

**MARYLANDERS FOR PROGRESS (LIBERIA), INC
MARYLAND DEVELOPMENT FORUM**

Wednesday, August 29, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Report Summary.....pages 2-6
Mr. Christian Herbert, Director, MFP_NGO

Welcome and Introductory Remarks.....pages 7-10
Mrs. Catherine Gyudede Woods, Secretary General, MFP

Keynote address.....pages 11-14
Mr. Steve Ursino, County Director, UNDP

BREAKUP SESSION.....page 15

THEMATIC PAPERS

Health.....pages 16-17

Education.....pages 18-19

Agriculture.....pages 20-22

Micro Finance.....pages 23-24

OUTCOME FROM BREAKUP SESSION

Health.....page 25

Education.....page 26

Agriculture.....pages 27-28

Micro Finance.....page 29

Acknowledgements.....page 30-31

REPORT ON THE MARYLAND DEVELOPMENT FORUM (MDF)
Held at the Monrovia City Hall, Wednesday, 29 August 2007

12 September 2007

I. BACKGROUND

In an attempt to mobilize financial and other resources from donors to implement projects and programs in the **Maryland Development Agenda (MDA)**, the MFP Project Team in Liberia recommended to the MFP Board of Directors in July, that a one-day **Maryland Development Forum (MDF)** be convened in Monrovia. The idea was driven by the need to bring together at the forum, representatives of relevant government ministries/agencies, UN Agencies, International Aid Agencies, INGOs/NGOs, Private Sector actors, the Maryland Legislative Caucus (MLC) and *Marylanders for Progress (MFP)* personnel to discuss the MDA with the view of assisting in its implementation. In August 2007, the Board approved the proposal, thereby paving the way for holding the Forum on Wednesday, 29 August 2007 at the Monrovia City Hall.

II. OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the Forum were: -

- To create a forum to gain donors/partners perspectives about the programs, projects and activities within the MDA with the view of acquiring their commitments and buy-in;
- To highlight and emphasize to donors and our partners in progress the critical needs of the people and communities of Maryland County as reflected in the Maryland County Needs Assessment Report;
- To mobilize financial and material support for the programs, projects and activities in the Maryland Development Agenda (MDA).

III. ACTIVITIES AT THE MARYLAND DEVELOPMENT FORUM (MDF)

A. Participants

Over 60 representatives of the institutions, organizations and individuals invited attended and participated in the Forum. The participants came from government ministries, UN Agencies, INGOs, NGOs, Private Sector actors, the Maryland Legislative Caucus (MLC) and

Marylanders for Progress (MFP) personnel¹. The Forum commenced at 10:00AM and concluded at 5:45PM.

B. Welcome Statement

Following Opening Prayers, Mrs. Catherine Gyudede Woods, Secretary General of MFP, gave the Welcome Statement. She set the tone of the Forum, *inter alia*, recalling the noble vision, which galvanized Marylanders into action in the Diaspora and Liberia to form MFP as a vehicle for assisting the people and county of Maryland during and after the 14-year civil crises. The full text of Mrs. Woods' Welcome Statement is attached.

C. Keynote Speech

The Keynote Address was delivered by Mr. Steve Ursino, County Director of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). He spoke on the theme: **“Decentralized Development in the New Liberia – the Local Economic Development Approach”** and emphasized the link between *decentralization* and *good governance*. The full text of Mr. Ursino's speech is attached.

D. Special Statement: Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia

Owing to an emergency – collapse of the Kahpu Bridge connecting Grand Cape Mount, Bomi, Gbarpolu, Lower Lofa and parts of Monsterrado Counties – President Sirleaf could not attend the program. However, she designated His Excellency, Joseph Boikai, Vice President of the Republic of Liberia, to proxy for her and represent the government.

Vice President Joseph Boikai delivered an inspiring speech endorsing the Maryland Development Agenda (MDA) and challenging the MFP membership and Marylanders in general to work assiduously for the realization of the Agenda. [The full text of VP Boikai speech is being transcribed and will be sent subsequently.].

E. Introduction of “Africa's Maryland”

Hon. John Ballout, Senior Senator of Maryland County introduced the film, *Africa's Maryland* to the participants. He gave a brief history of the

¹ The following MFP personnel traveled from Maryland County to Monrovia to participate in the Forum: Mr. Wah Mle Elliott (by road), Mr. Jasper Robertson (by road), Mr. Theophilus Kamma (by road) and Ms. Rowena Geddeh (by air). They have all returned safely back to the County.

making of the film and the objective it sought to achieve, i.e., highlighting to the world the critical development needs of Marylanders in the County. The film did serve that purpose as many participants including representatives of international organizations shed tears and expressed remorse at the numerous scenes of need, privation and underdevelopment in Maryland County. It may have been the single most impacting feature of the Forum with lasting impressions on participants including donors present. Mr. Steve Ursino, the UNDP boss was so moved by the film that he asked to make a copy of the DVD.

F. PowerPoint Presentation of the MDA

The key sectoral priorities – Health, Education, Agriculture and Micro-Finance - of the Maryland Development Agenda (MDA) were highlighted to participants through a PowerPoint presentation by the MFP Project Director, Mr. Christian G. Herbert. He said that MFP has put in place an effective Development Strategy geared towards realizing the programs and projects in the MDA. The Strategy includes, *inter alia*, a focus on the priority needs of Marylanders, a pledge to work closely with the government, donor agencies, NGOs, etc., in program design and implementation and to support government's Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (PRSP) and meet some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). A copy of the PP Presentation is attached.

G. Remarks/Comments

Several important personalities then made impromptu remarks referencing the prior speeches delivered including that of the Vice President of Liberia, the film "Africa's Maryland" and the Presentation of the MDA in PowerPoint format. Those who made remarks are: -

- a. Hon. Gloria Musu Scott, Chairperson of the Maryland Legislative Caucus;
- b. Hon. John Ballout, Senior Senator of Maryland County;
- c. Mr. J. Gbleh-bo Brown, UNDP Representative.
- d. Mr. Umaru Ishiaku, FAO Representative
- e. Mr. Felix Sarta Jan, ECO-Bank Representative
- f. Mrs. Ophelia D. Draper, Development and Acting Superintendent Maryland County

Due to time constraints, the number of speakers was limited. Lunch was served after the afore-mentioned remarks were made.

H. Break-up Sessions

Following lunch, the Forum disassembled into four (4) Break-up Sessions each focusing on the Health, Education, Agriculture and Micro-Finance priority sectors of the MDA. All Sessions were conducted simultaneously for a period of one (1) hour. Each Session was chaired/co-chaired by MFP personnel while a donor/NGO representative served as Rapporteur. Four (4) discussion issues guided the deliberations in each group. Attached is a list of Session chairs/co-chairs and Rapporteurs as well as the discussion issues.

Presentations followed the group discussions. Presenters were the Rapporteurs from the various Sessions. Copies of all four (4) presentations as well as the Thematic Papers, which informed them, are attached.

I. Closing Remarks

Mr. Christian G. Herbert, Project Director, MFP gave the Closing Remarks by recalling the key milestones achieved by the Forum as well as thanking all participants, organizers and well-wishers including those who facilitated the program by providing equipment, materials, supplies, etc. A list containing Acknowledgment is attached.

IV. OBSERVATIONS

The Maryland Development Forum (MDF) has been described by the Vice President of Liberia, His Excellency Joseph Boikai, as “an unprecedented program” which should be emulated by other counties. Mr. Steve Ursino, UNDP Programme Director also echoed similar sentiments, describing it as “a great initiative”. In a letter to MFP, Dr. Jordan Ryan, the United Nations Secretary General’s Deputy Special Representative to Liberia in UNMIL welcomed MFP’s “initiative to mobilize development at the local level and encourage you in your efforts to improving the living conditions of the people of Maryland County”. Both Senators John Ballout and Gloria Musu Scott of Maryland County, representing the Maryland Legislative Caucus, praised the Forum’s conduct and achievements, urging Marylanders to join hands in lifting the County from ruins to prosperity. The Acting Superintendent of the county, Mrs. Ophelia Draper, expressed her joy that Marylanders are now rising to the cause of development for their motherland. Other participants also expressed similar views and opinions about the Forum.

Evaluated against the expected outcomes, the Forum was a resounding success. It provided the appropriate environment for highlighting to the highest functionaries of the Government of Liberia, the United Nations Organizations, International Aid Agencies and other partners, the critical humanitarian and development needs of the people of

Maryland County as outlined in the Maryland Development Agenda (MDA). As a result of the Forum, MFP is now a buzz word in donor circles in Liberia and its image has been substantially accentuated. The comments of donor invitees present, letters received from UNMIL, the German Ambassador, etc., as well as telephone calls from UNICEF, WFP, etc., clearly demonstrate the growing interest and commitment of the donor community to the initiatives embarked upon by MFP especially the efforts imbedded in the comprehensive county development programme – the MDA. No single county in Liberia is on record as undertaking such a feat. Although the Forum did not generate any direct financial or resource pledge, however, all donors present and those currently responding to our invitations, have committed themselves to assist MFP, provided we meet specific requirements and follow their procedures/guidelines. For example, UNDP requires a letter addressed to the Country Director from MFP requesting a *partnership* relationship, followed by an inspection of our *offices* and *capacity* in Monrovia and Harper. These are the initial pre-conditions to supporting the MDA. Conditionality varies from one donor to another – an unavoidable challenge which we must meet to qualify for assistance.

While noting the successes achieved, it is important to mention the setbacks we encountered. The main setback is the absence of some members of the donor community at the Forum. Two (2) factors may have caused this. The first may have been the delay in receiving the printed copies of the MDA from the United States. This led to a number of postponements and cancellations of the Forum program and other commitments. The second may be the short notice given the invitees (48 hrs). Normally, invitations to donors for such undertaking are sent at least seven (7) days prior to the gathering. The tight schedule of the Keynote Speaker, the travel schedule of the President, the scheduled recess of the National Legislature, the possibility of forfeiture of pre-payments with clients, etc., - all contrived to constrain us to a fixed date – Wednesday, 29 August 2007. However, this setback should not be misconstrued to mean that those who did not attend lack interest in the Forum or its objectives. It is manifest in the telephone calls and written communications of some of the invitees who were absent, that they support the purposes of the Forum but the short notice did not permit adequate time for an internal review of the documents and for deciding on proper representation. They however are *not* uncommitted to assisting MFP in achieving the programs and projects in the MDA; there is an abundance of goodwill for MFP in the donor community upon which we need to capitalize.

V. CONCLUSION

Following the Forum, the MFP Project Team convened a meeting on Saturday, 1 September 2007 in Monrovia to review the successes and setbacks experienced with the view of taking appropriate measures to move MFP another step forward. A consensus was reached that the Forum's successes outweigh any setback(s) encountered. The meeting concluded that MFP build on the strength of the successes achieved by timely following up with donors and other partners invited to the Forum through scheduled meetings and consultations in the months of September and October 2007.

The MFP team has begun work and the first of these meetings or consultations is expected to begin in mid-September 2007.

WELCOME REMARKS BY MRS. CATHERINE G. WOODS

Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia,
Mr. Steve Usino, Country Director of the UNDP in Liberia and Guest Speaker
Maryland Legislative Caucus and Honorable Members of the Legislature
Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs and members of the Cabinet,
Mr. Alan Doss, Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations
Dean and Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Representatives of the Various International
and Local NGOs present,
Representatives of the various UN and international agencies, the Governor, Presidents,
Country Managers of the various Banks in Liberia,
Mr. Christian Herbert, Project Director, and members of Marylanders for Progress
(Liberia) Inc, Marylanders, citizens and well-wishers of Liberia, friends

A Woyroun ey, a-weah-o

On behalf of Marylanders for Progress (Liberia) Inc, USA and Liberia, the National Association of Maryland County USA, and the citizens of Maryland County, we welcome you to the Maryland County Development Agenda Forum. We appreciate your presence and hope that the deliberations today will yield positive responses on the important development issues dearest to Maryland County.

We especially welcome and thank our illustrious President, Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, for accepting our invitation, and her attendance at this Forum shows the manifestation of her leadership, her insight for the development of our beloved Liberia and the clarion call to all Liberians to wake up and collectively work together for the reconstruction of our Country, Liberia. Thank you Madam President, your first Cabinet meeting held outside Monrovia was in Maryland County inspired us to respond to the call of nation building and to pull resources together for the development of Maryland County and Liberia as a whole.

We also thank you, Madam President, for your decision to support the sister state relationship not only with Bong County but also with Maryland County and the state of Maryland, USA which share the historical ties. Today we are proud to say that a **Memorandum of Understanding** between the State of Maryland, USA and Maryland County, Liberia, was signed on August 27, 2007 by our Superintendent Hon. I. Sie Teba Neufville and Governor Martin O'Malley. We also thank Sr. Senator John Ballout for his effort in facilitating the WBAL/TV team, Mr. John Sanders, Mr. Tim Tooten and Mr. John Brosnan who visited Maryland County and produced the documentary Africa's Maryland which contributed to the decision making of the sister state relationship.

What is Marylanders for Progress (MFP)? Marylanders in the Diaspora, especially In the State of Maryland, being concerned about the dreadful plight of its citizens in Maryland County, formed the Marylanders for Progress (Liberia) Inc, in 1999 as an organization geared towards collectively sourcing and channeling assistance to the County. Members of this organization including Americans and other non-Liberians are

professionals in the field of medicine, engineering, education, agriculture/forestry and other professional careers. Membership is opened to all nationalities whose objectives are that of MFP's. MFP is a founding chapter of the National Association of Maryland County (NAMCAL) in the USA; this National Association is comprised of 7 chapters representing Maryland County in the United States.

MFP's vision is to create a framework for identifying priority needs, mobilizing needed resources, acquiring and delivering humanitarian supplies, supporting programs that will foster self-reliance and economic empowerment for its citizens, and to support key service institutions such as health, education, and agriculture/forestry. This is in line with poverty reduction strategy which is one of our government and the Millennium Development Goals.

What has MFP done to assist Maryland County?

Since its inception MFP, has achieved amongst other, the following:

In the field of education,

- In 2001 MFP shipped 20,000 textbooks for all grade school levels in the 4 districts of the County– the 4 districts are Harper City, Pleebo/Sodoke, Karluway and Barrobo;
- 2006 raised several thousand dollars towards Maryland County Education Scholarship Program initiated by Senior Senator John Ballout – this is to help with tuition for students of Maryland County wishing to attend institutions of higher learning but who cannot afford the cost. (This is an ongoing project);
 - 2006, supplied and funded the **Cape Palmas Music Center** which teaches music to students in Harper City; raised funds to supplement teachers' salaries and provide books to the Rocktown public school;

In the field of health:

- In 2002, MFP provided 14 hospital beds, medical supplies to the J. J. Dossen Memorial Hospital, and clothing for distribution among the citizens of Maryland County;
- Shipped medical supplies for clinics in Pleebo
- 2005 purchased a 6.5 KVA diesel generator to preserve medical supplies and water pumps for J. J Dossen Memorial Hospital water reservoir;
- Provided walkers, glucometers, beddings, blood pressure cuffs and otoscopes for hospital use;

Economic Empowerment;

- 2001, established a Credit Union with several thousand dollars for Maryland County market women providing small loans with low interest towards women's empowerment programmes;
- 2003, assisted Maryland County women residing in Monrovia with several hundred dollars towards dues payment into the Southeastern Women's Association and for filing Articles of Incorporation to initiate self-help projects;
- 2005, shipped clothing, children books and toys to Marylanders residing in Monrovia to help them help themselves.

Other Activities:

- 2004, MFP provided cell phones to Marylanders and other Liberian citizens who took refuge in Tabou, Cote d'Ivoire which made it possible for them to communicate with relatives abroad;
- 2004 registered as an NGO for MFP's community's funding programs that will help institute sectoral development in Maryland County
- 2007 provided funds to conduct Needs Assessment of Maryland County funded the production of the Maryland Development Agenda document produced by MFP Project Director, and the opening of offices in Monrovia and Harper cities.

What activity is the MFP undertaking now?

- In 2006 being concerned about the dreadful plight of the citizens of Maryland County, MFP asked Mr. Christian Herbert and other Marylanders to join forces in identifying programs and projects for the reconstruction of the County, after 14 years of destruction and carnage. The first major milestone of the MFP was to conduct a Needs

Assessment in the 4 districts of the County.
The second achievement was the crafting of
the Maryland Development Agenda.

Being a registered NGO, MFP appointed Mr. Christian Herbert as Program Director to be responsible for MFP programs in Maryland County and to liaise with donor organizations in assisting funding for its programs. As you will read in the Needs Assessment document, Mr. Herbert headed a team to Maryland County and held discussions with local government officials (superintendents, city mayors, chiefs, elders as well as heads of local and international NGOS operating in Maryland County) on the critical needs of the districts. These were endorsed by local authorities and are listed in the back of the booklet. A note of clarification; Maryland Development Agenda is neither in conflict with the government's development plans nor the County's, but is a private Diaspora Marylanders' initiative to compliment government development efforts. In order to realize its objectives in implementing the various projects, programs and activities that are underlined in the brochure, we need the financial and material support of donors, friends and Marylanders here and abroad. We realize that Government alone cannot carry on the development of the country, and according to the President, all hands aboard are needed.

MFP has a pool of young professional investors who would like to contribute their quota to the development of their home county through private non-governmental means. Marylanders in the past have sliced their monthly income to pool financial resources to give humanitarian assistance to destitute and war-ravaged. These investors were encouraged, upon hearing the President's call, decided to pursue the ownership and management of the Cavalla Rubber Plantation, but were disappointed when denied the opportunity; these investors had intended building a factory where rubber could be processed in different ways, thereby adding value, educating and engaging the younger citizens with job opportunities.

Madam President, our distinguished guests, Maryland County needs your support, your motivation and your prayers. We are prepared to meet the challenge.

I thank you.

Catherine G. Woods

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY MR. STEVE URSINO, COUNTRY DIRECTOR,
UNDP, SERVING AS KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT THE MARYLAND
DEVELOPMENT FORUM (MDF) AT THE MONROVIA CITY HALL ON
WEDNESDAY, 29 AUGUST 2007**

Your Excellency
Joseph Boakai
Vice President of the Republic of Liberia

Honorable John Ballout
Senior Senator, Maryland County

Honorable Gloria Musu Scott
Chairperson, Maryland Legislative Caucus

Honorable member of the Maryland Legislative Caucus

Officials of Maryland County

Honorable Christian G. Herbert
Project Director, Marylanders for Progress

Esteemed colleagues of the UN and international community

Ladies and Gentlemen:

.....
Let me begin by expressing profound gratitude for the invitation extended me to serve as Guest Speaker at this Development Forum organized by Marylanders for Progress (Liberia) Inc.

Let me also congratulate Marylanders, especially those from the Diaspora for this development initiative. We all realize that the Diaspora can have an immediate as well as long term impact in rebuilding a new Liberia on the foundation of good governance, human rights and economic and social progress.

This Forum, as I understand it, has to basic objectives:

- 1) To discuss the contents of the Maryland Development Agenda (MDA); and,
- 2) To mobilize needed resources for the implementation of the Agenda.

These objectives imply more development and less politics – a need for progress and transformation for all citizens of the County no matter what their political leanings may be.

We at UNDP want to congratulate the organizers who state to “help Marylanders help themselves rise from the ruins of war and improve their living conditions”.

We would add that your goal only implies to Maryland County but to all the counties of Liberia – to the nation that is Liberia. This partnership with the Diaspora and the people of Maryland County is something we would like to see replicated by the Diaspora in all 15 counties.

Honorable Legislators and officials of Maryland County, after more than two decades of political instability and 14 years of violent conflict, peace has been restored, a democratically elected government is now in place and Liberians in all parts (like what we see here today) are now eager to break with the past to forge ahead in the building of a new nation in unity and prosperity. In other words, it means a unity of purpose and in changing of minds and attitudes to do things differently.

This new environment, set forth under the sound, strong and determined leadership of Her Excellency, Madam Ellen-Johnson Sirleaf, with the support of Liberia’s international partners, provides the freedom and opportunity to formulate programmes and strategies to rebuild this nation, empower its people and focus on missed targets and broken promises of security and sustainable human development.

It is against this background that I would like to briefly discuss with you using the theme: ***“Decentralized Development in the New Liberia – the Local Economic Development Approach”***.

The new government of Liberia has inherited a heavily centralized system of government that was instituted since the founding of this nation.

We all agree that this legacy of a centralized system of governance has, from all indications, appeared to be incapable of meeting the governance and development needs and challenges of the Liberian people. Many have attributed this to one of the root causes of bad governance in Liberia which has resulted in the loss of innocent lives and the destruction of economic and physical infrastructure of the country of the over 14 years of civil conflict.

In order to address Liberia’s key challenges of poverty alleviation and socio-economic development, there is a need for a new paradigm of governance. The new system must place the tenants of good governance on cornerstones for the building of a strong, viable and prosperous Liberian state. More importantly, it should facilitate full participation of all citizens, especially traditionally marginalized groups such as women (I am thinking of the valiant market women of Liberia) and youth, in the processes of nation-building and governance.

One of the key ways for the promotion of good governance, especially for countries emerging from crises is through decentralization. Decentralization will ensure that the sub-political divisions of the country such as the counties and districts have the necessary autonomy and flexibility to turn popular participation at the local level into sustainable community-driven development.

This system of governance advocates a “demand-driven” strategy and has the merit of taking into consideration the specific demands and potential of each locality and, to a large extent, reduces central level involvement in local community development.

The current approach where central government is seen as providers, owners and managers of all aspects of control related to local community development has nurtured a dependency syndrome in the country, which has effectively undermined the rural communities being transformed into valuable social and economic resources.

The local economic and development approach will facilitate the improvement of living conditions of the population by means of consensus-based action among different social and economic agents (public and private) to take advantage of the endogenous resources by promoting local business capacities and the creation of innovative capacities in the counties and districts.

The LED approach, within which the local population defines common interests and priorities to confront common problems, offers an excellent opportunity to generate an enabling and positive environment. It must be seen within the overall framework of the nation’s development priorities, today reflected in the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy. Marylanders’ efforts should also take into consideration this strategy.

Some of the main reasons why the LED approach (often referred to as the bottoms-up approach) is preferred in post-conflict situations and those countries in transition are:

- 1) The top-down approach (implemented mainly from the central level) has proven to be unsuccessful in solving complex development problems;
- 2) The best knowledge regarding local problems, local needs, local resources, local development potential, as well as local motivation for promoting change exist at the local level;
- 3) It is of fundamental importance that the local community sees its place as the future has its development goals and participates in their implementation.

It is only in this way that we can address the pressing poverty challenges facing Liberia with a multi-dimensional approach – how do we harness the economic, human, political, socio-cultural capabilities – how do we address the critical economic (low income) infrastructure, lack of education and poor health levels?

How do we ensure the political will (here I mean not only the Executive but also the Legislative) to address poverty; to take decisions on the basis of sound technical analysis, ensuring equity and creating political relationships between the haves and have-nots by empowering the poor.

The LED approach plays a catalytic role in development of post conflict local economies through the development of post-conflict economies through the development of culture of partnership and the encouragement of participation of different actors in the decision-making process by promoting the definition of common priorities (consensus-building).

We note with great satisfaction the commitment and concrete steps being taken by this new government of Liberia to decentralize its activities and national development which, in our view, is a major step in addressing poverty alleviation in Liberia.

We saw, early this year, the holding of a cabinet meeting chaired by the President of Liberia several miles outside Monrovia. This was held in your beloved County, Maryland.

We also witnessed and participated in the celebration of your Country's 160th Independence Anniversary out of Monrovia, perhaps the first time in the history of Liberia. This took place in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County.

Very importantly, the publication of the IPRSP last year and the launch of the PRS a few days ago by the President of Liberia is a major step in addressing the country's post-war reconstruction and development priorities.

It charts a new course addressing economic and social development problems of endemic poverty, massive unemployment, illiteracy, institutional collapse and capacity deficiencies.

Last week, we were privileged to participate in the County Development Agenda Inception Workshop held in Gbarnga, Bong County.

The CDA process, as designed by Government with the support of the development partners is intended to advance recovery throughout the country towards a functional decentralized decision-making process in support of a consolidated national development process that will be participatory, inclusive and people-driven using the bottoms-up approach.

We want to call on all Liberians at the central, local and community levels to join hands with your government to make this goal achievable.

UNDP through such national initiatives will support your efforts in line with the priorities agreed in your plan through the Community-based Recovery Programme through sustainable livelihood and Totem projects; support to the DDCs, National Youth Volunteer Service, Launch of an Inclusive Financial Sector in Liberia, support to Local Administration through County Support Teams, support to growth centers such as the Centre Songhai model.

We once more want to thank the organizers of this great initiative. Be assured that UNDP is always with you, the people and government.

Thank you!

BREAK-UP SESSIONS

LEADERSHIP

The Break-up Sessions will be led and assisted by the following personalities:

I. HEALTH

- Dr. Tabehe Freeman/Dr. Fred Amargashi
- Rapporteur - Donor/Partner

II EDUCATION

- Mr. Thomas Collins/Mr. Dio Harris
- Rapporteur - Donor/Partner

III. AGRICULTURE

- Mr. Gabriel Coleman/Mr. John Woods/Mr. Theophilus Kamma
- Rapporteur - Donor/Partner

IV. MICRO-FINANCE

- Mr. David Vinton/Mr. Paul Jeffy
- Rapporteur - Donor/Partner

ISSUES

Key issues to be discussed at these Sessions include:

1. What are the perceptions/perspectives of your organization regarding the nature of projects and programs in this Sector? What can be done to further refine or enhance these projects and programs?
2. How can your organization assist MFP in the implementation of the programs and projects in this Sector?
3. What are the general or specific requirements, procedures or processes that need to be followed to obtain your organization's support and assistance regarding the programs and projects in this Sector?
4. What organizational unit, contact person or focal point in your organization should MFP contact or liaise with in the coordination of program and project activities?

HEALTH SECTOR PRIORITIES

Overview

In January 2007, Marylanders for Progress conducted a needs assessment of the Maryland County Health Sector and identified the following priorities:

- Rehabilitation of health facilities,
- Training of health workers,
- Augmentation of drugs, medical equipment and supplies in the county health facilities in the county,
- Strengthening the Maryland County Health Services referral system,
- Provision of safe drinking water and ventilated improved pit latrines for the sanitary disposal of human excreta.

Rehabilitation of Health Facilities

According to the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOF&SW), there are twenty-four functional health facilities in the county. Seven (7) facilities have been identified by our assessment as needing physical rehabilitation as follows:

1. Gbawiliken Clinic – Barrobo District
2. Glofarken Clinic – Barrobo District
3. Yediaken Clinic – Karluway District
4. Pougaken Clinic – Karluway District
5. Sodoken Clinic – Pleebo-Sodoken District
6. Cavalla Kunokudi Clinic – Pleebo-Sodoken District
7. Rock Town Kunokudi Clinic – Pleebo-Sodoken District

The cost of rehabilitating these seven (7) clinics is put at US\$130,000.00.

The water system of the JJ Dossen Memorial Hospital, the county referral center needs to be rehabilitated to ensure reliable water supply to the center. The cost for rehabilitation is put at US\$100,000.00.

Training of Health Workers

Twelve (12) of the twenty-four (24) functioning health facilities in the county are headed by nurse aides as the officers-in-charge. Every health facility (clinic) needs to be headed by a trained health worker. While we appreciate the efforts of these workers, efforts need to be made to reverse the situation for the better. To change the situation will not be an overnight thing since it takes a minimum of two years to train a mid-level health worker and the difficulties faced by health authorities in recruiting health workers for the rural areas, particularly the South-Eastern region. Two approaches are therefore recommended to address the challenge of providing human resources for health in the county:

1. In-Service training of those currently working in the county; and,
2. Pre-Service training of Marylanders living in Maryland County or Marylanders who will be willing to return to Maryland County to work after their training.

In-Service Training

This component will consist of workshops aimed at upgrading the knowledge and skills of health workers who are currently working in the county. The emphasis will be on the recognition and appropriate management of common illnesses. The training will be done through the relevant health partner in collaboration with the central MOH&SW and the County Health Team (CHT).

Pre-Service Training

The second component will consist of the selection of qualified Marylanders who will pass entrance examination of mid-level health training institutions. They will be provided with full scholarships for their training under the terms of contracts to return to Maryland County to work for certain number of years.

The combined cost of the training programmes is estimated at US\$475,000.00.

Equipment, Drugs and Medical Supplies

The efforts of MOH&SW and the partners are laudable. But there are some gaps that need to be filled. In some health facilities, some basic medical equipment is lacking and drugs and medical supplies are inadequate. Resources that will be mobilized will be used to augment the efforts of MOH&SW and its partners.

Strengthening the Referral System

The County referral hospital, the JJ Dossen Memorial Hospital is at the tail end of the County. It is a very difficult task getting patients to the hospital during emergencies due to the lack of transport. The county lacks adequate public transport system. There is a need to place three SSB radios at strategic locations in each of the four districts and have a network of ambulance system with three ambulances equipped with SSB radios in the county for referral during emergencies.

The total cost of strengthening the referral system is US\$500,000.00.

Construction of Wells and Ventilated Pit Latrines (VIPL)

Diarrhea diseases are among the top three causes of clinic attendance in the county. Many villages still get domestic water from creeks, streams and rivers. The incidence and prevalence of diarrhea diseases are high in those villages with no portable water and inadequate facilities for the sanitary disposal of human excreta. Resources that will be mobilized here will be used for wells and VIPL for communities with high incidence and prevalence of diarrhea diseases.

The estimated cost is put at US\$100,000.00.

Provision of Solar Panels

There are health facilities that provide 24 hours service in the county such as the Pleebo Health Center, Karaoke Health Center, etc. The cost of fuel, maintenance, etc., is enormous. Although the initial cost of solar panels is high, it is almost maintenance free and in the long term cost comparatively less. Resources mobilized here will be used to provide electricity generated from solar panels to these selected health facilities.

The estimated cost of providing solar panels is US\$120,000.00.

Special Advocacy Campaigns

Special advocacy campaigns need to be carried out in the county in the spirit of awakening Marylanders to take charge of their own health thus buttressing what MOH&SW and its partners are doing. These campaigns will be conducted in all the districts, chiefdoms, clans, etc.

The estimated cost of the advocacy campaigns is put at US\$120,000.00.

Shipment of donated items

Marylanders in the Diaspora have mobilized resources and will continue to mobilize more resources in support of the Maryland County Health Services. These donated items have to be shipped to Liberia and eventually to Maryland County.

An estimated amount of US\$60,000.00 will be required to facilitate the shipment of donated items.

EDUCATION SECTOR REHABILITATION IN MARYLAND COUNTY

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The civil crises in Liberia adversely affected all aspects of the Liberian society. The Liberian school system is no exception. Maryland County, like the rest of the 14 counties, has been greatly affected.

1.2 Context

The context of this exercise undertaken by MFP is to contribute to the urgent need to rehabilitate and strengthen the education system in Maryland County. The focus must be placed on educational programmes earlier instituted by the Ministry of Education in 2000, but fell short of full implementation due to a number of reasons – both political and financial.

These programmes include:

- a. Rehabilitation of damaged schools,
- b. Support for basis education (pre-premier to the 9th grade),
- c. Support for mass literacy programs,
- d. Teacher training,
- e. Assisted enrolment programme (AEP),
- f. Early childhood education,
- g. Girls education,
- h. Accelerated learning programme (ALP),
- i. Adult Literacy programme.

2.0 RATIONALE

There is a need for MFP to focus on these programmes. The essence of focusing on these programmes in Maryland County by MFP with support and funding from GOL, NGOs, individuals, concessions and most importantly, Marylanders themselves, will create conditions for permanence and sustainability of the school system of the County.

2.1 Programme Activities

2.1.1 Short Term

- a. Repair of damaged facilities,
- b. Furnishing and equipping all schools,
- c. Provision of instructional materials,
- d. Provision of incentives for teachers (i.e., adequate salaries, allowances, housing, etc.)
- e. Up-grading teachers through refresher training workshops and,

- f. Establishing public libraries, resource centers or reading rooms in each district.

2.1.2 Medium Term

- a. Conduct teacher in-service training for C, b, and AA certificate,
- b. Construct additional temporary schools where needed,
- c. Establish scholarship scheme with funding from GOL, donor agencies, NGOs, private individuals, concessions, etc.

2.1.3 Long Term

- a. Construct permanent & sustainable facilities,
- b. Initial staff development programme,
- c. Provide attractive salaries and other incentives for teachers,
- d. Renovate, furnish and equip the Technical College

3.0 **CONCLUSION**

Sustainable and effective educational programmes undertaken by MFP are crucial to the economic and social development of Maryland County. These programmes must therefore be supported with honest commitment.

AGRICULTURE SECTOR

Introduction

Citizens of Maryland County, Liberia residing in all parts of the Country and in the Diaspora recalling their great potentialities, have resolved to pull resources and work together for the post war reconstruction and overall development of their home county. In pursuance thereof, a team comprising of members of Marylanders for Progress (MFP), Liberia Inc., of multi-disciplinary backgrounds visited Maryland County six (6) months ago and conducted a county-wide Needs Assessment. This Paper is an outcome of that undertaking. This Paper seeks to draw the roadmap that will be used in the short, medium and long terms to foster agricultural development in the county.

Problem Statement

Agricultural productivity, particularly food production in Maryland County is currently low. Consequently, the present food security level in the county is one that leaves much to be desired for the following reasons:

1. Like in all of Liberia, food production, especially rice (the staple food) is at the subsistence level, and other locally consumed food commodities such as vegetables and groundnuts (peanuts) roots and tubers (cassava, yam, eddoes and sweet potatoes) are brought in from the Ivory Coast,
2. Almost all farming villages especially the production sites are not accessible by motor roads and where there are roads, they have been in a prolonged state of disrepair due to the war and have therefore become during the rainy season; even during the dry season some places cannot be reached because the roads leading to them have either been long since cut by erosion or bridges along those roads got broken more than a decade ago and have not been rebuilt,
3. The lack of or the deplorable condition of roads to and from farming sites are largely to blame for the perpetual practice of subsistence farming in the county because the frustrating situation pertaining to roads does not encourage or motivate farmers to produce food on a commercial scale as many food commodities are highly perishable and a person cannot carry more than 25 kilos of farm produce on the head over a long distance,
4. As a consequence of all of these factors, farmers in the county continue to be poor whilst citizens and residents of the county are in a state of vulnerability due to the poor and unstable food security situation.

Farming Needs

During the country-wide needs assessment that was done in February 2007, farmers in Maryland County identified the following as their urgent needs:

1. Farming tools & implements (cutlasses, hoes, shovels, files, diggers, rakes, watering cans, etc.),
2. Agro-chemicals (fertilizers & pesticides),
3. Seeds & Seedlings,
4. Simple Farm Machines (rice mills, cassava graters, cassava crushers – for farina (garri) production, palm oil presses, palm kernel crackers, power tillers, etc.),
5. Agriculture technicians,
6. Roads construction and rehabilitation.

Goals

The goals of MFP's intervention in Maryland County are to empower farmers of the county through capacity building and improvement characterized by training, the supply of farm inputs, building and rehabilitation of roads, providing resources and training in food processing, preservation, storage and facilitating making for improvement in their quality of life and raising of their standard of living and the overall development of the county.

Objectives

1. Mobilize 3 communities in each of the 4 districts within a reasonable period in order to sensitize farmers about their role in improving agricultural development and creating awareness about the poor state of agriculture in the county,
2. Conduct an eight (8)-day training of trainers (TOT) workshop for 200 farmers in the 4 districts of the county (2 days workshop & 30 farmers per district),
3. Set up 4 farmers cooperatives (1 cooperative in each district),
4. Retain a County Agriculture Team (CAT) that will coordinate & supervise MFP's agricultural intervention in the county,
5. Collaborate with the MOA (Ministry of Agriculture) and other relevant government agencies, UN agencies, local international NGOs, etc., for the development of Agriculture in the County,
6. Award scholarships to Marylanders who are interested in pursuing studies in various fields in agriculture for the county's manpower development,
7. Seek support for the commercialization and industrialization of agriculture in the County.

Methodology

- Have beneficiaries/attendants of the 4 districts TOT training workshops hold sensitization and awareness workshops at the Clan level in their respective districts,
- The CAT coordinates & supervises all agricultural activities in the county, liaise and collaborate with the MOA and other relevant entities for the successful implementation of MFP's agricultural agenda,
- Show video clips of how agriculture has positively impacted on the lives of people in Africa and other parts of the world during training workshops or consultative town hall meetings,
- Hold career guidance forums with emphasis on agriculture for Maryland County students in secondary schools and universities in the country in order to inform them about the merits of pursuing careers in agriculture in a bid to encourage more people to choose agriculture as their career,
- Hold an annual district and county agricultural fair and award prizes to outstanding farmers in order to encourage competition for increase in productivity,
- Negotiate for and secure foreign trips for members of the CAT as well as farmers from time to time for exposure and to observe how agriculture has done the magic in other countries. Such trips will bring the CAT and farmers in direct contact with Marylanders in the Diaspora and donors thereby giving them an opportunity to articulate the urgent need for support to the county's agriculture sector and in what specific areas,
- Do a complete documentary on agricultural activities in the county for showing during farmers training and discussions with students, and at meeting with Liberians in the Diaspora and prospective donors.

Short-Term Approach

1. Conduct one (1) sensitization/awareness workshop in each of the 4 districts for 2 days each,
2. Acquire basic farming tools for supply to farmers, such as cutlasses, hoes, etc.
3. Undertake quick impact pilot projects, i.e., produce vegetables, root and tuber crops, install in each district, food processing machines such as rice mills, palm kernel crackers, palm oil presses, etc.

Medium-Term Approach

1. Develop paddy fields for swamp rice production,
2. Establish plant multiplication sites in every district to make planting materials regularly available to farmers,
3. Lay the foundation for animal husbandry

Long-Term Approach

1. Mechanize and industrialize agriculture to make it export oriented.

Expected Outcomes

- A vibrant agricultural sector in the county
- Creation of jobs,
- Reduction of poverty,
- Improved quality of life and higher living standards,
- Increased revenue for government and higher GDP.

Conclusion

There is not better approach to changing the state of agriculture in the county than what has been described. The need for support to the county agricultural sector is urgent. This support will be in line with Government's poverty reduction strategy.

MICRO-FINANCE

I. Introduction

Economic growth cannot be achieved without putting in place well-focused programmes to reduce poverty through empowering the people by increasing their access to factors of production, especially credit.

Micro-Finance is about providing the economically active poor and low-income households with financial services such as credit (to help them engage in income generating activities or expand/grow their small businesses), who are traditionally not served by the conventional financial institutions.

The growing awareness of the potential of Micro-Finance in poverty reduction, economic growth and development, coupled with the emergence of highly successful and fast growing micro-finance institutions (MFIs) has effectively put the issue of micro-finance on the political agenda of most developing countries.

2. The Emergence of Micro-Credit/Finance in Liberia

In Liberia, as in most developing countries, the formal financial system provides services to about 35% of the economically active population while the remaining 65% is excluded from access to financial services. The 65% is often served by the informal financial sector, through non-governmental organizations (NGOs), money lenders, friends, relatives and credit unions.

The concept of a micro-credit programme started in Liberia in 1994. The pilot phase of the project was officially introduced by UNDP/UNDESA in collaboration with the Government of Liberia in February 1997. Most providers of micro-credit reach the public through Implementing Partners (IPs), Community-Based Organization (CBOs) Credit Unions, National NGOs and Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs).

Target beneficiaries are the Rural/Urban population who do not have access to credit from Conventional Financial Institutions with special attention to women, war-affected communities and the handicapped.

Activities eligible for funding include petty trade. Cottage industries, artisanal tools production, handicraft, agro-business, small-scale food processing, animal husbandry, wood products and fishing trade. It has a non-farm sub-sector bias. Funds are loaned to groups rather than individuals.

3. Challenges

- Dishonesty by some Implementing partners,
- Dishonesty by some groups/solidarity leaders,
- Dishonesty by borrowers (individuals),
- High default rate,
- Funding to individuals borrowers difficult to monitor as some dishonest borrowers relocate to avoid repaying loans,
- Absence of a micro-finance policy which seeks to make financial services available on a sustainable basis to the economically active poor as well as appropriate prudential and other regulations that should result in an organized and efficient micro-finance sector.

4. **The Way Forward**

- Government of Liberia should institutionalize Micro-Finance through the formulation of appropriate Micro-Finance Policy which seeks to make Financial Services available to the economically active poor, low-income earners and the Micro, small and medium enterprises through privately owned banks (Micro-Finance Banks). This is to create a vibrant Micro-Finance sub-sector that provides the necessary stimulus for national growth and development,
- Emphasis should also be placed on Capacity Building and Micro-Management Training,
- Development of an appropriate regulatory and supervisory framework based on the particular features and risks associated with this activity.

5. **Recommendation**

The Central bank of Liberia has a Micro-Finance Unit that is actively engaged with collaborating partners in reviewing the existing banking laws and their applicability to Micro-Finance. This process should result into the drafting and promulgation of a national policy as well as appropriate prudential regulatory framework which will culminate in an organized and efficient Micro-Finance sub-sector.

However, it is recommended that pending the promulgation of a National Policy on Micro-Finance, *Marylanders for Progress (MFP)* reactivates and improves upon its Micro-Finance scheme.

6. **Proposed features of the re-activated scheme**

- ❖ *Marylanders for Progress* should work with solidarity groups to run loan schemes in the respective communities;
- ❖ Would-be beneficiaries (groups only) should be required to save with *Marylanders for Progress* prior to receipt of loans, with each saving according to their affordability,
- ❖ Savings not to be used as collateral but as capital investment,
- ❖ Saving seen as an important way to engender clients' confidence in the loan scheme,
- ❖ Loan size not a function of beneficiary's savings,
- ❖ Institute regular monitoring of all borrowers,
- ❖ Interest rate – prevailing market rate
- ❖ Repayment: Four (4) to eighteen (18) months,
- ❖ Target beneficiaries – Urban/Rural poor population of Maryland County,
- ❖ Activities eligible for funding – activities in the farm and non-farm sub-sectors.

OUTCOME OF THE BREAK-UP SESSION ON THE HEALTH SECTOR IN MARYLAND COUNTY

PRIORITIES

1. Rehabilitation of Health Facilities
 - a. Rehabilitate seven (7) functional facilities
 - b. Add living quarters for health workers in those facilities
2. Training of Health Workers
 - a. In-service training to upgrade skill of those presently working
 - b. 1st Target: Recruit from within Maryland those established in the County
 - c. 2nd Target: Marylanders outside can trained/return to serve their County
 - d. Contract to be signed by health workers trained under this scheme
3. Strengthening of the Referral System
 - a. Ambulance (1) and vehicles (3) as well as fuel
 - b. Ambulance maintenance – fee to be charged (details should come from communities)
 - c. Communication – cell phone tower required in Karloken
4. Provision of safe drinking water in
 - a. Strategic areas without latrines and handpumps
 - b. Should be targeted first
5. Solar Panels
 - a. Available for 24-hours facilities including the Hospital
6. Advocacy
 - a. Educate the community about the need to place their feelings in their own hands
7. Shipment
 - a. Dialogue with Firestone for possible shipment of needed medical items
8. Partners:
 - a. NACP-MFP should meet to see possibility of implementing activities in HIV/AIDS
 - b. Focal Person
 - c. Areas of interest

OUTCOME OF THE BREAK-UP SESSION ON THE EDUCATION SECTOR IN MARYLAND COUNTY

PRIORITIES

1. Inadequacy of college/university trained teachers in the seven (7) high schools of the county;
2. Shortage of furniture (desks, chairs, and tables) for schools;
3. Inadequacy of instructional materials;
4. Lack of incentives in the forms of allowances and housing;
5. A dire need to renovate the schools that were affected by the war;
6. Upgrading of teachers in the county to make them effective;
7. Encouraging prospective Maryland college/university students to do teacher education by: -
 - a. Giving them scholarships, and,
 - b. Giving them some contract while they are in school

Therefore, MFP should solicit donor support for the implementation of the above-mentioned projects.

We further recommend that a Special Education Trust Fund be established to support the County Education Sector.

Finally, a follow-up needs assessment be done to put an estimated cost on these projects.

OUTCOMES OF THE BREAK-UP SESSION ON THE AGRICULTURE/FORESTRY SECTOR IN MARYLAND COUNTY

PRIORITIES

WHAT ARE THE PERSPECTIVES/PERCEPTIONS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION REGARDING THIS PROJECT

- The Forestry Development Authority (FDA) has identified Bamboo Reed project in Maryland County as highly marketable. Malaysians and Chinese companies interested to invest in these projects should be encouraged;
- FDA is willing to assist in the protection of Wetlands. A survey of Wetlands can be carried out by the FDA at an appropriate time;
- Renovate and rehabilitate the Harper Port for export purposes;
- FAO/UNDP consultant drew attention to the need for Marylanders to grow more food, be trained in agriculture in the areas of production and preservation because 50% of harvest is lost to pests. He also recommended the development of cooperatives.
 - Need to bridge the gap between subsistence farming and mechanized farming;
 - Rehabilitate or construct farm to market roads;
 - Farming inputs should be supplied on time prior to the commencement of the planting season;
 - Attention should be paid to harvesting palm kernels; millions are made to waste annually;
 - Not enough cassava is produced; cassava processing is required; training is also needed;
 - Marketing has to be improved; forming cooperative is helpful; form Central Points where farmers can easily bring their products;
 - Key issues: Roads – marketing – transportation
 - Human resource training and capacity building in technologies related to tree crops

HOW CAN YOUR ORGANIZATIONS ASSIST MFP?

- The Centre Songhai HP Satellite organizations supported by MC, MOA, UNDP, FAO and UNIDO is a unique and successful attempt to promote agricultural growth in Maryland county;
 - Marylanders have to be sensitized to know that they have a right to make demands on any company establishing in the county;

**WHAT ARE THE GENERAL AND SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS,
PROCEDURES OR PROCESSES THE NEED TO BE FOLLOWED?**

- FDA – write a short letter to the MD, cc to Board of Directors stating your dreams and aspirations
- Direct request has to come from the people.

**WHAT ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT OR CONTACT PERSON SHOULD WE
LIAISE WITH?**

- FDA
 - Department of Strategic Planning
 - Department of GIS & Remote Sensing
 - Centre Songai
 - Ministry of Commerce – Assistant Minister of Industry
 - RPAL – Mr. Harrison Karnwea
- UNDP – Country Director

OUTCOME OF THE BREAK-UP SESSION ON THE MICRO-FINANCE SECTOR IN MARYLAND COUNTY

PRIORITIES

Micro-Finance schemes are an effort to assist poorer people who, most often, are in the majority but under-privileged to receive financial assistance from structured financial institutions.

The Micro-Finance sub-group has deliberated and come up with the following recommendations:

- MFP should take the lead in the management of the loan scheme; MFP should begin to train the staff that will be in charge of the scheme;
- Target beneficiaries should be in the farm and non-farm sectors;
- Other institutions (donors, INGOs, NGOs) should be encouraged to give support;
- MFP staff should be trained to manage and monitor Micro-Finance projects through TOT (Trainers of trainers);
- UN Agencies should also be contacted to assist in the training program in order to gain their confidence;
- Loan beneficiaries should be trained to manage small scale businesses and if possible trained in life skills for those who may not have any skills at all;
- Payment period should be between 4-18 months depending on the type of business a group desires;
- Loans should be given only to groups, not individuals who desire to work together as a team in business;
- All funds should be kept in the ECO-Bank which has promised to be in Maryland County before the end of 2007;
- UNDP and other donors institutions should be contacted to assist MFP in providing substantial portion of the funds needed to support the Micro-Finance scheme

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

During Closing Remarks, MFP expressed profound thanks and appreciation to the following personalities who contributed to the success of the Maryland Development Forum (MDF) held on 29 September 2007 in the Ball Room of the Monrovia City Hall: -

1. Government
 - a. Her Excellency, Madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia
 - b. His Excellency, Honorable Joseph Boikai, Vice President of Liberia
 - c. Honorable John Ballout, Senior Senator, the National Legislature/MCLC
 - d. Honorable Gloria Musu Scott, Chairperson, Maryland Legislative Caucus

2. Board of Directors, MFP
 - a. Ms. Roberta Brown, President, Board of Directors
 - b. Dr. James Elliott, Chairman, Board of Directors
 - c. Mrs. Catherine Gyudede Woods, Secretary General, Board of Directors
 - d. Mr. Abrom Cooper, Vice President
 - e. Mr. Tony Riggio Jr.
 - f. Mr. Claude Langley
 - g. Mrs. Yvonne Hne, Treasurer
 - h. Mrs. Mildred Itoka

Mr. Gerald Cooper, Planning Chair

 - i. Special thanks to Mr. Gerald Brown
 - i. Mr. Brown funded the entire budget for the Forum. He also spearheaded the layout and printing of the MDA in its splendid and attractive form.

3. International Community
 - a. Mr. Steve Ursino, Country Director, UNDP
 - b. Other members of the international community present

4. Break-up Session
 - a. Dr. Tabe Freeman, Health Sector
 - b. Dr. Tete Brooks, Health Sector
 - c. Mr. David Vinton, Micro-Finance Sector
 - d. Mr. A. B. Johnson, Forestry Sector
 - e. Mr. Gabriel Coleman, Agriculture Sector
 - f. Mr. Dio Harris, Education Sector
 - g. Mr. Thomas Collins, Education Sector
 - h. All Raporteurs from the donor and NGO sectors

5. MFP Project Team
 - a. Mr. Mle Dio Freeman, Program Assistant, Operations

- b. Mr. Kpamu Sieh, Program Assistant, Administration
 - c. Mr. Jerome Kuah, Project Officer
 - d. Mr. Namu Williams, Logistics Officer
 - e. Mr. Wah Mle Elliott, Coordinator, MFP-Maryland
 - f. Mr. Alphonso Sieh, Assistant Coordinator, MFP-Maryland
 - g. Ms. Rowena Geddeh, MFP-Maryland, Harper Office
 - h. Mr. Robertson Jasper, Chairman, MFP-Karluway District
 - i. Mr. Hne Wilson, Chairman, MFP-Harper District
 - j. Mr. Victor Carngbe, Chairman, MFP-Barrobo District
 - k. Mr. Thomas Brewer, Chairman, Pleebo-Sodoken District(deceased²)
 - l. Mr. Beatrice Pearson, MFP, Maryland, Harper Office
6. Mrs. Pamera Negassa,
- a. Caterer
7. The Monrovia City Corporation
- a. Mrs. Ophelia Hoff-Saytumah, City Mayor
 - b. Other staff of the City Corporation
8. Computer operators
- a. Mr. Ernesto Herbert
 - i. Computer specialist and designer of the PowerPoint Presentation
 - b. Mr. Prince Herbert
 - i. Assistant computer operator
9. The Proprietors and operators of the Public Address System
10. The Corridor Studio – produces of the Forum’s DVD and photos
11. Drivers
- Mr. Blamasee Dorley

² Mr. Thomas Brewer died on 25 August 2007 in Monrovia after a brief illness. Earlier, he was flown to Monrovia from Harper for further treatment. Mr. Brewer served as Chairperson of MFP in Pleebo-Sodoken District since 2007. He was buried on Wednesday, 12 September 2007 in Harper Maryland County. MFP was fully represented at the funeral and burial. Ms. Rowena Geddeh, MFP representative-designate, laid a reef on his mortal remains at the funeral ceremonies.