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Legal Professional Development and Anti-Corruption Activity in Liberia (LPAC)

QUARTERLY REPORT

(October 1 – December 31, 2017)

28 February 2018

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Checchi and Company Consulting, Inc.

LEGAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ANTI- CORRUPTION ACTIVITY IN LIBERIA (LPAC)

Contract No. AID-624-TO-15-00003

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(October 1 – December 31, 2017)

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DISCLAIMER

The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
BOC	Board of Commissioners of LACC
CENTAL	Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia
CLE	Continuing Legal Education
COP	Chief of Party
CSO	Civil Society Organization
GOL	Government of Liberia
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
Jl	Judicial Institute
LACC	Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission
LiberLII	Liberia Legal Information Institute
LNBA	Liberian National Bar Association
LPAC	Legal Professional Development and Anti-Corruption Activity
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAPDL	National Associate of Public Defender Lawyers
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PMTP	Professional Magistrates Training Program
QJTP	Quarterly Judges Training Program
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
STTA	Short-Term Technical Assistance
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Legal Professional Development and Anti-Corruption (LPAC) project, a five-year activity, is USAID/Liberia's primary formal justice sector program. Its design addresses two fundamental challenges to Liberia's development as a state following the rule of law: (i) increasing the capacity of its institutions to produce a sufficient number of qualified judges, magistrates, prosecutors, public defenders, lawyers and other law-trained actors to maintain an effective legal system, and (ii) reducing the corruption that undermines the justice system.

LPAC consists of two components to address those challenges. The first component directs capacity building to the four key Liberian justice sector institutions: the Judicial Institute (JI), the Louis Arthur Grimes Law School (Law School), the Liberian Legal Information Institute (LiberLII), and the Liberian National Bar Association (LNBA). The second component supports the Liberian Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) and associated Government of Liberia entities in their efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict perpetrators of corruption-related crimes, and to educate the public regarding the fight against corruption in Liberia. All LPAC reports follow this same order and format unless otherwise noted.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the Quarter the Liberian national elections for a President and House of Representatives took place with the “first round” held on 10 October 2017. Since no presidential candidate won a majority in the first round the top two candidates were to compete in a run-off originally scheduled for 7 November. Appeals were launched to the Supreme Court which in early December dismissed the challenges and the second round was held on December 26. The elections were the first elections to be run entirely by the GOL and its security forces since the end of the conflict in 2003. Although ultimately a success and resulting in a peaceful process and transition of power, it severely impacted many events, especially the LNBA Convention and put great pressure on the Supreme Court, diverting attention from LPAC activities.

During the previous Quarter, Checchi engaged USAID about the need to fundamentally reform the design and implementation mechanisms of LPAC. Checchi presented a comprehensive reform proposal aimed at sustaining and strengthening institutional management, professional training, and capacity for a more sustainable, efficient and equitable legal and judicial system. Following acceptance of this proposal during the Quarter LPAC incorporated them into the Year 3 Work Plan. The draft Work Plan, delivered to USAID as a “draft for discussion” in October 2017, although discussed, amended, and “approved in principle”, has not yet been formally approved. Notwithstanding LPAC, with USAID encouragement, proceeded to implement the Year Three Work Plan but with instructions to limit implementation until additional funding could be obligated which was received in January 2018.

The PMTP was designed as a five (5) year program, for sixty (60) candidates per year with the objective of creating a more qualified – but not previously legally trained - group of Magistrates to fill the vacuum left by conflict. With help from USAID, the first cohort graduated in 2011 but, due to the lack of funding, the next sixty Associate Magistrates (PMTP Cycle II) didn’t graduate until June 2017, with support mainly from Sweden through UNDP and some USAID assistance. PMPT Cycle III is jointly implemented by the JI and is mainly funded by USAID/LPAC. Notwithstanding the election-related priorities of the Supreme Court, the PMTP recruitment process was completed in December 2017. The sixty candidates were carefully and transparently selected with the participation of LPAC, all but 3 from counties outside the Monrovia capital area from underserved counties, the number of female candidates was doubled from the last Cycle to 12 and further includes 12 sitting Magistrates who had not previously received professional training. For the first time, all 60 candidates are either are sitting Magistrates or college graduates.

The LPAC international Case and Court Management Consultant arrived in Monrovia in October. He and Liberian consultants assessed current court management/case management systems and identified processes, gaps and challenges. A draft assessment report with findings and recommendations, completed in December, will be shared with the Supreme Court, Court Administration Office and Judicial Institute early in the next quarter.

LPAC supported the JI Quarterly Training of 32 Public Defenders in October with thirty-two (32) public defenders from all counties participating in the training. In addition, in collaboration with UNMIL, LPAC participated in the training of Judges and Magistrates in Buchanan. LPAC's full-day contribution to this cost-effective training focused on Court and Case Management as well as ethics and corruption in the administration of justice.

LPAC, in close cooperation with the Law School, selected the recipients of the Public Interest Scholar program for academic year 2017/18. Five female students and four male students were the new winners of the scholarships program for the current academic year, which marks a success compared to last academic year where no female candidate participated in the program. There are now 21 LPAC supported Public Interest Scholars in all 3 years with the first cohort of 6 students expected to graduate at the end of the current academic year.

As part of the implementation of the new LPAC work plan, and in close cooperation with the Dean, two LPAC embedded positions at the Law School were filled with highly qualified staff prior to the start of the Second Semester in December 2017. A full-time, US-educated Liberian Associate Dean and a full-time Director of Counseling/Student Services are now supporting the (part-time) Dean and academic staff of the Law School. They will, in addition to providing advice, provide improved student services and enhance educational quality and sustainability of the Law School.

In November, with LPAC assistance, the LNBA held a successful and well-attended national convention in Gbarnga, Bong County. Although the ongoing national elections then in-progress led to the unexpected cancellation of participation by some speakers, the event was a success. A new CLE module on property law was introduced as well as CLE sessions on other topics of interest to the legal profession were delivered. The event had the full bench of the Supreme Court in attendance and participating actively in the learning opportunities presented.

LPAC assisted with the further development of the LACC's ICT platform to assure greater efficiency as well as protecting the privacy of those under investigation. Investigations output also increased. LPAC provided informal and formal training to investigators as well and assisted in establishing an operations room. LPAC and LACC began working on a solution to the problems of prosecuting corruption cases in an over-crowded and under-resourced criminal justice system by supporting a pilot program of setting down cases in less crowded courts outside of Monrovia. The first such pilot case is expected to start in Rivercess in January 2018.

LPAC awarded four grants to CSOs towards the end of Year 2. Activities were mainly focused on making anti-corruption and the rule of law a major issue during the election debates and within the electorate. Grant activities include the establishment of a University of Liberia anticorruption group; broadcasts of plays and performances, theatrical events, and radio jingles; pledge cards for presidential and local candidates; and post-election monitoring of anti-corruption promises. During the Quarter many such activities took place and contributed to making good governance, the fight against corruption and the rule of law

central themes in the election. As referred to above, appeals were launched by several political parties to the Supreme Court.

The appeals to the Supreme Court and resulting discussions in the media created a volatile mixture of distrust, misunderstanding, and threats of violence. Since these elections were the first to be run entirely by the GOL and its security forces since the end of the conflict, the stakes were high. In this environment an unsolicited proposal was received from the Angie Brooks International Centre/ Women's Situation Room, to implement a project called "The Talking Bus – Upholding the Rule of Law" in conjunction with the LNBA. The aim was to provide information to the public areas across the country about the national elections with a specific emphasis on explaining the rule of law, Supreme Court proceedings and, once judgment was rendered, how the delayed the finalization of the election process was fully in accordance with the Constitution.

1.0 COMPONENT A: STRENGTHENING LEGAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1.1 SUB-COMPONENT A.1 – SUSTAINABLE JAMES A. A. PIERRE JUDICIAL INSTITUTE (JI)

Objectives

The JI has the sustainable capacity to support an accountable judiciary that instills increased trust in Liberia's formal justice system. To achieve sustainability, it will be necessary for the Institute to obtain reliable funding from the GOL and better manage its scarce resources.

Objective A.1.b – The Judicial Institute is able to effectively and efficiently develop professional courses and reference materials in new subject areas and provide these course offerings to justice sector actors.

Activity A.1.B.7: Capacity and Training Needs Assessments (WP 1.3)

The report of the Magistrates and Judges' Capacity and Training Need Assessment conducted by LPAC and the JI and was finalized in this quarter. Following approval by USAID, it will be presented to the JI Management and JI Board of Governors during the next quarter and will form the basis of the design of the JI annual training plan for 2018.

Activity A.1.c.1 – Court Administration Working Group (WP 3.1 - 3.2)

Court Management Curriculum (WP 3.1 - 3.2)

The LPAC International Case/Court Management Consultant, Mr. Barry Walsh, arrived in Monrovia in October. He held several meetings with the Case/Court Management Liberian STTA Consultants and senior judicial officers and court officials including the Chief Justice, the JI Chairman of the Board of Governors, the Court Administrator and Deputy Court Administrator to assess current court management practices. At the request of the JI, Mr. Walsh presented a half-day training session for public defenders in Monrovia and a similar half-day training for Judges and Magistrates at the Quarterly Training in Buchanan. The training sessions were designed to compare international best practices in case/court management and their application to Liberia.

After completion of his assignment in Liberia, the Mr. Walsh continued to work closely with the Liberian consultants to develop the final report and the design of the subsequent training/academic activities for JI, Law School, and LNBA. The final report was reviewed by

LPAC in December and shared with USAID, the Chief Justice, the Court Administration Office and Judicial Institute. Follow up activities are scheduled for the next quarter.

Activity A.1.c.3: Professional Magistrates Training Program (WP 2.2)

The recruitment process of the candidates for the PMTP Cycle III continued during the quarter. The LPAC Judicial Training Advisor and the LPAC M&E Specialist supported JI in interviewing 125 shortlisted candidates from November 14 -15th. The selection of candidates was completed in December and the requisite recommendation made to the Supreme Court for approval.

There was a very large turn-out for the aptitude exam in September 2017. This indicated a high level of public interest in the professional magistrates' training program. Considering the acute need for more trained magistrates, coupled with the desire of the Judicial Institute to meet the original target of training 60 candidates per year, the Supreme Court made a request and proposal to LPAC to increase the number of candidates enrolled for Cycle III, from 30 candidates to 60 candidates. Following consultation and approval from USAID, LPAC supported this request and proposal and worked closely with the JI on the process to make certain that the PMTP Cycle III will commence in January 2018 including procuring extra furniture and equipment for the JI.

Activity A.1.c.4: Quarterly Judges Training Program (QJTP) (WP 2.3)

LPAC staff held meetings with JI Management and the National Association of Trial Judges to organize the Quarterly Training of Judges in Q3 and Q 4 of 2017. The LPAC Case/Court Management Consultant and the LPAC Anti-Corruption Advisor participated in the training and each delivered half-day presentations to circuit judges.

A.1.c.4: Quarterly Public Defenders Training Program (QDTP) (WP 2.3)

LPAC supported the JI Quarterly Training of Public Defenders on October 16-20, 2017 in Monrovia. Thirty-two public defenders from all counties participated in the training. The training was held in partnership between JI, LPAC, and UNMIL. The aim was to enhance the capacity of public defenders to represent effectively the indigent in criminal and certain civil matters. LPAC supported JI to deliver four days of training and UNMIL covered one day. The LPAC Case/Court Management Consultant gave two half-day presentations. This was followed by a meeting between the LPAC COP and Legal and Judicial Education Advisor with the Board of the National Association of Public Defender Lawyers (NAPDL) to discuss LPAC support for further training of PDs.

Objective A.1.e: The Judicial Institute's enabling legislation is passed that authorizes the JI to engage in the full range of activities projected in the JI's 2012-2017 Strategic Plan.

Activity A.1.a.5 – Staff Capacity Development Finance and Budget Administration (WP 4.2)

The financial management/accounting policies and procedures manual were reviewed and approved of by the LPAC COP and JI management and will be submitted to the JI Board of Governors for endorsement in Q2.

Activity A.1.a.6: Information and Computer Technology (ICT) Procurement and Support Computer Research and Training Room (WP 7.4)

The setup and configuration of ICT equipment for the JI computer research and training room and installation of internet connection were completed in October. The Computer Lab is now fully established and operational in time for the start of PMTP Cycle 3. A “Computer Literacy Improvement Training Module” has been made available to all PMTP candidates as well as other judicial actors.

I.2 SUB-COMPONENT A.2 – SUSTAINABLE LOUIS ARTHUR GRIMES SCHOOL OF LAW

Objective

An institution that consistently obtains outside sources of funding to pay for programs, materials and activities that better prepare young lawyers to become leaders of the country.

Objective A.2.a –The Law School’s financial and administrative management systems conform to international good practice standards.

Activity A.2.a.2: Administrative Systems Organizational Management of the Law School (WP 1.2-3)

During the quarter, LPAC in close cooperation with the Dean developed TORs for two LPAC embedded positions at the Law School: a full time "Associate Dean" and a full time "Director of Counseling/Student Services". The TORs were widely circulated, and five applications were received. A recruitment committee to evaluate the applications was established, consisting of the Dean of Law School, the LPAC COP and the Legal and Judicial Education Advisor. The recommended candidates were submitted to USAID and subsequently approved. They started work in mid-December to prepare for the next semester.

Activity A.2.a.3: Information and Computer Technology (ICT) Procurement and Support ICT

ICT procurements and support (WP 2.1 and 2.3)

During the reporting period, the LPAC ICT Specialist completed the installation of the Windows operating system on all computers, set-up individual email accounts for faculty and students, and group email accounts for faculty and students for each year and developed a group policy for the use of the computer system and an ICT Policy for the Law School. A needs assessment was conducted on the audio-visual equipment required to improve and strengthen teaching at the Law School.

Objective A.2.c: LPAC support establishment of public service scholarship endowments, and support's law school efforts to secure sustainable funding without utilization of limited annual budget funds.

Activity A.2.c.1 – Public service scholarships

In close cooperation with the Law School, LPAC launched the new Public Interest Scholar selection process for academic year 2017/18 in October 2017. With LPAC assistance, a selection committee was established by the Law School to set scholarship eligibility criteria, develop application materials, and design a fair, objective, and transparent process for evaluation of the applications. LPAC, working with Law School then concluded the selection of the scholarship program recipients and jointly announced the new and continuing Scholars for the academic year on November 14, 2017. For the current academic year, USAID/LPAC expanded the scholarship program to 9 winners from a large group of highly qualified applicants. Five out of nine recipients are women. LPAC now supports 20 Public Interest Scholars (11 male and 9 female) in all 3 years with the first cohort of 6 students expected to graduate at the end of the current academic year.

Nineteen scholars attended the LNBA annual convention held in Gbarnga, Bong County, in November with LPAC support. They assisted the LNBA administration during the convention and also the Law School in the registration of the alumni. They had the opportunity to participate in discussions where they expressed clear and cogent opinions.

LPAC organized a one-day Seminar with all scholars in December 2017. The new scholars received an orientation program regarding the scholarship requirements, benefits and opportunities followed by training for all 20 scholars. The Dean, Associate Dean, Director of Students and Counselling as well as the President and Executive Director of the LNBA attended. Training was provided with special emphasis on ethics in the Legal Profession and Judiciary. LPAC proposed student participation in Legal Aid clinics under direct lawyer supervision and internships with Public Defenders and Magistrates. The proposal received overwhelming support. Certificates of Award were awarded to all 20 scholars during the event honoring their selection and recognizing their commitment to public service.

Objective A.2.d: The law school fully implements curriculum reforms and establishes a clinical education program.



Public Interest Scholar receives certificate from Associate Dean Jamal Dehtho.

Activity 4.2.d.1 – Curriculum and legal clinic assessment and implementation plan

Implementation of new curriculum courses (WP 4.1)

The LPAC Legal & Judicial Education Advisor worked with senior Law School academic staff to develop course outlines and curriculum for child and gender law courses, scheduled to be taught during the second semester starting in March 2018. Course outlines were finalized and submitted to the Dean for approval.

Moot court programs

LPAC in cooperation the USAID's INTERNEWS program began planning a media moot court regional activity to take place in Johannesburg, South Africa from February 8-11, 2018. LPAC will provide funds for tickets, per diem and visas for 4 students, among them two are LPAC scholars and the Associate Dean (LPAC) who, together with Judge Eva Mappy Morgan trained and mentored the participants. INTERNEWS will cover the expenses of Judge Mappy Morgan.

Objective A.2.e: Legal scholarship at the law school is enhanced through the consistent publication of the law journal and newsletter, and through the faculty writing program.

Activity A.2.e.2 – Law journal

Law Journal (WP 4.4)

The long over-due journal was published in November. LPAC supported the full cost of printing and publishing of 567 copies of the law journal. The journal was displayed for sale at the Law School table during the LNBA convention. Discussions will take place next Quarter to plan the next edition and see what has been learned from this initial publication, including improving the quality and speeding up delivery of future editions.

1.3 SUB-COMPONENT A.3 – SUSTAINABLE LIBERIA LEGAL INFORMATION INSTITUTE (LIBERLII)

Objective

LiberLII is fully self-funded by the end of Year 4 and is able to facilitate electronic production and publication of legal materials.

The latest grant to LiberLII has been completed and no new activity is anticipated until the Board's decisions made at the end of August have been implemented. The Dean has not concluded his review of the outstanding MOU with the UL, or of staffing and the related budgetary and management structure of LiberLII, including the preparation of draft job descriptions. Consequently, a LiberLII Board meeting has not been convened. LPAC has made it clear to the Board and the Dean that continued assistance depends on action being taken on sustainability and operation.

The election process, and with it the “changing of the guard” at most GOL Ministries caused delay and uncertainty. By way of example, the Chairman of the Board of Governors of LiberLII is in the process of being replaced, creating a delay in finalizing the MOU incorporating LiberLII into the Law School and the University of Liberia. LPAC expressed willingness to assist with

additional grant funding to supplement financial support from the GOL budget and assist in moving LiberLII to sustainability provided that the MOU is satisfactorily completed and agreed to by all parties.

I.4 SUB-COMPONENT A.4 – SUSTAINABLE LIBERIAN NATIONAL BAR ASSOCIATION (LNBA)

Objective

To raise the performance of the LNBA to ensure that it is a professionally run bar association capable of promoting and enforcing the highest standards for legal professionals throughout Liberia; and which will require the LNBA to develop innovative ways to raise funds from external sources, and use existing resources more effectively, while providing relevant benefits to its members.

Objective A.4.a: LNBA's financial and administrative management systems conform to international good practice standards.

Activity A.4.a.1 – Staff Capacity Building

Strategic Plan (WP 1.1)

In this quarter, the Executive Director and members of the Executive Committee of the LNBA, together with LPAC's Administration Systems Specialist, continued to meet to try and finalize LNBA's strategic plan. It is anticipated that the final Strategic Plan will be approved during the second quarter of 2018.

Financial management (WP 3.3)

The LNBA Executive Council approved the Financial and Management policy manual. Financial management policies are now being implemented at the LNBA Secretariat and Legal Aid Clinic in Margibi County. Forms and templates, for a basic petty cash journal and vouchers, and other financial processes, have been installed on the LNBA Administrative and Financial Office computers and are being complied with. The Admin/Finance Officer is undergoing regular financial management training.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems (WP 5.1 – 2)

A survey was conducted at the LNBA Annual Convention held in Gbarnga City, Bong County. The survey was to assess lawyer satisfaction with activities connected to the LPAC programs including LiberLII, the new LNBA website, and CLE sessions. The survey found that of the total number of LNBA participants 28% were women and 72% men; that 74% of LNBA members have good computer skills, while 86% had access to computer and the internet; 83% expressed satisfaction with LiberLII website the same number attested that the website is helpful in accomplishing their tasks at work.

Objective A.4.b: The LNBA is able to effectively conduct outreach and fundraising activities to generate a consistent stream of funding to support its operations, Quarterly Assemblies, professional development activities, and its public outreach and service programs.

Activity A.4.b.1 – Fundraising and Outreach Plan

The LNBA Executive Council approved CLE courses to be delivered throughout the year. With LPAC support, these extra courses will be facilitated by both local and international experts. Lawyers attending these training sessions will pay a fee to be determined by the LNBA Executive Council. The Annual Report of the LNBA was presented by the LNBA President at the Annual Convention. The contributions of USAID-LPAC were lauded in the report which also highlighted the distance the LNBA has come during the last year towards organizational sustainability – including cash assets amounting to nearly USD 100,000 – mostly by way of contributions to the “Building Fund”.

Objective A.4.c: The LNBA is able to effectively and efficiently develop Continuing Legal Education courses and reference materials for a broad range of subject areas to promote the professional development of its members.

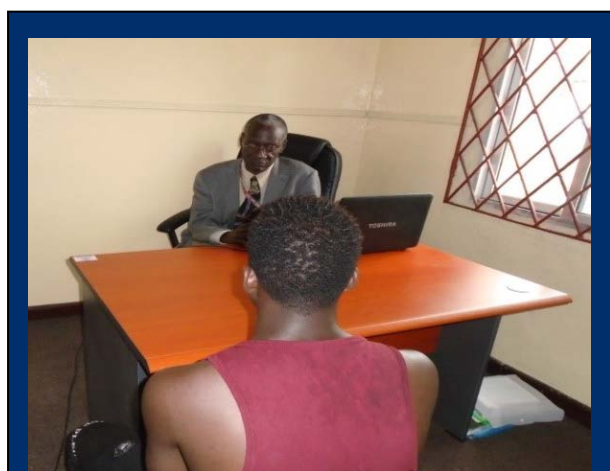
Activity A.4.c.3 – Mandatory CLE certification programs

At the 2017 LNBA Annual Convention, a total of 217 (M-171 & F-46) lawyers and law students successfully participated in 5 Continuing Legal Education sessions, including the first fully developed CLE course module on property law. The Case and Court Management CLE curriculum is well advanced.

Activity A.4.d.1 – Sustainable Pro Bono programs

WP 1.4-6 – Pro-bono services and legal aid programs (WP 1.4 – 6)

During Q3, the LNBA/Legal Aid/Pro Bono Clinics in Montserrado and Margibi counties dealt with a range of cases. The Margibi and Montserrado Counties Legal Aid/Pro Bono clinics now have twenty-six pro bono LNBA lawyers trained in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Mediation. These lawyers have handled and resolved over one hundred cases brought to the clinic during the reporting period. Building on the LPAC/LNBA “PILOT” Pro Bono Legal Aid Program, in accordance with the original implementation plan, the LNBA presented a grant proposal to LPAC for expansion of Legal Aid Clinics to three additional counties (Bomi, Bong, and Grand Bassa). That proposal is currently under review and will be further discussed, negotiated and presented for approval in next year.



LNBA Pro Bono Lawyer consulting with legal aid client at Montserrado County Legal Aid Clinic.

Activity A.4.f – Information and Computer Technology (ICT)

LNBA Website (WP 4.3)

Additional content was uploaded to the LNBA website. The service firm is currently training LNBA Secretariat staff to administer the website.

2.0 COMPONENT B: STRENGTHENING THE LIBERIA ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION (LACC)

Objective

The LACC leads the country's anti-corruption agenda by undertaking programs to prevent, investigate and prosecute corruption; and educate the public regarding the fight against corruption in Liberia.

2.1. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, SYSTEMS, AND RESOURCES (B.1)

Activity B-1. a.1.1 Assist LACC with the development of the LACC Strategic Plan for 2018-2023

LPAC continued to assist LACC staff in developing a new strategic plan. The plan has now reached the drafting stage and should be ready for publication in January 2018.

Activity B-1. a.1.3: Security and Confidentiality Manual

LPAC provided the LACC with assistance in installing CCTV cameras inside the secure areas of the LACC and in and around the buildings and grounds. It is intended that a consultant will be engaged by LPAC to provide advice to the LACC about integrated security procedures including digital as well as physical security in 2018.

2.2. IMPROVED INVESTIGATIONS (B.2)

Activities B-2.b1.1 Build LACC investigators' capacity and skills through training to effectively investigate corruption cases

LPAC continued building skills of LACC investigators. Following the completion of the Digital Extraction First Responder Training on 29 September 2017, LPAC staff provided the LACC investigation division with informal training and advice regarding warrants for the lawful use of these skills and further advised the LACC as to the necessity to adopt strict procedures for the internal and external handling of this kind of material. LPAC assisted the LACC by providing advice about secure means to store digital forensics equipment and the servers upon which sensitive data would be stored. General work to create secure operations and evidence room included the installation of security systems for access to special rooms in the LACC, a swipe card system to access the evidence room and, for a higher level of security, thumb-print access for the digital forensic room allocated to only three senior LACC officers. Future training programs for this next quarter include evidence collection and analysis, assets forfeiture, and interview techniques.

Activity B-2.b1.2: Assist LACC with improving Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for investigations

A committee comprised of LPAC staff and LACC officers met in a workshop at LPAC to begin work on the drafting of a comprehensive investigations manual. The manual will cover all procedural and management aspects of an investigation, from initial reception of a complaint through to final disposal. Once finalized, it will form the basis of a simplified digital case management system.

Activity B-2. b1.3: Build investigation skills through providing demand-driven group consultations on various topics in coordination with the LACC

Clinics and Case Reviews: Like most GoL agencies, LACC operations were disrupted in this quarter by the election. LPAC officers concluded a series of clinics about report-writing in major investigations. There will be further clinics on this topic over the next few months. It was also agreed with the managers of the Investigation Division, that LPAC officers, as a final stage in the investigation process, would participate in case reviews of investigations at which particular investigators would explain and justify the report before it is signed-off to be sent to the Board of Commissioners for consideration. At a recent clinic with officers of the Investigation Division, LPAC staff conducted case reviews with officers and discussed with them how they would use digital evidence.

Operations Management: The LACC Investigations Division now has 20 investigators and a current caseload of 34 ongoing investigations. As noted above, the rate at which cases are being referred to the BOC for a referral to the MOJ has doubled in this last 12 months. This dramatic increase in investigation output and in the tempo of investigations stimulated a request from the managers of the Investigation Division for assistance in operations management. This kind of assistance is long-term and, in October 2017, LPAC began by assisting the LACC in fitting out and establishing an operations room. The operations room is a dedicated room of the LACC for the exclusive use of Investigations Division officers for briefing, operation planning, and case reviews meetings. It also contains sensitive and secure areas for the storage of real evidence, forensic digital equipment and sensitive and confidential data obtained during investigations. The operations room has already been used for training and case review purposes.

2.3. PROSECUTIONS (B.3)

B-3.c1.3 Support LACC to prosecute cases in 'satellite' courts

The LACC has the power to withdraw cases from the MOJ if after 90 days the MOJ has taken no action. The Director of Legal Division explained that there are two constraints on the capacity of the Legal Division to prosecute such cases itself for the LACC: resources and forum. It does not have enough lawyers; the operational budget has been reduced successively over three years following regular yearly cutbacks by the government to the LACC overall. Therefore, they have to choose carefully which cases they can take on. Secondly, the cases

land in Court C which on average has 150 cases in its list, 99% of which are MOJ cases, some of which go back 6 years. Therefore, they applied successfully to have the cases transferred to courts near Monrovia where the lists are smaller. LPAC will continue to assist the Legal Division in terms of technical advice and logistic support to prosecute the cases in these courts. Accordingly, LPAC provided logistic support to the LACC in setting down an indictment for a corruption prosecution involving a Sinoe County senator in Rivercess County. The court in Rivercess County has small docket and is easier to travel to than Sinoe County

2.4. IMPROVED EDUCATION AND CORRUPTION PREVENTION (B.4)

Objective B.4: The LACC has an effective public education and outreach program that provides information and support to the activities of individual citizens, CSOs, and business organizations in the private sector fight against corruption.

Activity B-4 d1.1: Assist LACC with developing and managing website

Work on the design for the new website design was completed. It was interrupted by the LACC's move to new headquarters in July 2017 and the implementation of LPAC's upgrades to the LACC's ICT platform. The new website is more user-friendly and will contain much more content than the current website. Importantly, users will also be able to use it to submit complaints online and complete assets declarations form. The website will go live in January 2018.

B-4.d1.1 Assist LACC to implement on-line Asset Declaration (AD) filing system

The LACC received a total of 409 declarations from relevant senior executive officials of all departments and agencies. While the LACC's efforts to secure compliance in the executive branch was very successful, members of the Assembly and judges and senior officers of the courts have yet to provide the LACC with any completed forms.

Activity B-4 d1.2 Build capacity of LACC to communicate effectively with the public and the media.

The international and Liberian media and communication consultants began work on designing a new, more integrated, comprehensive and multi-faceted communications and public relations strategy. The two consultants interviewed numerous LACC officials as well as officials and staff of NGOs and media organizations. Just as their field-work was completed, illness struck down one of the consultants. While this interrupted the work, the consultant is fortunately fully recovered and will complete the strategy soon and present it to the LACC' senior officers in January 2018.

B-4 d1.5 Assist LACC with implementing effective public education activities

The LACC with assistance from LPAC coordinated the International Anti-Corruption Day activities on 9 December. These consisted of a university debating competition on the theme of development and corruption, a parade through central Monrovia and a series of speeches at the Centennial Pavilion

2.5. ANTI-CORRUPTION LEADERSHIP AND ANTI-CORRUPTION SECTOR COORDINATION (B.5)

Objective B.5: The LACC is able to exercise its leadership role and is able to effectively work with the legislature and other integrity agencies to develop and implement effective anti-corruption strategies, policies, programs, and laws.

B-5 e1.1 Assist LACC with drafting and promoting enhanced anticorruption legislation Whistle-Blower and Witness Protection and Corruption Court Bills.

LPAC has provided technical support to LACC in drafting and promoting national legislation including the Whistle-Blower and Witness Protection Bill and the Corruption Court Act over the past year. Despite the election, the Bill remains on the floor of the Assembly for consideration. Similarly, the corruption court bill is in committee. All the leading candidates for President at this year's election have said the witness protection bill is a priority so it may be passed promptly when the Assembly reconvenes in January 2018. Further, the main sponsor of the LACC's bills in the Assembly in 2017 is now the Vice-President.

3.0 CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

GRANT ADMINISTRATION

Center for Transparency and Accountability in Liberia (CENTAL)

CENTAL's program was entitled "Election and You". In October 2017, CENTAL held four integrity forums in the regions (two on Buchanan and two in Gbarnga). About 100 residents attended each. They met with candidates for District Representative seats. All the candidates accepted that fighting corruption was high on their legislative agenda. They supported particular anti-corruption measures including compliance with the National Code of Conduct, the passing of the whistleblower protection bill, support for the asset declaration system, the establishment of a corruption court and the expansion of the powers of the LACC. Each candidate signed an "integrity pact", committing them to the support of these anti-corruption policies and programs if elected.

As part of activities, CENTAL participated in a live radio talk show on Radio Kwatekeh in Gbarnga, Bong County and on Magic FM in Buchanan City, Grand Bassa County. A range of anti-corruption topics was discussed with the presenter, followed by a talk-back component.

CENTAL produced one hundred and ten (110) copies of newsletters featuring news stories from the "Elections and You Program". It also featured stories on CENTAL activities covering the period September to December 2018.

CENTAL will closely monitor the first 100 days of the new administration's commitment to reducing corruption and will publish a report about it by measuring the degree to which it supports or promotes particular governance and anti-corruption measures and policies.

Flomo Theater

Flomo Theater implemented a program called "Strengthening Traditional Mechanisms to Fight Corruption through local Media and Community Theater". The aim of the project is to build a common consensus with local leaders on building trust among authorities at the Community level to advocate for good governance through meetings, workshops and dramatic performances in rural and regional areas.

Flomo Theater conducted consultative and integrity forums on anti-corruption in seven communities in Lofa and Margibi). These meetings were usually followed themes with more than 3000 people attending. They also performed drama serial



Open theater culture performance produced by Flomo Theater at Vayeamah Public Market in Margibi County.

programs on community radio about corruption in several counties. Flomo Theater is expected to submit the final program closeout report on or before March 31, 2018.

Rural Human Rights Activists Program (RHRAP) “Using Electioneering to Promote Transparency and Accountability in Governance”,

In the lead-up to the election in October RHRAP hosted 12 community radio talk shows and broadcast 40 anti-corruption radio programs on radio networks in rural areas, encouraging citizens to use their voting power to fight corruption during the runoff election. The radio programs included talk shows (live interviews), newscasts and talk-back. RHRAP also held corruption awareness meetings with community members and candidates in six electoral districts, during which participants were encouraged to ask questions and make recommendations about reducing corruption in their community.

Angie Brooks International Center (ABIC) “The Talking Bus – Upholding the Rule of Law” in conjunction with the LNBA

The outcome of the first round of voting on October 10, 2017, led to uncertainty and conspiracy theories among the population. Appeals to the Supreme Court by several political parties put the Constitutional outcome of the elections in question – especially among the least informed yet most volatile section of the population. The resulting discussions in the media created a mixture of distrust, misunderstanding, and threats of violence. Since these elections were the first to be run entirely by the GOL and its security forces since the end of conflict, the stakes were high.

LPAC provided funding to the Angie Brooks International Centre/ Women’s Situation Room, to implement a program called “The Talking Bus – Upholding the Rule of Law” in conjunction with the LNBA. The aim was to provide information to the public across the country about the national elections with a specific emphasis on explaining the rule of law, Supreme Court proceedings and, once judgment was rendered, how the delayed finalization of the election process was fully in accordance with the Constitution. It explained how reliance and respect for the rule of law avoid conflict. Using a decorated bus equipped with a public-address system, members of the LNBA, the Women’s Situation Room, and other CSOs traveled to “hot-spots” throughout Liberia to discuss the election and the need to for the election to proceed in an orderly and peaceful way – in accordance with the Rule of Law.

The program was launched by an LPAC hosted kick-off event on December 8, 2017, attended by a large audience including several ambassadors, donors, and opinion leaders – as well as a very large media contingent. It was remarkably successful in terms of press attention and public engagement obtained and throughout the program in the press, on radio and television. The following day the Supreme Court announced its decision and the “Talking Bus” was present and dominated the news cycle with sound analysis and calls for calm in preparing for the second round of elections. The grant program simplified and interpreted the Supreme Court opinion to thousands of people across nine Counties in Liberia and provided legal education on election law, the constitution of Liberia and sensitized them on the rule of law; encouraged citizens to respect the culture of upholding the rule of law.

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