

LIBERIA ENERGY SECTOR SUPPORT PROJECT (LESSP)

The U. S. Agency for International Development's (USAID) Liberian Energy Sector Support Program (LESSP) contract was awarded to Winrock International (WI) on October 4, 2010 under USAID Contract 669-C-00-10-00059-00. The Winrock International team, including subcontractors Energy and Security Group (ESG) and Tetra Tech ES Inc. are implementing LESSP.

LESSP was developed by USAID in response to the priority set by the Government of Liberia (GOL) of rehabilitating energy infrastructure, which is an integral component of the nation's macroeconomic development strategy as set forth in the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS). Specifically, LESSP contributes to the following goals stipulated in the PRS:

- Builds the capacity of the Rural and Renewable Energy Agency (RREA) and the restructured Ministry of Lands, Mines & Energy;
- Increases energy access in both Monrovia and the three rural counties; and
- Launches Liberia's hydropower generation capability and explores additional generation options from other renewable energy sources; and improves legal, institutional, and regulatory framework within the energy sector.

The purpose of the LESSP program for USAID is to increase access to affordable, renewable energy services in geographically focused rural and urban areas in order to foster economic, political and social development in Liberia. The program is focusing its work in Bong, Nimba and Lofa counties. The ultimate impact of the program, the change that USAID Liberia expects to see in targeted areas, will include:

- Increased and sustainable access and affordability of electricity within urban and rural poor communities;
- Improved performance of local governments, civil society and the private sector in monitoring, regulating, and managing the use of renewable energy;
- An increase in the percentage of households and businesses utilizing clean energy and a corresponding increase in economic activity; and
- Policy changes that improve the investment climate for the energy sector.

LESSP's three objectives are broad and diverse, encompassing energy sector regulation and institutional reform, renewable energy (RE) pilot power plant construction and commercialization, strengthening of community-based organizations (CBOs) and capacity of institutions of higher education, public-private partnership development, and capacity building for support of the Liberia Electricity Corporation's (LEC) to hasten electricity connections for lower income customers. A common thread connects the various subcomponents: the focus on RE as a key tool for enabling economic growth, and building an environment conducive to private investment in the energy sector.

The Winrock Team has developed a comprehensive strategy and implementation plan that reflects lessons learned and global experience in energy policy and regulatory reform, institutional capacity building, rural electrification, RE technologies and service delivery, CBO and enterprise development, and Global Development Alliance/Public Private Partnership (GDA/PPP) development. The graphic on the next page, titled the **LESSP Activities Map**, shows the project Goal, the three Objectives and the Tasks and Sub-Tasks associated with the program Objectives.

LESSP ACTIVITY MAP

LESSP GOAL

To increase access to affordable, renewable energy services in geographically focused rural and urban areas in order to foster economic, political, and social development.

OBJECTIVE 1 (CLIN 1)

Strengthen GOLs capacity to implement plans for rural electrification as expressed in National Energy Policy (NEP)

TASKS / ACTIVITIES

- 1.1 Conduct HR Skills Assessment of RREA
- 1.2 Execute a Training Plan for RREA and the Renewable Energy Fund (REFUND)
- 1.3 Develop an Action Plan for a new Electricity Regulatory Board (ERB)

OBJECTIVE 2 (CLIN 3, 4, 5)

Establish commercially viable pilot plants that provide renewable energy services to population centers in Bong, Lofa, and Nimba Counties

TASKS / ACTIVITIES

- 2.1 Establish 2 hydroelectricity power stations (CLIN 4)
- 2.2 Establish 2 biomass-powered electricity systems (CLIN 4)
- 2.3 Produce 2 additional power systems in other renewable energy technologies (CLIN 4)
- 2.4 Support community-based organizations and businesses to operate LESSP power systems (CLIN 3, 5)

OBJECTIVE 3 (CLIN 2)

Collaborate with international donors for the expansion of Monrovia's power grid

TASKS / ACTIVITIES

- 3.1 Manage a fund for the purchase of electricity distribution materials to connect low and middle income customers to the Monrovia electricity grid.

OBJECTIVE 2 SUB-TASKS

- 2.1.1 (hydro) Undertake appropriate feasibility studies & economic analyses for proposed plants
- 2.1.2 (hydro) Develop Terms of Reference (TOR) for Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC)-type contracting to build the hydro facilities
- 2.2.1 (biomass) Undertake appropriate feasibility studies & economic analyses for proposed plants
- 2.2.2 (biomass) Develop TOR for EPC-type contracting to build the biomass facilities
- 2.4.1 Assess & create database of organizations involved with community & cooperative development
- 2.4.2 Provide support for businesses and cooperatives operating power systems
- 2.4.3 Strengthen centers of higher education, vocational training for renewable energy disciplines
- 2.4.4 Secure GDAs with non-traditional resource partners to expand delivery of renewable energy