



**LIBERIA**

**PROJECT HALF YEARLY PROGRESS UPDATE**

**PERIOD COVERED: JANUARY – JUNE 2014**

<b>Project No &amp; Title:</b>	PBF/LBR/A-11: Community-based Truth Telling and Atonement Project (Project ID: 00088032)		
<b>Recipient Organization(s)<sup>1</sup>:</b>	UNDP		
<b>Implementing Partners (Government, UN agencies, NGOs etc):</b>	Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR)		
<b>Location:</b>	Monrovia, Liberia		
<b>Total Approved Budget :<sup>2</sup></b>	US\$ 1,000,000		
<b>Preliminary data on funds committed :<sup>3</sup></b>	US\$ 78,765.00	<b>% of funds committed / total approved budget:</b>	7.9%
<b>Expenditure<sup>4</sup>:</b>	US\$ 108,882.6	<b>% of expenditure / total budget: (Delivery rate)</b>	10.9%
<b>Project Approval Date:</b>	4 October 2013	<b>Possible delay in operational closure date (Number of months)</b>	3 months (January-March 2015)
<b>Project Start Date:</b>	1 January 2014		
<b>Expected Operational Project Closure Date:</b>	31 December 2014		
<b>Project Outcomes:</b>	Communities are reconciled and live in peaceful coexistence utilizing the Palava Hut system/approach to settle their differences		
<b>PBF Focus Area</b>	National Reconciliation		

<sup>1</sup> Please note that where there are multiple agencies, only one consolidated project report should be submitted.

<sup>2</sup> Approved budget is the amount transferred to Recipient Organisations.

<sup>3</sup> Funds committed are defined as the commitments made through legal contracts for services and works according to the financial regulations and procedures of the Recipient Organisations. Provide preliminary data only.

<sup>4</sup> Actual payments (contracts, services, works) made on commitments.

5 PBF focus areas are:

1: Support the implementation of peace agreements and political dialogue (Priority Area 1):

(1.1) SSR, (1.2) RoL; (1.3) DDR; (1.4) Political Dialogue;

2: Promote coexistence and peaceful resolution of conflicts (Priority Area 2):

(2.1) National reconciliation; (2.1) Democratic Governance; (2.3) Management of natural resources;

3: Revitalise the economy and generate immediate peace dividends (Priority Area 3);

(3.1) Short-term employment generation; (3.2) Sustainable livelihoods

4) (Re)-establish essential administrative services (Priority Area 4)

(4.1) Public administration; (4.2) Public service delivery (including infrastructure).

## Qualitative assessment of progress

<p><i>For each intended outcome, provide evidence of progress during the reporting period.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, for each outcome include the outputs achieved.</i></p> <p><i>(500 words max.)</i></p>	<p><b>Output 1: INCHR capacity strengthened to lead and coordinate the National Palava Hut Programme</b></p> <p>Consistent with Output 1 of the PBF-approved Result-Framework of the Community-based Truth Telling and Atonement Project, the Project Management Unit (PMU) was established with six (6) staff members. The Unit is relatively effective, responsive and efficient. Two members of the PMU, Richard H. Sieh and Abdul-Hamid Kiawen, recently acquired increased knowledge and new skills and tools in Restorative Justice, Conflict Analysis and Prevention, Community Building and Forgiveness at the 2014 Summer Peacebuilding Institute (SPI) Programme, at the Center of Justice and Peacebuilding at Mennonite University in the USA. Another staff of the PMU, Ms. Alphonzi R. Myers, has attained basic knowledge in Project Planning and Management at the Liberia Institute of Public Administration (LIPA) in Monrovia. Four other staff members of the INCHR, Annie Knuckles, Rebecca Kiawion, Arthur Smith and Fofee V. H. Sherif, have acquired knowledge and skills in different disciplines at LIPA, including Human Resource Management, Procurement Management, Public Financial Management, and Internal Audit and Control. The trainings have enhanced the individual and collective professional capacities of the beneficiaries and the effectiveness of their respective departments.</p> <p><b>Output 2: Studies conducted and Palava Hut methodology and operational guidelines developed</b></p> <p>There have been some delays because a Technical Appraisal Panel set up to review expressions of interest from four bidders did not find any institution with all the requisite qualifications to conduct the ethnography survey. However, following consultations with various stakeholder including MIA, PBO, UNDP, CSOs, UNMIL &amp; INCHR it was agreed that instead of a field based ethnography survey the INCHR organizes two fora that will bring together the relevant stakeholders discuss and will help determine a methodology for the palava hut talks as well as help address all other issues related to holding the palava hut programme. It was also agreed and the INCHR has requested that UNDP identifies and recruits a qualified consultant from its roster to provide technical support to the INCHR to organize and conduct the two fora and set up the methodology for the palava hut talks. The holding of these palava hut fora builds on the first Technical Palava Hut Forum held in November 2013,</p>
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following the official launch of the Palava Huts Talks in October 2013 by the President of Liberia. That forum took a number of decisions including: Some of the participants to be involved in the upcoming forum are:

Conduct study tours to Rwanda and Sierra Leone to learn from the experiences of these countries on their use of traditional peace structures and mechanisms for peace. The INCHR, through the PMU, has developed the TOR for the tours and initiated contacts with key institutions and individuals in Sierra Leone and Rwanda (including the Human Rights Commissions of the two countries) in preparation for the study tours. Lessons could be learned from the post-conflict reconciliation success stories of the two countries that may prove instructive and integrative to the Liberia reconciliation program within the national palava hut framework. Moreover, a draft TOR has been developed for the conduct of the mapping of war-related violations that can be addressed through the Palava Hut process.

### **Output 3: Nationwide outreach conducted on the Palava Hut Programme**

Considering the logical sequence of the planned project activities, the nationwide outreach which is aimed at raising awareness on the process, safety and benefits of the National Palava Hut Programme, will not achieve its cardinal objective in the absence of the Palava Hut methodology and operational guidelines which should be amongst the core subjects of education during the outreach process. This is one of the reasons why efforts are being exerted by relevant stakeholders to fast track the conduct of the three forums whose outcome will inform the development of the Palava Hut methodology and operational guidelines, which will immediately be followed by the training of CSOs for the conduct of the nationwide outreach before the implementation of the actual Palava Hut hearings. The INCHR is also considering working under the broader communication and outreach proposal intended to inform, educate, and solicit the citizen participation in support of the implementation of the reconciliation roadmap and related programmes.

### **Output 4: Palava Hut process piloted in at least 4 linguistic regions**

The Palava Hut hearings will be conducted in the fourth quarter of the reporting year. This activity is contingent on the development of the Palava Hut methodology and operational guidelines, which is a planned deliverable of the third quarter.

**Output 5: At least 2 regional memorials constructed in hard hit war-affected communities**

A parcel of land which hosts the Duport Road Massacre Site in the Cow Field Community, outside Monrovia, has been acquired and surveyed for the construction of a memorial to dignify the victims as part of the community cleansing and healing process under the Palava Hut Program. Details for the construction work are being discussed with the UNDP. The INCHR earlier requested to directly procure the services of a local firm to construct the memorial, but the UNDP has insisted on a bidding process. The UNDP will also procure the needed materials.

Beyond the humanizing and dignifying the dead, the construction of the memorial will transform the area into a tourist site and a source of research for lessons learning about the Liberian civil conflict with promising economic and in-kind incentives for the community, thus contributing to the process of community healing and appreciation of the palava hut program.

**Output 6: INCHR mandate in relation to TRC recommendations clarified**

A total of 177 local leaders, traditional and religious leaders, women and youth leaders, social workers, persons with disabilities and other stakeholders have directly acquired increased knowledge and understanding of the INCHR's mandate in relation to the TRC recommendations as well as the purpose and status of the Commission during the awareness and sensitization forums held in Lofa, Bong, Margibi and Grand Bassa counties, in the week of 25<sup>th</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2014. The participants included 128 males and 49 females. Many other stakeholders and citizens of the targeted counties were also indirectly reached with adequate information and knowledge through programs aired on local community radio stations during the 4-county awareness and sensitization exercise.

Responses generated from targeted participants through probe-oriented questions asked before the start of discussions at each of the awareness sessions revealed that most of them had misconceptions and misgivings about the mandate of the INCHR related to the TRC recommendations and the status of the Palava Hut Programme because of little or no basic knowledge and understanding of the process. For instance, many of them had thought that it was the responsibility of the INCHR to establish a court to prosecute alleged war crimes, while almost all of them had no idea of even some

	<p>of the TRC recommendations already implemented by the government, including the creation of the LACC, Constitution Review Committee, and work on Land Reform and Decentralization through the Land Commission and Ministry of Internal Affairs/Governance Commission respectively.</p> <p>But as evidenced by the participants’ inputs during discussions and their responses to the prepared but orally administered post-discussion questions, the awareness exercise has increased their knowledge and understanding of the mandate of the INCHR to “ensure that all the recommendations contained in the Report of the TRC are implemented” and that civil society organizations “monitor and campaign for the scrupulous implementation of all recommendations contained in the report” (Article X, Section 46 of the TRC Act). They also acquired more knowledge about the INCHR involvement with the palava hut program recommended by the TRC, its current status and the expected role of local communities in ensuring its success.</p> <p>The majority of the participants volunteered to continue the awareness process to ensure that more local people and communities have deeper knowledge and understanding of the INCHR mandate associated with the TRC recommendations, the palava hut process and the role of the citizens as well. The activity is one of the agreed targets of the Statement of Mutual Commitments between the UN Peacebuilding Commission and the Government of Liberia.</p>
<p><i>Do you see evidence that the project is having a positive impact on peacebuilding? (250 words max.)</i></p>	<p>Although the key activities (nationwide outreach and palava hut hearings) of the project have not started, but the Palava Hut programme has begun to show positive feedback impact. For example, while attending the Technical National Palava Hut Forum organized by the INCHR and held at the Monrovia City Hall in Monrovia on November 13-15, 2013, the son of President William R. Tolbert who was slain during the April 12, 1980 military coup, Rev. William R. Tolbert III, openly apologized to the people of Liberia for any wrongdoings committed against them by his family and others who had run the political affairs of the country before the bloody coup. He narrated his experiences while in detention in the aftermath of the coup.</p> <p>In response, the chiefs and traditional leaders from the 15 political sub-divisions of Liberia at the forum apologized to the Tolbert and other families who were victimized as a result of the coup and asked forgiveness. That moment of mutual acknowledgement of wrongdoings and statement of apology involving the son of an assassinated President and the traditional authorities from across the</p>

	country, combined with their avowed commitments to the palava hut program, constitutes a positive effect on the national reconciliation and healing process in the framework of the National Palava Hut Program.
<i>Were there catalytic effects from the project in the period reported, including additional funding commitments or unleashing/unblocking of any peace relevant processes? (250 words max.)</i>	Government of Liberia has made a commitment of US\$ 600,000 to the National Palava Hut Program.
<i>If progress has been slow or inadequate, provide main reasons and what is being done to address them. (250 words max.)</i>	Progress towards the implementation of the key activities (development of palava hut methodology, training of CSOs, nationwide outreach and conduct of palava hut hearings) of the project has been slow because of delay in the conduct of the ethnographic study stated under Output 2. The slow pace is a result of difficulties experienced in identifying a qualified local firm to conduct the study. The UNDP, UNMIL, PBO, INCHR and other stakeholders have therefore reached a consensus to do the study through three forums to fast track the process.
<i>What are the main activities/expected results for the rest of the year? (250 words max.)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A more robust PMU taking forward the implementation of INCHR’s work plan and enhanced coordination with and support from both UNDP and UNMIL technical teams</li> <li>▪ Availability of methodology and operational guidelines for the palava hut hearings</li> <li>▪ Shared experiences and lessons learned from the study tours to Sierra Leone and Rwanda that can be adapted to the palava hut program</li> <li>▪ Effective participation of trained CSOs in the implementation of the palava hut program through capacity building of CSOs</li> <li>▪ Increased public knowledge and understanding of the process, benefits and safety of the palava hut program through nationwide outreach</li> <li>▪ Political parties, civil society, student and minority groups have increased knowledge and understanding of the INCHR mandate related to the TRC recommendations through the conduct of stakeholder dialogue</li> <li>▪ Strengthened and fully capacitated palava hut committees through institutional assessment and capacity-building</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Engendered pilot palava hut hearings in selected communities</li> <li>▪ Identified war-related violations/cases suited for the palava hut process through mapping of violations</li> <li>▪ At least two (2) constructed memorials</li> </ul>
<p><i>Is there any need to adjust project strategies/ duration/budget etc.? (500 words max.)</i></p>	<p>Given the delay in the implementation of key activities of the project mainly because of the long bidding process for the ethnographic study which did not identify any qualified local firm to undertake the task, there is a need to adjust the project duration by three additional months to ensure the achievement of the planned project targets and the expected outcome.</p>
<p>Are there any lessons learned from the project in the period reported? (500 words max.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited public knowledge and understanding of INCHR mandate and role related to TRC recommendations.</li> <li>• The mention of the TRC recommendations has become less appealing to many citizens, particularly the victim community, because of limited public knowledge about the general status of the implementation of the TRC recommendations.</li> <li>• The continued willingness of relevant stakeholders to remain engaged with the INCHR has helped in keeping the project on course.</li> <li>• Progress is sometimes stalled as the INCHR is not managing the project funds on the basis of being at “Significant Risk”, according to the Moore Stephens institutional assessment Report of July 2012.</li> <li>• The wide range of tasks associated with the National Palava Hut Program has posed a huge challenge for the 6-member staff of the Project Management Unit.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<p>What is the project budget expenditure to date (percentage of allocated project budget expensed by the date of the report) – preliminary figures only? (250 words max.)</p>	<p>US\$ 108,882.6 (10.9% of the total budget) as at 30 June 2014.</p>

<p>Any other information that the project needs to convey to PBSO (and JSC) at this stage? (250 words max.)</p>	<p>The process of the development and finalization of the Annual Work Plan with the UNDP as well as the establishment and staffing of the Project Management Unit was a bit time-consuming, which has affected progress of the actual start of the project implementation. The cost for personnel support to the staff of the PMU for the project year was originally underestimated (US\$ 98,000) and despite being raised to US\$110,400 following frantic discussions with the UNDP, the PMU of the INCHR is one of, if not, the least paid Project Management Unit. This situation underpins the reason for the limited staff capacity of the PMU to date.</p>
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**INDICATOR BASED PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT:** *Using the **Project Results Framework** as per the approved project document- provide an update on the achievement of key indicators at both the outcome and output level in the table below. Where it has not been possible to collect data on indicators, state this and provide any explanation in the qualitative text above.*



<p><b>Output 1:</b> INCHR capacity strengthened to lead and coordinate the National Palava Hut Program</p>	<p>Indicator 1.1: Project Management Unit (PMU) set up and functional in INCHR</p>	<p>Baseline: No Technical Unit in place</p> <p>2013: Limited logistics (vehicles etc) in place at INCHR</p>	<p>Target: PMU set up by December 2013</p> <p>M&amp;E Plan developed by March 2014</p> <p>Functional Project Management Unit and equipment in place by 2014</p>	<p>PMU established in January 2014 with six (6) staff members.</p> <p>Development of an M&amp;E Plan. The Plan was developed with the input of the PBO.</p> <p>The PMU is functioning with reasonable effectiveness, responsiveness and efficiency but with limited staff as a result of limited funding.</p> <p>Some of the needed equipment are available</p> <p>Four (4) of the staff have benefited from both local and external training opportunities. Other four (4) staff members of the INCHR who are not with the PMU have also attended training courses in</p>		

	<p>Indicator 1.2: # of staff are trained</p> <p>1.3: # of logistical and technical support is provided</p> <p>1.4: # of reports available</p> <p>1.5: # of staff recruited</p>			<p>procurement management, human resource management, Public financial management and internal audit and control.</p> <p>Desktops, laptops, printers, mimeographing machine, etc. Vehicles are not available yet. Chief Technical Advisory support from UNDP provided and complementary support from UNMIL.</p> <p>Quarterly and half-year reports available.</p> <p>8 staff recruited as part of PMU,</p>		
<p><b>Output 2:</b> Studies conducted and Palava Hut methodology and operational</p>	<p>Indicator 2.1: # of research findings</p> <p>Indicator 2.2: Study report</p>	<p><b>Baseline</b> (2013): No report</p>	<p>Studies conducted by 2014</p>	<p>The achievement of this target is delayed and there is a consensus for a shift for reasons provided in the right column. However, the outcome of the Technical National</p>	<p>The INCHR, UNDP, PBO, UNMIL and other stakeholders have reached a consensus to conduct four forums as substitution of the ethnographic study but with the same objective</p>	<p>The conduct of an ethnographic study as a planned target has been adjusted to the conduct of three forums with the same mandate to assess/research</p>

<p>guidelines developed</p>				<p>Palava Hut Forum held in November 2013 amounts much to the expected result of the ethnographic study. The intention of the forum was to provide a baseline for the study.</p> <p>Regarding the planned target related to the study tours to Rwanda and Sierra Leone for experience sharing and lessons learning, the INCHR, through the PMU, has developed the TOR for the tours and initiated contacts with key institutions and individuals in Sierra Leone and Rwanda (including the Human Rights Commissions of the two countries) in preparation for the study tours. Lessons could be learned from the post-conflict reconciliation success stories of the two countries that may</p>	<p>of the study to assess the traditional palava hut systems of the four linguistic groups of Liberia utilizing the expertise of qualified internal and external consultants. The outcome of the agreed forums is meant to enrich the result of the previous forum to inform the development of the context-specific methodology and operational guidelines for the national palava hut hearings. The UNDP has been requested by the INCHR, to assist in identifying consultants to support the INCHR in the process, which will include subsequent stakeholder review and decision. The reason for the variance is based on the long (March to May 2014) bidding process, which concluded with the disqualification of the three local firms that had</p>	<p>the similarities and dissimilarities of the traditional palava hut systems of the four linguistic groups of Liberia.</p>
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				<p>prove instructive and integrative to the Liberia reconciliation program within the national palava hut framework. Moreover, a draft TOR has been developed for the conduct of the mapping of war-related violations that can be addressed through the Palava Hut process that another activity under Output 2.</p>	<p>applied to conduct the ethnographic study. Given the centrality of the outcome of the assessment/research of the traditional palava hut systems to the rollout of the essential aspects of the national palava hut program and considering the amount of time any rebidding process may require, the conduct of the forums has been agreed as the best choice for progress.</p>	
<p><b>Output 3:</b> Nation-wide outreach conducted on the Palava Hut Program</p>	<p>Indicator 3.1: # of outreach events held</p>	<p><b>Baseline (2013):</b> No outreach events</p>	<p><b>Target(2015):</b> Campaign conducted in all counties in all 16 languages</p>	<p>The INCHR carried out a 4-county (Lofa, Bong, Margibi and Bassa) awareness exercise both on its mandate in association with the TRC recommendations and the National Palava Hut Program.</p> <p>The actual outreach/campaign on the process, benefits and safety of the Palava Hut is contingent on the</p>		

				research of the traditional palava hut systems and the development of the methodology and guidelines of the national palava hut hearings.		
<b>Output 4:</b> Palava Hut process piloted in at least four (4) linguistic regions.	Indicator 4.1: Palava hut discussions held	<b>Baseline (2013):</b> None undertaken	<b>Target:</b> By 2015 at least 3 discussions held in each county.	The Palava Hut hearings will be conducted in the fourth quarter of the reporting year. This activity is contingent on the development of the Palava Hut methodology and operational guidelines, which is a one of the planned deliverable of the third quarter.		
<b>Output 5:</b> At least two Regional Memorials in hard hit war-affected	Indicator 5.1: # of memorials constructed	<b>Baseline (2013):</b> One public memorial constructed in Bong County by the Transitional	<b>Target:</b> At least two regional memorials constructed in 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> quarters (2014)	A parcel of land which hosts the Duport Road Massacre Site in the Cow Field Community, outside Monrovia, has been acquired and		

communities		Justice Working Group with support from OSIWA		<p>surveyed for the construction of a memorial to dignify the victims as part of the community cleansing and healing process under the Palava Hut Program. Details for the construction work are being discussed with the UNDP. The INCHR earlier requested to directly procure the services of a local firm to construct the memorial, but the UNDP has insisted on a bidding process. The UNDP will also procure the needed materials.</p> <p>Beyond the humanizing and dignifying the dead, the construction of the memorial will transform the area into a tourist site and a source of research for lessons learning about the Liberian civil conflict with promising</p>		
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				economic and in-kind incentives for the community, thus contributing to the process of community healing and appreciation of the palava hut program.		
<b>Output 6:</b> INCHR mandate in relation to TRC recommendations clarified	Indicator 6.1: # of stakeholder meetings held	<b>Baseline (2013):</b> No clarity on INCHR mandate	<b>Target:</b> At least five county-level and stakeholder dialogues/meetings held by August 2014	A total of 177 local leaders, traditional and religious leaders, women and youth leaders, social workers, persons with disabilities and other stakeholders have directly acquired increased knowledge and understanding of the INCHR's mandate in relation to the TRC recommendations as well as the purpose and status of the Commission during the awareness and sensitization forums held in Lofa, Bong, Margibi and Grand Bassa counties, in the week of 25 <sup>th</sup> June to 2 <sup>nd</sup> July, 2014. The		

				<p>participants included 128 males and 49 females. Many other stakeholders and citizens of the targeted counties were also indirectly reached with adequate information and knowledge through programs aired on local community radio stations during the 4-county awareness and sensitization exercise.</p> <p>The stakeholder meeting with political parties, civil society student and minority groups is planned for the third quarter (August 2014).</p>		
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