

- I. **Background:** The Government of Liberia, since the recast budget of 2005/2006 budget, has now made it a norm to allocate funds in the national budget for county development projects. These funds were made available as a result of the increase in revenue flow due to the success in reducing leakages in the collection system. These funds are intended to be used for projects at the community level. Community residents are to be encouraged into deciding the type of projects they would wish to undertake in their own interest.

Based on the experiences of the 100-Community Development Project, the Ministry of Internal Affairs has enhanced the capacity of the Project Coordination Unit by restructuring it into a County Development Support Secretariat (CDSS) to provide technical and administrative support to the County Administrations in the effective implementation of county development projects.

- II. **Project Identification and Formulation:** The budget law passed during the 2007/2008 fiscal budget states that a Special County Development Council (SCDC), comprised of a number of opinion leaders (set by the County Legislative Caucus) from the administrative districts/traditional communities, is to convene in the county and identify the communities or areas that would benefit from the county development funds. These meetings are chaired by the Chairperson of the County Legislative Caucus.
- III. **Decisions of the Target Community:** Following the SCDC meeting, representatives of the district or traditional community are expected to return to their respective locations and convey the decision of the SCDC to the residents of the area. At this meeting, decision on project selection is reached by consensus by those in attendance. When the projects are identified, the community residents will pass this information on to the Office of the Superintendent through the PMC, for onward transmission to the CDSS for analysis and advice. This is important to avoid underestimation of projects and ensure that specs are consistent with the norm. The Ministry of Internal Affairs admonishes all county administrators to work closely with the Legislators of the county during the process.
- IV. **County Development Budget:** Included with the Special County Development Council Meeting Report shall be a budget (totaling the amount allotted in the budget for county development). This shall be broken down into the amounts allotted to each target community as decided in the county development council meeting, along with other project costs-- administrative, monitoring, reporting etc.-- that will be under written by the PMC during the implementation of projects.
- V. **Project Implementation:** Projects are identified, specifications/proposals done at a Target Community Meeting (TCM) and then submitted to the PMC

by the Target Community, through the Office of the District Commissioner. These projects, especially those of infrastructure nature, shall be subsequently submitted to the CDSS for review and technical analysis in terms of costing, correctness of drawing details, construction timelines. Upon the approval of the specs by the CDSS, the PMC will be authorized to commence the bidding process as required by the guidelines of the Public Procurement & Concession Commission (PPCC). Non-infrastructure nature will be reviewed for feasibility and the appropriate advice offered accordingly.

- VI. Disbursement of Funds:** Project Funds will be allotted in keeping with the new budget law. The BoB will, on a quarterly basis, prepare allotments in the name of the individual counties and submit them to the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the preparation of the accompanying vouchers. The Ministry of Finance then prepares the necessary payments to the individual County Development Fund Accounts as verified by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Subsequent disbursements to the County Development Accounts shall be based on the receipt of quarterly financial and project status reports which shall be made to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and subsequently forwarded to the Ministry of Finance for verification.
- VII. Management of Funds:** Payment of funds is made through the Office of the Treasurer. When a contractor request payment, an invoice is submitted to the Office of the Treasurer, amounting to the percentage of advance payment contained in the contract. The Assistant Treasurer prepares a payment voucher, with all the necessary attachments for review by the Treasurer. The Treasurer upon review submits the documents to the Superintendent for approval. Once the payments are approved, the Assistant Treasurer prepares the check(s) for signing by the Assistant Superintendent for Development and the PMC Chairperson, or in their stead, the Superintendent and the Treasurer. Payments for other purposes shall follow the same procedure. It should be noted that when the PMC makes a payment request for projects, that request must take into consideration funds for all PMC administrative costs associated with the implementation of the project(s).
- VIII.** The CDSS requires the submission of additional reports as follows:
- a) Copy of Project Monitoring Reports emanating from the PMT and DDC;
 - b) Contractor's Material used vs. Quoted (Budgeted) Materials Report,
 - c) Contractor's Invoice or payment request.

The documents indicated above must be received by the PMC along with the contractor's invoice, before the processing of another Payment Voucher in favor of a Contractor.

Further payments for other purposes shall be based on reports for the task performed. These reports are to be submitted to the PMC detailing expenditures with receipts and invoices before any other payment is approved.

- IX. Processing of Transactions:** The Assistant Treasurer (Accountant) shall, on a daily basis, record all transactions in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. The County Development Support Secretariat (CDSS) shall work with the PMCs to facilitate this aspect of their work, by providing training and initiating the accounting process for each county team. CDSS Financial Analysts will pay periodic visits to the county to ensure that the PMC is performing its duties consistent with these guidelines.
- X. Financial Reporting:** A monthly financial report (by project) must be submitted to the CDSS by the PMC, two days after the end of each month. In addition, the PMC is also expected to submit quarterly financial reports at the end of each quarter. All financial reporting forms must be completed by the Assistant Treasurer, reviewed by the Treasurer and submitted to the PMC Chairman before submission to the CDSS. Reports found to be wanting shall be returned to the field with notations of the problem(s) observed. In extreme cases, an on-the-spot audit shall be conducted to correct the problem. All further disbursement of funds to a county whose financial reports is found to have discrepancies will be halted pending clarification.
- XI. Monitoring & Evaluation:** The PMT shall closely monitor the projects and report to the PMC on a monthly or at the end of each phase of the project, whichever comes first. Additionally, the Secretariat shall also contract independent accountants to pay periodic visits to the county to ensure that the PMC is properly recording financial transactions in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. These visits shall also help to strengthen the PMC by ensuring that the financial guidelines and procedures set for the disbursement of funds are adhered to. The accountants are to prepare situation reports and submit same to the CDSS at the end of each field visit. Following monitoring visits, the CDSS shall prepare monthly and quarterly evaluation reports for submission to the Minister of Internal Affairs.

Terms of Reference

The County Development Program under the auspices of the Government of Liberia is currently on course. County Officials shall be working along with private citizens of the county to manage the project. Their roles and responsibilities need to be clarified to avoid duplication of effort and conflict in the discharge of duties.

The Superintendent shall:

- 1) Serve as the Co-Chairperson to the Special County Development Council (SCDC);
- 2) In consultation with the Chairperson (County Legislative Caucus Chair) organize meetings of the SCDC;
- 3) Chair the County Procurement Committee;
- 4) Approve payment vouchers for all payments to be made from the County Development Fund (CDF);
- 5) Ensure that bids are tendered in accordance with PPCC Guidelines;
- 6) Appoints the bid evaluation committee and oversee the opening of bids;
- 7) Sign checks in the stead of the Assistant Superintendent for Development;
- 8) Monitor development projects to ensure that they are being carried out consistent with specs and plans
- 9) Approve all project contracts on behalf of the county and
- 10) Work to ensure that financial and other project reports are prepared and submitted to the Ministry of Internal Affairs periodically.

The Assistant Superintendent for Development shall:

- 1) Serve as the focal point in the county development program;
- 2) Work with target communities to develop project proposals to ensure that projects are designed in accordance with the expressed needs of the people ;
- 3) Serve as prime signatory (A) to the CDF Account;
- 4) Closely monitor and report to the Superintendent on the status of the county development projects;
- 5) Work with target communities and/or contractors to help address problems which may arise during project implementation;

The PMC Chairman shall:

- 1) Carry out the day-to-day management of the county development program;
- 2) Review project(s) emanating from the county prior to submission to MIA;
- 3) Help organize the bidding process;
- 4) Participate in the bid opening process as a member of the procurement committee;
- 5) Counter-sign checks for payments approved by the Superintendent and
- 6) Attest all project contracts

The PMC Treasurer shall:

- 1) Serve as the custodian of the CDF;
- 2) Maintain the account records of the CDF;
- 3) Attest all payments made from the CDF account;
- 4) Serve as prime signatory (B) to the account;

- 5) Ensure that the books of account are kept in an organized manner in accordance with generally accepted accounting principle and
- 6) Ensure the preparation of periodic financial reports;

The **Assistant Treasurer** shall:

- 1) Serve as the second custodian of the CDF;
- 2) Prepare payment vouchers for expenditure from the CDF account;
- 3) Ensure that the requisite supporting documents are attached before payment vouchers are prepared;
- 4) Record all financial transactions appropriately at the end of each working day
- 5) Prepare periodic financial reports for review by the PMC and County Officials and must
- 6) Have accounting knowledge

District Development Committee (DDC): The District Development Committee, working closely with the PMC and the Office of the Superintendent, shall be charged with the responsibility of monitoring the project implementation at every stage. As such, the DDC shall be responsible to:

- 1) Visit the project sites weekly or as often as possible, to verify that the projects are been implemented in accordance with the project plans and specifications;
- 2) Prepare weekly and monthly monitoring reports, detailing observations made during the visit;
- 3) Draw the attention of the contractor or project implementer, to discrepancies observed while at the project site, with the view of encouraging corrections to be made, while noting your observations in your report;
- 4) Report to the PMC with copies to the Office of the County Development Support Secretariat.

Procurement Committee: The Procurement Committee, working closely with the PMC shall be responsible to:

- 1) Organize the project documents for bidding;
- 2) Ensure that the ads for bid are placed in the newspapers and on public buildings for the time period required in accordance with the PPCC Guidelines;
- 3) Keep all participants in the bidding process informed about the schedule of the bidding activities
- 4) Prepare the letter of award to the winner of the bid
- 5) Draft the contract between the contractor and the county