



PEACEBUILDING FUND (PBF)
ANNUAL PROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2012

Programme Title & Project Number	Country, Locality(s), Strategic Results ²
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Youth Service Programme for Peace and Development (NYSP) • PBF/LBR/D-11 • MPTF Office Project Reference Number:³ 80551 	<p>Country Liberia</p> <p>Locality (Counties) Bong, Bomi, Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Grand Bassa, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, Montserrado, Sinoe</p> <p>Strategic Results Promotion of National Reconciliation – (Component 2 of the Liberia Peacebuilding Programme).</p>

Participating Organization(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF (Recipient Agency) • WFP (Partner agency)

Implementing Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Youth and Sport • Ministry of Agriculture

Programme/Project Cost (US\$)	
MPTF/JP Contribution	\$1,000,000
Agency Contribution UNICEF (OR)	\$320,000
Government Contribution	\$140,000
Other Contributions	
AusAid	\$800,000
WFP	\$425,000
Netherlands	\$246,000
TOTAL	\$2,931,000

Programme Duration
Overall Duration: 16 months
Start Date⁴: 1 December 2011
End Date (or Revised End Date)⁵: 31 March 2013
Operational Closure Date⁶: 30 June 2013
Expected Financial Closure Date: 31 March 2013

Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Evaluation
Assessment/Review - if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>
Mid-Term Evaluation Report – if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>

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¹ The term "programme" is used for programmes, joint programmes and projects.

² Strategic Results, as formulated in the Performance Management Plan (PMP) for the PBF, Priority Plan or project document;

³ The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to "Project ID" on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

⁴ The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

⁵ As per approval by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

⁶ All activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF programme have been completed. Agencies to advise the MPTF Office.

I. Purpose

The National Youth Service Programme (NYSP) falls under the Reconciliation component of the Liberia Peacebuilding Programme, with the expected Outcome of **conflict mitigation, enhanced social cohesion and youth empowerment**. For youth empowerment, the expected output is *‘reduced youth potential for violence through the creation of a National Youth Service Programme’*. The programme cycle is for three years, but the first year was spent in LPP and programme development, leaving 2012-14 for implementation.

The NYSP is an integrated peacebuilding and development programme that aims to address several key issues related to youth, including both public sector service delivery and private sector development, that will have a catalytic effect at the local level and nationwide. In the public sector, the programme will focus on strengthening capacity and delivery of social services in the 4 sector areas of Public Administration, Education, Health and Social Welfare, and Youth Development through Youth Centers. Peacebuilding and leadership skills are covered during the induction training and then delivered as a cross-cutting area throughout the year of service in the target communities. For the private sector, the programme seeks to expand livelihood and economic opportunities of youth through a fifth sector, Agriculture, and the development of a business and technical skills.

The programme creates the platform for young university, college and technical school graduates to be afforded the opportunity to contribute to nation building while simultaneously developing their skills and experience for career development. For the first year of the programme, 150 National Volunteers (NVs) were recruited to serve in 11 counties, with an additional 500 ‘at-risk’ or ‘disaffected’ rural youth targeted through the Agricultural component which is managed in partnership with World Food Programme (WFP). These 650 young people are targeted as agents of change in their community and are therefore considered primary beneficiaries. However, the true impact of the programme is captured among the ‘secondary’ beneficiaries – the communities and young people that benefit from their services across the country. The programme addresses youth related issues through a multi-faceted approach that includes youth participation in public service delivery, career development, skills training and reduced youth potential for violence. To support the skills development of youth in private Agricultural sector, and facilitate the creation of rural assets as a means of providing sustainable livelihoods, 17 NVs with higher level degrees in agriculture were selected to assist with the implementation of WFP Liberia’s productive safety net interventions in five counties (Bomi, Bong, Gbarpolu, Lofa and Nimba). The interventions entail an innovative agricultural value chain approach through the strategic activities including:

1. Empowerment of youth groups through promotion of lowland rice production, including organizing youth groups in collective agricultural production units.
2. Empowerment of female youth through incorporation into women managed community grain reserves (CGRs) to reduce seasonal food insecurity.
3. Developing the capacity of smallholder farmer groups including youth through WFP’s Purchase for Progress (P4P) project through post-harvest handling training and strengthened market linkages.
4. Promotion of vegetable production through establishment of school gardens.

The Strategic Performance Management Framework for the LPP cites the Programme component Outcome as ‘alternative dispute resolution mechanisms address religious and ethnic cleavages, and strengthen the peaceful conflict mitigation, social cohesion and national identity building in particular among inter-ethnic youth groups’. There were inconsistencies in the LPP design. The previous model of NYSP was the National Youth Volunteer Service (NYVS), which targeted university and technical school graduates who delivered social services in health and education in the counties. However, this group is different from the ‘disaffected’ youth that were to be targeted for livelihood development, particularly in Agriculture. These inconsistencies were addressed by partnering with WFP for the Agriculture component. UN Women accessed funds directly from the PBF and separately from the LPP allocation, to implement activities captured under 2.2.3. However, WFP has demonstrated results in this category as well.

II. Results

The Project Outcome is to ‘Reduce youth potential for violence through the creation of a National Youth Service Programme’, with the primary indicator articulated as ‘150 University or technical/agricultural institution educated and graduated Youth enrolled as National Youth leaders in NYSP programme, and additional 500 ‘at-risk’ or disadvantaged youth enrolled in the Agricultural component’.

By 2012 end, 170 National Volunteers (NVs) were working in 76 rural communities in 11 counties; including 41 public schools, 8 hospitals, 6 clinics, 17 agricultural projects, 6 Offices of the Superintendent for Development and 7 youth centers. The rural communities are the primary beneficiaries from an increased delivery of social services related to peacebuilding and development. NVs themselves have benefitted with better career prospects through the critical skills and experiences gained. The programme was up-scaled more NVs enrolled. This was possible with the additional Fast Track initiative funding from the Government of Netherlands ‘Peacebuilding, Education, and Advocacy’ (PBEA) global programme.

Institutional strengthening and public service delivery under the programme’s Education sector have considerably improved. Quality of teaching, number of students and percentage of teachers in classrooms with university education has improved in the 41 schools where NVs are employed. Principals of beneficiary schools said that they would be unable to teach Mathematics and Science without the NYSP support. In Grand Gedeh County, the percentage of teachers with university degrees has increased from 6.6 % to 17 %. Some schools have up-scaled from 10th to 11th grade and increased student population by as many as 150. These results confirm that NYSP have improved both access and quality of education thus contributing to better educated Liberians with skills and knowledge for the job market.

The NYSP agricultural component successfully involved 876 “high risk” youth in 2012. The NVs participated in community sensitization and mobilization activities for lowland rice production and Community Grain Reserves (CGR) activities. They closely worked with local youth CSOs and identified 337 “high risk” youth (175 girls and 162 boys) in target communities to participate in the WFP food-for-work and cash-for-work initiatives; and an additional 539 women as CGR members. In addition, 111 young women are performing a leadership role within the CGR management structures. Besides the short-term benefit of receiving food or cash for work, the youth participants have the skills and knowledge to practice sustainable farming such as rice cultivation.

Led by the NVs, youth participation in community agricultural infrastructure development activities has also united community members under a common objective. The NVs have also been instrumental in establishing new groups and reinforcing and empowering existing ones. Several youth farmer groups said that by actively participating in the consultation and sensitization process, they could build greater trust in their communities. Therefore, the programme has significantly contributed to peaceful reintegration of “high risk” youth in their communities. The NVs have also implemented community specific development initiatives to promote peaceful integration of “high risk” youth within target communities. Utilising the skills gained during training exercises, over 60% of NVs have already submitted project proposals to WFP. NVs based in Salayea, Lofa County organised a district football tournament in which 208 youth participated. The district commissioner attended the tournament and it also received local radio coverage.

Outputs

The National Youth Service Programme (NYSP) was established following a series of assessment and consultative missions to the six core counties of Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Maryland and Sinoe. Further assessments were undertaken in counties with youth centers (Cape Mount, Nimba and Bomi counties). New programme staff members, including the Programme Manager (previously with NYVS), were recruited in an open and transparent process involving members from the government (MoYS and Peace Building Office (PBO), UNICEF and UNMIL). The programme staff were given an initial contract of six months with the possibility of extension/renewal for another six months.

The fourth batch of NVs was recruited with UNMIL Civil Affairs and UNICEF Liberia support. Of the 310 who applied, 205 were shortlisted for interview. The Vetting Panel⁷ further short-listed 159 applicants since the rest did not qualify because of age (above 35 years) or did not have the required documents. Some were graduates from unaccredited health institutions and some high school graduates without any skills. The selected candidates attended a five-week induction course in May-June 2012. They were trained in Peacebuilding and leadership; facilitation and presentation skills and project management. They were also sensitized on sexual and reproductive health; malaria control and awareness; teacher education; psychosocial counseling; community participatory approaches; gender and personal development. They were also trained in business planning, youth entrepreneurship, financial management and farming as business, farm tools management, pest control and crop management. A sports event was also organised.

In June, Programme Officers (POs) were deployed to the six county offices in Bong, Lofa, Grand Bassa, and Sinoe, Maryland and Grand Gedeh. The offices are well-equipped with motorcycles and office stationaries including printer/copier machines and laptops. In December 2012, the NYSP programme received a pick-up truck. Logistical support for establishing the new offices were provided by UNICEF and UNMIL. USAID Advancing Youth also provided support to the Bong County office.

Though funds for the agriculture component were disbursed only in September 2012, WFP had already started to work with NVs in Lofa, Bong, Nimba, Bomi and Gbarpolu counties. The volunteers were briefed on the target communities they were going to serve. They also attended two days of training on improved crop production practices especially for rice and legumes; construction of small scale irrigation structures and using community mobilization approaches. WFP conducted the training in collaboration with FAO. To further develop the volunteers' agricultural knowledge and skills, WFP assigned its NGO partners as joint supervisors. Similar trainings will be held in Bomi and Gbarpolu counties in the first quarter of 2013. The volunteers will also attend a workshop on design, implementation, monitoring and reporting on productive safety net programmes.

Since the training, NVs have trained youth target groups on crop production, post-harvest handling and quality improvement of rice and cassava. They have also delivered trainings in leadership and governance, participatory planning, book keeping, community ownership and institutional development of farmer groups.

1.1 150 National Youth Volunteers assigned to schools, health clinics (including SRH and psychosocial), youth centers, and agricultural projects in 9 counties (Bong, Lofa, Grand Gedeh, Maryland, Sinoe, Grand Bassa, Cape Mount, Montserrado, and Bomi)

As of July 2012, all volunteers have been deployed to all the nine counties. They are all serving at their assigned institution/duty stations. The following is a list of sector updates:

Education Sector: The volunteers assisted the schools with student registration, supervised entrance examinations and provided outreach services to out-of-school children/youth. They also created awareness on peacebuilding and development and organised community clean-up campaigns. In Bong, the volunteers conducted adult literacy classes and organized peacebuilding events for youth. Together with NGO Right to Play, a week-long training workshop on leadership and coaching was organised for 117 youth from two districts. The volunteers are also engaged in 'mentor-to-mentor' programmes with Peace Corps volunteers and have developed links with the USAID Advancing Youth programme. In Grand Bassa, the NVs supported the development of an adult literacy programme, distributed school stationaries provided by UNMIL troops and provided outreach services to prisoners. The volunteers also attended a 10-day Advancing Youth Project workshop on adult literacy, carried out a lecture series on the 'Importance of Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution' in close collaboration with local Youth groups.

⁷ Vetting Panel comprised MoYS, MoHSW, MoPEA, Liberia Peacebuilding Office, Association of Liberian Universities, United Methodist University and UNMIL Civil Affairs.

In Grand Gedeh, the Toe Memorial School upgraded its classes from grade 10 to 11 because of the volunteer teachers. Enrolment rates for Tuzon Elementary and Junior High schools almost doubled from 215 the previous year to 383 following the volunteers' door-to-door awareness campaigns on the government's free education policy. In Lofa, the volunteers provided community outreach services for out-of-school children, student registration and clean-up campaigns while in Maryland, they organized PTA meetings and a workshop on curriculum usage and classroom management. The volunteers also supported UNMIL to collect data on enrollment, drop-out and completion for the 2011-12 academic session. In Sinoe, the volunteers conducted Community Peace Education workshops, launched school garden peace projects and organised weekly counseling and mentorship for prisoners of the Greenville Central Prison.

Health: The volunteers were assigned either to hospitals and clinics or to the health ministry. They supported in creating awareness on various health issues such as prevention of malaria and diarrhea, STDs and teenage pregnancy. They also advocated for family planning and provided psychosocial counseling services (including prisons). Some volunteers helped with registration, screening, patient care while others provided HIV&AIDS counseling. They also worked on Gender Based Violence (GBV) issues as part of the GBV Task-force in Maryland and GBV hospital department in Bong.

Youth Development: The NVs assigned to Youth Centers (YCs) worked with local youth groups to conduct awareness and community clean up campaigns. In Bong, volunteers have been teaching MS Office package (Excel, Access and Word) at the Amoscom and Pushed In computer schools. The volunteers in Bomi, Montserrado, Cape Mount, Grand Bassa, Bong and Nimba have been supporting UNICEF's Connecting Classrooms programme that trains students on IT, cross-cultural exchange and community journalism.

Public Administration: The volunteers are assigned to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to provide administrative and technical support to county authorities. In Bong, the NVs collaborated with the Gbarnga Regional Justice and Security Hub to conduct outreach activities on peacebuilding and security. They also supported to plan activities and disseminate information during the bi-monthly press meetings and organizing community town hall meetings.

1.2 500 'at-risk' or disadvantaged youth assigned to agricultural/rural livelihood projects

Agriculture: Following WFP's training of the volunteers in data collection, engaging high risk youth groups and working with existing women's farming projects, the NVs have closely worked with local youth CSOs. They identified 337 "high risk" youth (175 girls and 162 boys) in target communities to participate in the WFP food-for-work and cash-for-work initiatives; and an additional 539 women as CGR members. In addition, 111 young women are performing a leadership role within the CGR management structures. Besides the short-term benefit of receiving food or cash for work, the youth participants now have the skills and practical knowledge of farming such as rice cultivation. In Gbarpolu, the volunteers provided technical advice to youth farmers and supported establishment of agricultural cooperatives. They also provided leadership and management training. The volunteers are working towards forming a women's group (Salayah) and to launch school gardens. In Bomi, the volunteers have been working on pre-nursery preparation and also in conflict management initiatives related.

1.3 Educational facilities provided with teaching resources

This activity was delayed and will be implemented in the first quarter of 2013.

1.4 Health facilities provided with resources for advocacy and awareness campaigns, plus additional materials

This activity was delayed and will be implemented in the first quarter of 2013.

1.5 Youth centers provided with resources to facilitate computer literacy, a business center, reading and research materials, sporting and event activities, training, and job placement assistance

This activity was delayed and will be implemented in the first quarter of 2013.

1.6 To promote awareness of both youth and communities in programme counties on peacebuilding, reconciliation, development and major government policies.

These activities are on-going with a part of the monthly operational budget allocated to the POs which have played a major role in the on-going government and donor peacebuilding initiatives. For instance, the POs assisted with the conflict analysis process under the Peacebuilding, Education, and Advocacy (PBEA) programme, the national Out of School Children consultation with education ministry officials and participated in regional consultations. They also functioned as vital links between young people, school management and communities and facilitated recruitment of Junior Volunteers for Youth Led Social Cohesion, an initiative under NYSP with PBEA funds. The objective is to recruit local Peer Educators for Peacebuilding and Leadership training in conflict prone communities under the refugee affected counties of Nimba, Grand Gedeh and Maryland. The POs have also supported data collection for the NYSP baseline and other perception surveys for monitoring and evaluation.

1.7 Community social cohesion is strengthened and local conflicts are reduced through Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms.

Early monitoring of NVs provided two key issues and programme responses related to this Output. Firstly, the NYSP Induction training did not sufficiently provide training on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and conflict resolution. Many volunteers mediate and monitor conflicts and establish peace clubs in schools and communities. Secondly, NVs are assigned to communities they don't belong to and therefore they do not necessarily understand the local dynamics of conflict or speak the local dialect for more in-depth mediation. Based on these findings, it was found imperative that local young volunteers could be recruited under the NYSP. With additional funding, the 'Junior National Volunteers for Youth Led Social Cohesion' (JNVs) was launched in Grand Gedeh, Maryland and Nimba counties. JNV is implemented by the Peacebuilding Office, Ministry of Internal Affairs in partnership with MoYS. In October 2012, 45 (15 from each of the counties) JNVs were recruited. In November 2012, they attended a 21-day Training of Trainers programme in Peacebuilding, Leadership, Early Warning and Advance Mediation. The JNVs were deployed in December to 54 rural communities where they will further train 540 beneficiaries. These beneficiaries will serve as peace committee members in their communities. The project will be complete by June 2013.

1.8 To provide an opportunity for university, college and technical/Agricultural institution graduates and 'at-risk' or disadvantaged Youth to acquire personal development, leadership, and technical skills that will enhance their capacity to access the labor market.

The real impact of this output can be determined only after the 2012-13 batch of Volunteers complete their services. However, some NVs have already dropped the programme after they received job offers from the sectors they were serving, especially in Agriculture.

1.9 Development of a Business and Technical skills internship programme that engages partnership with corporations, SME's and/or supports Youth entrepreneurial activities.

This output was delayed based on the need to re-allocate funds to cover NYSP personnel for 2012 final quarter and also to avoid duplication of similar activities by other partners. The AusAid fund will pick up a related activity to establish 'business centers' in youth centers and discussions are underway to identifying how this will be implemented.

Communication Strategy: In line with its communication strategy, work plan and budget, the NYSP developed and broadcast a weekly radio programme titled 'Youth in Action'. The programme highlights the activities and perspectives of the volunteers in the field. To create awareness on NYSP among policy makers and the general public, NYSP developed a logo, printed brochures, T-shirts, stickers, a 25-minute documentary and a theme song on its objectives, activities and results. Some national newspapers have also published news articles on NYSP's training programmes and its contribution to the agriculture sector. NYSP is collaborating with NGO Talking Drums studios to develop a radio drama on volunteerism for peacebuilding and development. NYSP is also partnering with the Peacebuilding Office to develop and disseminate IEC materials including radios programmes and videos on peacebuilding activities. As part of the Education and

Peacebuilding project, UNICEF developed the first Liberia-based Sara comic book under the Sara Communication Initiative in partnership with the Liberia Association of Writers. Titled *Sara and the Plum Tree Palaver* (dispute), the package includes a comic book, an information pamphlet and a poster. The objective is to promote a culture of tolerance, reconciliation and peace among children in the formal and non-formal education systems. The comics will be disseminated widely across schools and youth centers in 2013.

Catalytic Funding: The LPP-NYSP received US\$ 800,000 from the Government of Australia in November 2012. The funds are being utilized to better equip youth centers, establishment and operation of the JNV for Youth-Led Social Cohesion programme and expansion of NYSP to Nimba and Grand Cape Mount counties. The Government of Netherlands approved US\$ 246,000 and 2013 funding for \$540,000. These funds will be utilized for implementing various activities under the NYSP and associated JNV activities till July 2013. New partnerships were established between UNICEF-MoYS and the Peace Corps for strengthening the training and institutional partnerships between line ministries under the education sector. UNICEF-MoYS and World Bank are already discussing on developing an operational guideline and implementation manual for the existing programme in line with the National Youth Employment Programme.

Explain, if any delays in implementation and analyse the risks:

The general elections and the formation of the new government also delayed project implementation. The project's main implementing partner, MoYS, did not have a minister till February 2012 and Deputy Minister for Youth Development till May 2012. In their absence, the ministry could not commit to programming decisions and implementation of the project. With multiple partners involved in the project, it is a big challenge to convene all partners and make quick decisions since national ownership of NYSP is critical. UNICEF global financial management system migrated to a new software in late 2011. Funds received during that period, which includes the PBF-L, did not appear in the new system until January 2012 thus causing delays in project implementation. The MoYS is responsible for recruitment, funding and operations of the NYSP. However, cumbersome administrative and financial processes within the ministry have delayed implementation. For example, the requirement for multiple signatories on cheques has delayed payment for operational expenses. Similarly, procurement of supplies requires several signatories and tax/business documents from bidders. However, most Liberian business houses which bids for the supplies lack adequate documents thus causing delays. Distribution of motorcycles to the POs in the counties was also delayed because of the long time it took to register, insure and receive license plates. The recruitment and eventual deployment of the education volunteers coincided with the school vacation. The volunteer education programme activities therefore had to be rescheduled until June 2013.

Qualitative assessment:

The NYSP is a complex and multifaceted programme with a wide geographic coverage. Therefore, the results will vary based on sector and location. However, initial results indicate that the programme has contributed to further improvement and strengthening of the sectors where the volunteers were deployed. For example, the quality and access to education in the target communities have improved. Similarly, services under health, agriculture, public administration and youth sectors have also improved. However, the programme activities in the various sectors also have challenges affecting activity implementation. For instance, volunteers applying for the health sector are limited and therefore cannot be deployed to all health facilities where their services are urgently required. The Youth Development sector did not get funds on time mostly because of administrative and financial processes. Overall, the interventions in the youth sector are weak, with majority of funds allocated to the justice and security component and considerably lower for preventative security and youth issues. These issues are being addressed through planning and re-design of the activities. These changes and lessons learned would contribute to timely, efficient and effective project implementation, especially for the next batch of volunteers. Despite limited funds and other implementing challenges, NYSP have benefitted members of target communities with better health, education and other social services. The volunteers themselves are better trained and equipped with life and livelihood skills to support themselves and their families.

Quantitative reporting on results

INDICATOR BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

	Performance Indicators	Indicator Baselines	Planned Indicator Targets	Achieved Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance	Source of Verification
Outcome 1⁸ Reconciliation: Conflict mitigation, enhance social cohesion & youth empowerment	See M&E Framework for LPP					M&E Framework for LPP
Output 1.1 Reduced youth potential for violence through the creation of a National Youth Service Program	150 university/technical graduates enrolled as National Youth leaders under NYSP. Additional 500 'at-risk'/disadvantaged youth enrolled in Agriculture sector.	-No NYSP. -Zero Enrollment. -Zero 'at-risk' or disadvantaged youth.	150 National Volunteers 500 'at-risk' or disadvantaged youth engaged in agriculture.	170 National Volunteers 876 'at risk' or disadvantaged youth engaged in agriculture	Catalytic funding and up-scaling of programme, WFP targets exceeded planned indicators based on higher programme enrollment and supporting funds.	Programme based M&E (UNICEF and WFP) MoYS field reports and liquidation receipts

Note: The MoYS has taken over full ownership of developing a robust M&E plan that is still currently under development.

iii) Success Story

Conflict dynamics being addressed: Youth disempowerment is one of the key conflict factors, related to a number of interrelated issues stemming from lack of education, inability to access service delivery, skills development and/or productive livelihoods and jobs. The NYSP address the overwhelming challenges youth face through a multifaceted approach. National Volunteers are agents of change and positive role models in the communities and institutions that they serve in. Most significant change will vary depending on the sector, county, and community of assignment. The NYSP has empowered youth through social, political, and economic interventions and targeted the delivery of critical state social services through improved education, health and public service delivery. It has also developed skills, including productivity and organizational representation, of rural females and youth in the agricultural sector.

Project Interventions: The programme intervenes at both interpersonal and the social-political level. At the interpersonal level, it strives to give young people the confidence and skills to be community leaders and resolve conflicts in a peaceful manner. It helps young graduates to gain work experience and skills while contributing to national development. For rural youth benefitting from the agriculture sector, it has improved their livelihoods and skill sets. The NVs delivering education and health services in remote rural communities generate a sense of well-being and the perception that the government is responsive to the nation's complex development and peacebuilding requirements. The programme has also strengthened MoYS's capacity by establishing a Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit which can monitor government youth development programmes and provide on-going technical training to its staff, as well as set priorities based on evidenced research. The programme targets multiple levels of change with a comprehensive youth empowerment strategy.

Result: The benefits are at personal and socio-political levels. On the personal level, the volunteers feel empowered to be the change in their assigned communities by achieving peacebuilding and development results. They are teaching in classrooms, working for the local government, assisting health workers, and conducting outreach and learning activities. All these responsibilities instill in the young volunteers, a sense of empowerment for positive change. At the socio-political level, communities' attitudes of the government are changing with better access to social services and other needs of the community and the youth population. Students are learning math and science, and schools are accelerating their teaching level based solely on the presence and capacity of the NVs.

⁸ For PBF: Either country relevant (from the Priority Plan or Project Document) or PMP specific.

Under the JNV programme, incidence of domestic violence has reduced and community conflicts related to land issues are being addressed. The NYSP also addresses the ‘Monrovia/urban’ versus ‘County/rural’ divide by sending University volunteers to serve in remote rural areas. Since the volunteers are assigned to communities that they do not belong to, they learn and appreciate the local culture thus creating a sense of belonging and national unity in diversity. Community members and leaders appreciate the services and leadership they deliver – so overall this process lessens discrimination and negative (tribal based) perceptions.

III. Monitoring Arrangements

The Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation (RME) Unit under MoYS was established with the project funding. The unit Director and other staff members were recruited through a competitive selection process. The selection members included representatives from MoYS, MIA/PBO, UNICEF and UNMIL. The panel also selected Development Management Associates (DMA), an international consultancy firm, to conduct a baseline pre-validation survey of the programme⁹. DMA also trained Programme Officers and other MoYS staff to use PDA systems to conduct the survey. Since establishing unit, several monitoring tools have been developed, including a revised M&E strategy and SOP for routine M&E exercises. The unit has also identified specialized research priorities and studies to be conducted.

UNICEF and MoYS conducted regular joint field monitoring visits to the project sites. There has been strong complementary monitoring and engagement in the counties where UNICEF has field offices and presence (Grand Gedeh and Maryland).

However, monitoring visits to remote counties such as Lofa and Sinoe have been irregular. With more resources and personnel, monitoring in these counties is expected to improve in 2013. Further improvement of the M&E system is being developed. The programme itself will be restructured and absorbed under the wider National Youth Employment Programme, with UNICEF and the World Bank providing technical support to this process. This will allow future volunteer batches (2014-15) to be integrated into the MoYS regular budget.

IV. Future Work Plan (if applicable)

The 2013 Work plan with major activities is as follows:

Activities	Date/Month
- Recruit Training Coordinator. - Finalize MoU with Peace Corp and MoYS for induction training, review and revision of all programme related ToRs. - Strategic planning sessions with partner ministries. - Establish learning committee	March
- Recruit 175 National Volunteers. - Develop and validate induction training manuals.	April-May
General induction training for all NVs.	June
Sector specific training sessions for all NVs (4 weeks for Education sector volunteers and 1-2 weeks for other sectors).	July
Deploy NVs to institutions/target communities.	August
Regular monitoring and follow up of each sector in all counties.	September-December

⁹ The pre-validation DRAFT DMA Baseline survey will be uploaded with the Report.