



**PEACEBUILDING FUND (PBF)
FINALPROGRAMME¹ NARRATIVE REPORT**

REPORTING PERIOD: FROM 12.2011 TO 03.2013

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/XX/J-2 MPTF Office Project Reference Number:³ 	<p>Country Liberia</p> <p>Locality (Counties) Bong, Bomi, Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Grand Bassa, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, Montserrado, Sinoe and Grand Gedeh</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, NGOs

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	\$786,000
TOTAL	\$3,471,000

Programme Duration
Overall Duration: 16 months
Start Date ⁴ : 1 December 2011
End Date (or Revised End Date) ⁵ : 31 March 2013
Operational Closure Date ⁶ : 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: dd.mm.yyyy
Mid-Term Evaluation Report – if applicable <i>please attach</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: dd.mm.yyyy

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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.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The NYSP is an integrated peacebuilding and development programme that aims to address several key issues related to youth capacity building and empowerment, including in both public sector service delivery and private sector development, that has had a catalytic effect at the local level and nationwide. In the public sector, the programme focuses 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 were delivered as a cross-cutting area throughout the year of service in the target communities. For the private sector, the programme sought to expand livelihood and economic opportunities of youth through a fifth sector, Agriculture, and the development of a business and technical skills in rural Liberia.

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.

In the Public Sector area of Education NVs teach a variety of courses across a range of different grade levels. Most teach between grades 4 and 12, with a high concentration on the transitional years and exam preparation – from elementary to junior high, from junior high to high school, and for completion of high school through the West African Examination Council. NVs teach English, Mathematics, Health, Science, and Economics along with holding mentorship and coaching sessions. In some cases they also assist with school management and extra-curricular activities – such as assisting with school gardens, fundraising for school improvement, and running a variety of clubs. In the Health Sector NVs also provide a variety of services; including patient screening, patient testing, patient treatment, and patient counseling along with providing health education on a variety of issues and conducting awareness and clean up campaigns. Many of the NVs are concentrated in the Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) sector. In the Youth Development Sector many of the NVs assigned to Youth Centers were re-assigned to UNICEF’s connecting classrooms programme or assisted with the management of Youth Centers that were operational. Those in the Public Administration sector represented the County Superintendents office through the Development Superintendent and assisted with (or sometimes carried out) the duties of that office. All NVs conduct regular Peacebuilding and Leadership activities, such as holding forums on a variety of topics, mediating civic disputes in the community, facilitating elections, and hosting radio talk shows. Finally, all participating NVs were provided with career development training and a job fair event before graduation.

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, 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 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 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. For the 2013-2014 "5th Batch" of Volunteers UNICEF and the MoYS will partner with USAID Food and Enterprise Development (FED) and the Advancing Youth Programme (AYP).

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 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.

In recognition that Youth are a heterogeneous group with different challenges and needs, the NYSP addresses youth-related issues in a differentiated and comprehensive fashion, which encompasses public service provision (primarily in Education and Health), career development, skills training, and reduced youth potential for violence through the following components:

1. **Peacebuilding & Leadership:** Peacebuilding is about fostering non-violent communication skills such as peaceful conflict resolution methods and mediation. The training and activities in this cross-cutting area focused on conflict management skills such as: self-awareness, self-respect and anger management. It will enhance the understanding and application of values such as equality, tolerance and respect. Leadership modules focus on taking initiative and developing skills for democratically engaging political structures and inciting community change.
2. **Education:** The education component focuses on filling the serious gap of qualified human resources in the education sector by providing teaching services in junior high and senior high schools, adult literacy programs, and teacher training programs – with a particular emphasis on the sciences, economics and sociology.

3. ***Health (including Sexual and Reproductive Health, Psychosocial)***: NVs selected to work in clinics were recruited from professional institutions and non-universities that specialize in medical and health issues. NVs support health institutions, and specialize in Sexual and Reproductive Health and Psychosocial needs. This has addressed Youth specific concerns related to early pregnancy, family planning, and STDs (including HIV-AIDS) such as testing, treatment and counseling.
4. ***Youth Development (Youth Center Management)***: Youth centers will become centers of creativity and capacity development that will offer resources such as: peacebuilding and leadership skills training, computer literacy, internet service, business skills center, library, sporting activities and cultural events. NVs were recruited to manage Youth Centers' services and develop standard monthly activities, including the provision of computer literacy training.
5. ***Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods***: Agricultural production contributes towards 40 percent of Liberia's GDP and as a sector presents the greatest potential for generating sustainable livelihood options in rural areas, therefore it is important for development of this sector that also combines skills training for agriculture-related enterprise and connecting to markets. NVs with agricultural degrees provided mentorship and guidance to 'at-risk' and disadvantaged female youth.
6. ***Public Administration***: Young graduates with degrees in public administration were assigned to local government at the county administration level through the Ministry of Internal Affairs Development Superintendents office. These young graduates can contribute to decentralized, county level development work working with local authorities.

II. Assessment of Programme Results

- i) Narrative Reporting on Results:

Outcomes

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 to two additional counties and 20 additional NVs were recruited for the Education Sector. 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, upscaling significantly from the planned 500. 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.

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 with the first year spent in 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 public sector service delivery and private sector development with a catalytic effect at the local and national level.

In the public sector, the programme focuses on strengthening capacity and delivery of social services in the four 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 target communities. For the private sector, the programme seeks to expand livelihood and economic opportunities of youth through Agriculture and development of business and technical skills. The programme provides an opportunity for young university, college and technical school graduates to contribute to nation building while simultaneously developing their skills and experience for career development.

Outputs

Outputs/Activities not Captured in the Original Programme Matrix are as follows:

Assessment of Six Counties

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).

Recruitment of NYSP Personnel

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 the Peacebuilding Office PBO), UNICEF and UNMIL. The programme staff was offered an initial contract of six months with all extended for an additional six months. They are currently serving on 'bridge' contracts that expire at the end of August, 2013.

Recruitment of 'fourth batch' of National Volunteers

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 Panel 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.⁷

Induction Training

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.

Deployment and Procurement of Supplies

In June, 2012 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.

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.

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,

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

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. The overall number of schools benefiting from the programme is 41.

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, STIs 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. There are 8 hospitals and 6 clinics benefiting from the programme.

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. Currently, there are 7 youth centers benefiting from the programme.

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. In total, 6 Offices of the Superintendent for Development are benefiting from the programme.

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

Agriculture: 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 were 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.

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. The overall number of agricultural projects benefitting from the assignment of NVs is 17.

1.3 Educational facilities provided with teaching resources

Due to budgetary constraints and new government ministry protocols within the procurement process, this activity was not completed during the programme cycle. It will be implemented in the third quarter of 2013, under the new programme cycle.

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

Due to budgetary constraints and new government ministry protocols within the procurement process, this activity was not completed during the programme cycle. It will be implemented in the third quarter of 2013, under the new programme cycle.

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 has been significantly delayed but will be implemented in time for the deployment of the next (fifth) batch of National Volunteers in the third quarter of 2013. The procurement process has taken much longer than was initially expected due to the new protocols of the government ministries, however some progress has been made and some of the items have already been procured. All the Youth Centers will be equipped with computers, photocopiers, printers, libraries, sporting equipment and all other necessary resources to enable the planned activities for which the Youth Centers were designed. These activities will include computer literacy classes, study sessions for students, sporting events, peacebuilding workshops, career development and so on.

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 created 54 Community Peace Committees, and they will further train 540 beneficiaries. These beneficiaries will serve as peace committee members in their communities. Despite that the project is still ongoing, it has been reported that 97 disputes have been resolved through ADR rather than the formal justice system through the CPCs and JNVs. 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.

An exit training session was held for all the 150 NVs for 3 days on Career Development. The training session involved instruction in interview techniques, in writing a CV, and other general guidance in order to prepare them for entering the job 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.

Additional Activities not Captured in the Original Programme Matrix, are as follows:

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.

RME Unit: 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 programme⁸. 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.

⁸ The pre-validation DRAFT DMA Baseline survey will be uploaded with the Report.

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.

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. Some schools have upgraded their classes from grade 10 to 11, some schools have doubled the number of students after the NVs started teaching there. And all 41 schools where NVs are employed have significantly increased the number of teachers with a university degree. Similarly, services under health, agriculture, public administration and youth sectors have also improved. However, the programme activities in the various sectors 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, funding for the youth sector is limited, with majority of funds allocated to the justice and ‘response’ 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.

Many of the conflict drivers that led to the instability and violence are still present in Liberia, specifically related is the high level of unemployment amongst the youth and a continued lack of engagement in decision making and opportunities can stimulate agitation and dissatisfaction amongst the most active part of society. The NYSP has aimed to address such issues in a number of ways. The National Volunteers, throughout their intensive training and deployment into the field are able to gain highly applicable skills towards future employment, as well as significant knowledge in leadership and peacebuilding. The program also allows them to engage with the communities within which they are deployed and promote greater social cohesion and the opportunity to transfer the skills they have achieved to more youth. Through the Agricultural component the National Volunteers are able to reach out to “high risk” and unemployed youth, transferring their knowledge and skills to enable more youth to support themselves in the private sector or to gain employment. The NVs in the Educational sector are able to increase the capacity of local schools, thus greatly increasing the opportunities of the youth in the community. The work in the Health sector encourages the spread of awareness and information in SRH and family planning to provide support for the more vulnerable people of society and thus giving them greater opportunity to support themselves. The Youth Centers directly address the issues of employability by promoting activities in computer literacy, leadership and career development. The Junior National Volunteers have created 54 Community Peace Committees, each with ten members, allowing youth to directly participate in peacebuilding and decision making in their communities. Through these activities, the NYSP has begun to successfully address the causes and drivers of conflict in Liberia.

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 funding for US\$ 246,000 in 2012 through the ‘fast-track’ system, and \$540,000 in 2013. 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 educations 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.

ii) **Indicator Based Performance Assessment:**

	<u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets (Cumulative over funding period)	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
<p>Outcome 1⁹ Reconciliation: Conflict mitigation, enhance social cohesion & youth empowerment</p> <p>Indicator: See M&E Framework for LPP Baseline: Planned Target:</p>			M&E Framework for LPP
<p>Output 1.1 Reduced youth potential for violence through the creation of a NYSP Indicator 1.1.1 Baseline: No NYSP. Zero enrollment. Planned Target: 150 National Volunteers</p>	170 National Volunteers	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.
<p>Indicator 1.1.2 Baseline: Zero ‘at risk’ or disadvantaged youth. Planned Target: 500 ‘at risk’ youth engaged in agriculture.</p>	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.

⁹ Note: Outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets should be as outlines in the Project Document/Priority Plan or PMP specific so that you report on your actual cumulative achievements against planned targets. Add rows as required for Outcome 2, 3 etc.

iii) Evaluation, Best Practices and Lessons Learned:

In the period from December 2011 to March 2012 full assessments were completed in the six core counties and of all ten existing Youth Centers in Liberia. The primary objectives of the assessment were:

- Meet with key county authorities in all ten counties to raise awareness of the NYSP and to plan implementation
- Establish potential roles and responsibilities of County Authorities for NYSP
- To gather lessons learned from previous involvement with peacebuilding and education programmes from those involved in its implementation
- To locate and lay the ground work for the establishment of NYSP support offices
- To identify institutions for placement of the NVs
- To identify host families for NVs
- To assess the current operational capacity and resources of the Youth Centers
- To meet with the county Peace Committees and establish potential linkages with their organization and conduct an evaluation of their current involvement with Youth in the community and potential synergies and linkages between activities
- To meet with other critical NGOs/CBOs and key stakeholders involved in the counties of operation conducting work in the areas of Education, Health, Agriculture, and Youth services and establish an information sharing and coordination mechanism
- To locate areas of potential linkages and synergy building with stakeholders in the relevant component of the NYSP
- To locate potential agricultural activities and entry points for that component
- To hold consultations with local Youth groups, to share information and hear their expectations and potential contribution to the NYSP
- To identify potential conflict hot-spots or themes of conflict locally that will need to be addressed under the programme

Each county and Youth Center had an official Assessment Sheet written up with a list of all stakeholders met and a synopsis of their input and recommendations for the county.

In June the MoYS conducted a follow up assessment of the Youth Centers in Bomi, Grand Bassa, Nimba and Gbarnga. The report highlighted a number of issues that affected the functioning of the Youth Centers. First of all the Youth Center Management Teams structure was confused and disorganized, resulting in great difficulties when it came to the running of the centers. From this assessment it was acknowledged that a comprehensive set of Torso is needed to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the members of the YCMTs. This is currently being addressed. Another major difficulty facing the Youth Centers is the lack of resources and equipment. This is due to a variety of reasons; usage, theft or damage. Without the resources and equipment the NVs and YCMTs have struggled to maintain the activities at the centers. Due to budgetary constraints and delays in the procurement process this issue is yet to be addressed, however as highlighted the procurement process is currently ongoing and this will be resolved in the third quarter of 2013, in time for the next batch of NVs to be deployed to the Youth Centers.

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.

The problems experienced in procurement of resources and equipment for the Youth Centers, and to support the Educational and Health care sectors have been highlighted. The greatest challenges lie in the new protocols in the procedure for government ministries and also a lack of human resources in this department. This difficulty has been recognized at all levels and measures will be taken in the next programme cycle to prevent a repetition of such issues.

Monitoring and evaluation of the NYSP has been significantly lacking, and has caused some problems in the implementation of the programme. For instance, the difficulties experienced at the Youth Centers were not highlighted as quickly as they could have been, and thus it has taken some time to address these issues. Therefore, an M&E Unit has been established for the programme with the view to comprehensively monitor and report on the programme in the next programme cycle.

iv) A Specific Story

In June 2012, the National Youth Service Programme deployed Dehyeate Cooper, 27, with three other volunteer, to teach at the Doloken Gbovey High School in Bong County, Central Liberia. Many prominent Liberians including those hailing from Bong are products of the school. However, like many other schools in Liberia, the Doloken Gbovey High has seen some challenging times after the war, with shortage of qualified teachers, school supplies and basic facilities.



Dehyeatee Cooper, 27, a NYSP volunteer teacher, is inspiring many young girls to stay in school in pursuit of a better and peaceful future. ©MoYS/2013

During Liberia's 14 year civil war, children and young people constituted the largest group of recruited fighters. The war ended 10 years ago and the young generation experienced peace for the first time in their lives. However, their troubles were far from over. The war destroyed more than 80 per cent of schools and learning institutions, leaving a great majority of Liberian youth between the ages of 15 to 35 without adequate education or the skills to earn a decent livelihood.

Today, the youth comprise more than half of Liberia's estimated population of 3.6 million, the most productive group of any country's work force, and this is the group that requires urgent attention and the most investment for Liberia to truly transition into a path of peace and development.

The NYSP is one such initiative of the government, UN and development partners initiated through the Peace Building Fund (PBF) and up-scaled under UNICEF's global Peacebuilding, Education, and Advocacy (PBEA) programme. This integrated peacebuilding and development programme provides opportunities to young university, college and technical school graduates like Ruth to volunteer their services for nation

building and empower themselves with skills, practical work experience and self-confidence to enter the job market.

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. The programme has five sector areas including; education, health, agriculture, public administration and management of youth development centers. All national volunteers are trained on peacebuilding and leadership skills during the induction programme, empowering them to resolve disputes in the assigned communities.

Dehyeate has a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology and English, and she is already making a big impact at the Doloken Gbovey High School. "The school lost all its lady teachers over the years. It is not easy sometimes because I am the only female in the teaching staff, but it also motivates me. I am able to encourage and inspire girl students to stay in school and achieve higher education status no matter what," said Dehyeatee.

Besides teaching literature and sociology, Dehyeatee mentors young women in three communities, leading them into the organization and development of peacebuilding clubs. She meets them twice a week for lectures on conflict mediation, community base outreach and family planning.

One of the biggest challenges in all development and service sectors in Liberia is the shortage of skilled and educated human resources. And young men and women national volunteers like Dehyeatee are beginning to fill this gap and contributing to improved service delivery in many remote and disadvantaged communities.

For example, education sector national volunteers are conducting adult literacy classes, carrying out door to door school enrolment campaigns, conducting workshops on curriculum usages, classroom management, counseling and mentorship. Volunteers in the health sector conducting health and hygiene education at clinics before patients are treated, establishing school health clubs to promote key health messages to communities, and supporting registration, screening and treatment of patients.

National volunteers in the agriculture sector are training women farmers on record keeping and accounting; supporting agriculture extension workers and farmers in rehabilitating swamp land for cultivation, and working with school children in vegetable garden projects. The national volunteers are just as active in Youth Centers, introducing computer literacy programmes, sports and development activities, and organizing discussions on peacebuilding, conflict resolution, sexual violence and HIV and AIDS.

But no matter which sector they are working in, there is one thing that unites all national volunteers and sets them apart from other development workers. Each of them have peacebuilding and leadership skills, and they are helping many communities resolve disputes through peaceful dialogue.

Currently there are 170 national volunteers in 76 rural communities, with an increase of twenty volunteers in the two additional counties of Cape Mount and Nimba based on support from the Fast Track initiative of the Government of Netherlands 'Peacebuilding, Education, and Advocacy' (PBEA) global programme in the Education sector. It is expected that in 2013 further expansion will occur in this sector, both in terms of recruitment and in terms of the quality and duration of the National Volunteer training. This is based on a new UNICEF and Government of Liberia partnership with the Peace Corps and planned paired assignments in the secondary school sub-sector, with American volunteers serving side by side with Liberian volunteers.

"Life has not been easy for me you know. I am a single mother of two children. And I know there are many young Liberians who have a tough life. But I use my own experience to connect to the children, and I feel blessed that I can inspire them to stay in school for a better future," said Dehyeatee.

"The objective is to change minds and change attitudes. The youth felt that elders did not involve them in the decision making processes. Elders perceived youth as trouble makers. But now I am very very proud (of the

joint multi-sectoral interventions for the youth),” said the Project Officer Bill Corder from the Peacebuilding Office, Ministry of Internal Affairs. “We are leaving footprints behind and we expect people to follow. But there is still more work to be done. A lot more to be done.”

*Theo Roberts, Ministry of Youth and Sports
Melvana Vatekeh, UNICEF*

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.

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.

Lessons Learned: The most significant lesson learned from this programme cycle is the timely activity of the procurement process. It has delayed the programme in supporting Educational and Health care sectors with the supply of resources and with equipping the Youth Centers with the necessary items to support the planned activities. This will need to be addressed in the next programme cycle in order to prevent any future delays.

The recruitment process for the JNVs was hurried and 50 % were not deployed into the County of their origin, making their integration into the communities much more difficult which was detrimental to the overall success of the programme. In order to address this, these JNVs had to be let go and a new group of JNVs were employed, taking care to assign them to communities in their County of origin to strengthen the social cohesion element of the programme. This proved to be much more successful.

It is important to strengthen collaboration amongst all relevant stakeholders to create opportunities for retention and/or employment of qualified programme graduates. Then the programme must tailor the upcoming induction training of the new batch of NVs to address shortcomings identified during the past trainings and the fieldwork. Furthermore, the RM&E capacity of the MoYS needs to be strengthened in order to systematically monitor and document the results, identify and address bottlenecks.