pilot groups will be organized to test the efficiency and efficacy of that means of cash transfer. The pilot groups will be subject to particular monitoring within the scope of PDM.

Awareness, Training and Conditionality

The relatively short duration and the urgent nature of the programme, and the limitations facing some households that are labor-constrained do not justify that strict conditionality be set for receipt of safety net cash transfers. However, assistance will be framed as “semi-conditional”. The semi-conditional element of the cash transfers refers to UNDP’s principle to support unconditional cash that encourages individual beneficiaries to make productive investments in time and effort toward their advancement. Lessons learned from UNICEF’s unconditional cash transfer programmes over a number of years have illustrated a strong relationship between unconditional cash programmes and significant improvement in social indicators. This has informed UNDP’s approach to encourage beneficiary participation in training rather than establish it as a condition. Local communities and individuals identify their own priorities, can make their own choices, and experience has shown that households improve health practices and invest in educational when they get cash transfers.

Beneficiaries will be actively encouraged to participate in at least one of two opportunities that will contribute to increasing their human or financial capital:

1. Take part in literacy, numeracy and business skills training offered by the MoE and/or other institutions;
2. Join a VSLA, adhere to its rules and conditions, and regularly make share savings deposits (relevant for those who are not currently members of a VSLA).

Within the scope of the National Social Protection Strategy and Policy, as it relates to promoting "productive social protection" for those able to participate in such actions, UNDP and the MGCSP will consult extensively with county, district and community authorities and stakeholders on what types of productive investments are of importance to their development plans. If and when viable options arise and appropriate for recipient households, non-conditional transfers could be modified to take the form of conditional transfers (cash for work or cash for training) during the course of implementation. Such would be contingent on adequate technical and operational planning, and the availability of the necessary accompanying technical and financial resources.

All beneficiaries will receive Ebola awareness and prevention training in conjunction with monthly cash distributions. Education sessions will be conducted before each distribution. The programme will coordinate with the Ministry of Health and/or designated organizations in the country/district to obtain lesson plans and materials, as well as schedule event trainers. As part of post-distribution monitoring, follow-up will be conducted with households to document how beneficiaries practice the lessons they received and whether they were passing on or modelling those lessons to others in the community.

Adult Literacy, Numeracy, and Business Skills Training

Schools have been closed in Liberia in an attempt to reduce the potential for communal gatherings in public places and avoid close contact between people. They will finally open in February. The loss of income by some teachers and other professionals, will have left them in a financial hole which will take months to remedy. Some will welcome an opportunity to teach evening or weekend training sessions to earn some additional income. Unemployed youth may also be tapped to serve as literacy trainers. In such cases, they will be provided the necessary training on didactic methods and the curricula for literacy and numeracy training.

The coverage of existing adult literacy programs is insufficient to address the needs of the large segments of the population who remain illiterate. The momentum established within the scope of this programme will provide a spring board for putting in place longer-term literacy programming, in scope and scale, to address the full extent of the problem in the three counties.

Existing or enhanced curricula and lesson plans developed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) will be used. UNDP will coordinate with MoE their participation in/support for the program in the form of oversight of the training activities for the purposes of quality control. If necessary, the programme will support rapid teacher training in adult education methods. The program will offer a stipend of LD 4,250 (US\$50) per month to motivate trainers to provide their services at night and/or on weekends. In any case, care will be taken to avoid providing an unintended motivation to teachers to neglect or abandon their duties as full-time instructors in formal educational facilities.

Besides existing teachers working in the education sector, literacy/numeracy/livelihoods skills trainers will be sought from among interested, available and qualified persons who are unemployed, have experienced job suspensions or income reductions. For the purpose of the first levels of literacy training, even unemployed youth who have completed high school could be recruited to conduct basic literacy/numeracy sessions, while benefiting from the opportunity to earn some short-term income in the form of CFW. After the project, those trainers could form a ready cadre of adult educators who might be integrated and utilized within the scope of longer-term, more extensive programs of adult education.

Two of the three counties targeted by this programme are among the three counties in the country with the lowest percentage of the population categorized as literate. The literacy rate among women will likely be lower than their county's average.

Livelihoods skills training will be another contributor to building/strengthening of human capital, which will have direct influence on the building of financial capital. Skills training provided to beneficiaries will contribute to strengthening the growth and development of the VSLAs and participants in other micro/small enterprises. VSLA leadership has cited such training as a key necessity among their members. The project will seek out and utilize skills training curriculum, lesson plans and methods utilized by other organizations, such as those which have been implemented by CARE in the county of Bong in support of over 100 VSLAs.

At this time, it is assumed that approximately 33% of beneficiaries (approximately 1,000) will elect to participate in adult literacy and skills training. It is safe to assume that the training described above would meet a need of not only beneficiaries of cash transfers, but many, if not all, members of the targeting communities. So as not to deny such an important opportunity to only select groups within communities, training will be open to all persons interested in participating. In fact, overwhelming demand will signal a need to the concerned authorities and to partners such as UNDP and others, that expanded, longer-term programmes should be developed to address fully the manifested need.

VSLA Membership

Membership in a VSLA offers several benefits to women and men who represent their households. While there apparently is an extensive network of VSLAs throughout the country, still many households have yet to take advantage and join one. Participating members of existing VSLAs will be strongly encouraged to promote the values and benefits of a VSLA, seeking out potential new members from among others in their communities.

To become a VSLA member, candidates will have to meet existing admission conditions and be formally approved according to VSLA procedures.

Improving the livelihoods of existing and new members should contribute to longer-term growth and development of the associations. Their ability to sustain their operational capacity will assure more and better service in support of their membership, with beneficial effects to their respective communities at large.

Roll-out Strategy

Recognizing the imperative to begin introducing liquidity into the households and communities of targeted counties/districts as soon as possible, while responsibly ensuring that effective targeting is carried out; systems, procedures and tools for efficient cash distribution and accountability are designed, validated and put in place; appropriate and effective associated training is designed, planned and implemented; effective monitoring systems and tools are designed and implemented; and required supplemental staff can be recruited by the MGCSP and UNDP, the project will commence roll-out in one county, Bong, utilizing approximately USD 2 million of UNDP internal funds (\$1,479,542 in 2015 and the balance in 2016). Expansion will take place as additional funding is approved from external sources.

The county of Bong will be the “beta” for UNDP’s full-scale implementation. Cash distribution will be provided to 3,000 households in a yet to be determined number communities, pending the identification and validation process. Roll-out in the other two targeted counties will occur by mutual agreement between the MGCSP and UNDP based on analysis of the extent of need in Bong County in relation to the resources in hand, or when additional funding is secured.

The MGCSP and UNDP will closely monitor distributions systems, procedures and tools for effectiveness and efficiency, with changes made as warranted. The methods employed for community sensitization, local cash distribution steering committee formation, reliability of beneficiary identification, screening, selection and registration will be assessed and honed as required.

Financial Disbursement and Reporting

Financial Accountability: The Implementing Partner (MGCSP) shall be responsible for ensuring that the allocated resources for the Annual Work Plan are utilized effectively in funding the envisaged activities and will be responsible to sign the combined delivery report in consultation with the Responsible Party (RP).

Under this program arrangement, the RP with specific work plan shall request funding directly from the UNDP based on the approved annual work plan in the application of the direct cash transfer modality. However, the MGCSP as the Implementing Partner shall be kept informed of all such requests and the UNDP shall inform the MGCSP of all such disbursements to the Responsible Party.

Under the National Implementation Modality arrangement, all requests for payment shall originate from the RP. The RP shall maintain a tracking system for the purpose of ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the combined delivery report. The tracking system in place shall ensure that envisaged disbursements are within the approved budgets. The tracking system shall track the disbursements and the commitments besides capturing expenditure records through direct payments and support services made by UNDP on behalf of the Implementing Partner.



Cash Transfer (NEX Advance) modality: The Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) modalities will be applied during the period of this program subject to current and or future results of capacity assessment. This shall be negotiated on a case-by-case basis specific to the circumstance of the IP and the RPs.

Where direct cash payment is applied, disbursement shall be done on a calendar quarter and the replenishment of such advances shall be subject upon submission of the financial report of the prior quarter expenditures. The Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenditure (FACE) will be used as the financial reporting and request instrument. UNDP financial rules and regulations will apply on NEX Advance management, i.e. 80% of all previous outstanding NEX Advance/s made to the IP under all UNDP programmes/projects must be accounted for with supporting documents before the next NEX Advance is made to the IP.

As part of quality assurance, the MGCSP and the UNDP shall ensure the timely liquidation and reporting of NEX advances. Any advance that is not liquidated two weeks following the submission deadline will result in the suspension of the Advance modality application to the IP and or the RP where applicable and payments will be effected on the basis of direct payment requests until such time that the outstanding advance is liquidated and the corresponding financial report is submitted.

Direct payments: As agreed, UNDP country office shall make direct payments to other parties for services procured by the Implementing Partner in accordance with the Annual Work Plan. Funds will be disbursed to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by the Implementing Partner on the basis of requests signed by the designated official of the IP. Direct payments will be made to vendors or third parties for obligations incurred by UNDP in support of activities agreed with Implementing Partner.

The MGSP designated official will sign the request for direct payment. For UNDP to procure the goods and services included in the AWP, Implementing Partner will draft the technical specifications for goods and the terms of reference for the services to be procured. Documentation of payment by the Country Office must be made available to the Implementing Partner. A register for such requests shall be maintained to facilitate follow-up.

Direct Agency Implementation: UNDP conducts expenditure from requisition through to disbursement with no cash being transferred to the implementing partner. However, the implementing partner has full programmatic control and so full control over expenditures – refer to Letter of Agreement between UNDP and the Government of Liberia for the Provision of Support Services.

Direct project Costs (DPC) are cost that are incurred by UNDP that are execution-driven and are incurred for and can be traced in full to, the delivery of the project inputs. These execution-related costs are complete separate and distinct from General Management Support (GMS) cost that are incurred by UNDP regardless of the implementation/execution modality chosen for the projects.

DPCs normally relate to operational and administrative support activities carried out by UNDP offices on behalf of Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) or Country Office support to National Modality (NIM) projects such as:

- a) HR activities, including recruitment of project personnel, issuance of project personnel contracts, etc
- b) Costs incurred in the process of undertaking procurement activities of project goods and services and
- c) Finance transactions that are performed on behalf of an implementing partner.

Financial Reporting: The UNDP, when requested shall provide a monthly print-out of project finances to the Implementing Partner prior to the release of the CDR. The Implementing Partner should verify the Expenditures/disbursements and revert to UNDP for any correction to be made. On quarterly basis, UNDP will submit to the Implementing Partner the Combined Delivery Report (CDR) for verification and signature as a true record of quarterly expenditure report.

Fiduciary Compliance: In managing the Annual Work Plan resources, the Implementing Partner has fiduciary and compliance responsibilities to UNDP. It also has compliance responsibility for UNDP's reporting procedures.

Procurement of Goods and Services: Liberia's Government established rules and procedures governing procurement may be used when Government procures, as long as it does not contravene UNDP's rules and procedures. However, UNDP must be informed of procurement processes within the Implementing Partner and when necessary UNDP must be represented in procurement committees that are held to evaluate quotations and bid offers.

Both the IP and the RP shall maintain a fixed assets registry of all equipment procured during the program duration. Ownership of equipment, supplies and other properties financed from the UNDP funding shall be considered as UNDP's, unless title is transferred on purchase. Matters relating to the transfer of ownership by UNDP shall be determined in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures of UNDP.

V: MONITORING & EVALUATION

Monitoring is a continuous function that aims primarily at providing management and main stakeholders of a country programme or a project with early indications of the progress, or lack thereof, towards delivering intended results. Effective monitoring is not demonstrated by merely producing reports in a prescribed format at set intervals. As a minimum, on annual basis, the following monitoring activities must be carried out in accordance with the programming policies and procedures outlined in the UNDP User Guide:

- On quarterly basis, progress reports on implementation of the different program activities by both the IP and the RPs shall be submitted to the MGCSP. The MGCSP will then submit the consolidated program progress report to the UNDP.
- An Issue Log shall be activated in Atlas and updated to facilitate tracking and resolution of potential problems or requests for change.
- A risk log shall be activated in Atlas and regularly updated by reviewing the external environment that may affect the AWP implementation.
- A Monitoring Schedule Plan shall be activated in Atlas and updated to track key management actions/events
- An annual review shall be conducted during the fourth quarter of the year or soon after, to assess the performance of the AWP and appraise the Annual Work Plan (AWP) for the following year.
- A representative from the UNDP office should visit each project at least on quarterly basis. Field visits serve the purpose of results validation and provide latest information on progress for annual report preparation. Field visits should be documented through brief and action-oriented reports, submitted within the week of return to the office.
- Joint M&E Visits will also be undertaken to include the MGCSP & UNDP, the IP and the RP.

AUDIT CLAUSE

Audit is an integral part of sound financial and administrative management, and part of the UNDP's accountability system. Audit services cover the overall management of the project's implementation, monitoring and oversight. The audit of projects nationally implemented by Government or by non-governmental organizations will be more of a financial nature that is ultimately meant to have the auditors express their opinion on:

- The annual expenditure (Combined Delivery) ;
- The assets and equipment;
- The cash position of a given project.

To this effect, the audit work should include the review of work plans, progress reports, project resources, project budget, project expenditure, project delivery, recruitment, operational and financial closing of projects (if applicable) and disposal or transfer of assets. As part of its assurance responsibilities, UNDP will conduct spot checks on the assets and documentation on the use of project resources.

Annual Audit

Annual audits will be conducted by the legally recognized auditor of the Government, or by a private audit firms engaged by UNDP in consultation with Government Coordinating Agent in accordance with the established procedures set out in the Programming and Finance manuals.

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