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LIBERIA ACCOUNTABILITY AND VOICE INITIATIVE (LAVI)

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The Liberia Accountability and Voice Initiative (LAVI) is designed to strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships to advocate for and monitor policy and accountability reforms. LAVI will focus on developing a portfolio of initiatives with the potential for cumulative impact around issues that have the greatest potential for positive change and are responsive to locally defined priorities. In particular, LAVI will work to:

- Increase the horizontal and vertical linkages among actors involved in similar issues;
- Increase organizational capacity of targeted civil society actors (including professional associations, trade associations, private sector, and others) to participate in issue-based reforms;
- Promote the development of ongoing capacity development services on the local market; and
- Ensure that both learning, and methodologies are shared and applied by other development partners.

Current Activities

- Drafting and promotion of the County Social Development Fund (CSDF) stand-alone bill by LAVI's Natural Resource Management Coalition partners, which will sustain achievements of the 2018/2019 Budget Law amendments to increase citizen participation in the use of public resources in their communities.

- “*More for Education*” campaign team engaging education stakeholders including county and district education officers through town hall meetings, policy dialogues, and presentation of research findings and recommendations.
- Providing capacity development support to the Ministry of Education in its efforts to support county and district education officers for monitoring schools.

Accomplishment to Date:

- Supported eight Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the formation of an advocacy coalition to promote reforms in the management and monitoring of the CSDF.
- Succeeded in pushing for amendments for reform to the CSDF law in the 2018-2019 Section (9) Budget Law, giving citizens and local authorities more control on CSDF management and providing new transparency and accountability to the use of the CSDF.
- Provided capacity development support to CSOs supporting CSDF reform, which led to new organizational policies and plans in financial management, gender and social inclusion, strategic planning, financial sustainability, and monitoring and evaluation.
- Provided funding and support to government agencies that oversee natural resource management for community outreach activities.
- Provided support to seven national CSOs and three county level CSOs to collaborate and implement “*More for Education*” advocacy campaign in 15 counties of Liberia to advocate for at least 20 percent of the national budget to be allocated for education.
- Increased funding for education from 14% to 15% in the FY 2018-2019 national budget due to increased engagements between the “*More for Education*” campaign members, legislators, and other education stakeholders.
- Identified and trained a pool of eighteen Liberian small businesses, consulting firms, and experienced non-governmental organizations to function as service providers who will address capacity challenges among CSOs and build up the local capacity development market.
- Supported the merger between the LAVI service provider pool and the established Consortium of Business Development Service Providers of Liberia (CBDSPL) for enhanced sustainability of a local service provider hub and provided marketing and organizational capacity development.
- Launched the LAVI Learning Lab, a co-working space, technology hub, and online community dedicated to information-sharing and collaborative problem solving to promote issue-based reform.
- Conducted political economy analysis and social network analysis to identify realistic entry points for LAVI and the issue-based reform coalitions, to advocate for and monitor policy and accountability reforms.

Planned Outcomes

- Influence legislation to increase government accountability, transparency, and responsiveness around issues such as the CSDF, education, electoral reform, among others;
- Increased number of civil society actors, networks, and coalitions engaged in advocacy;
- Increased number of civil society actors representing marginalized constituencies trying to affect government policy or conducting government oversight;
- Increased number of civil society actors showing improved organizational performance; and
- Improved level of responsiveness and effectiveness of capacity development service providers.