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Name of your Organisation: Norwegian Church Aid
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ABOUT THE EVALUATION

Evaluation year: 2004 - 2006

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Country: Liberia

Region: West-Africa

Theme/DAC sector: Reconstruction Relief (730)

SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION

Title of Evaluation Report:

"Cleaning Up – An Evaluation of the ACT response in Liberia 2004 – 2006."

Background:

The ACT Alliance (Action by Churches Together) has been responding to the emergency situation in Liberia with annual ACT appeals since 2001. The signing of the Peace Accord in August 2003, followed by the installation of an interim government and the arrival and deployment of UN peacekeepers from October 2003 signalled a new phase in the ACT response. This evaluation therefore looks at the work covered by the three appeals from 2004 to 2006.

The ACT 2004 appeal (AFLR 41) was primarily about providing relief and cleaning up the countryside following the war. The ACT 2005 (AFLR 51) appeal aimed at providing assistance to the population to return and resettle in their communities of origin and start to clean up and respond to the traumas of the years of war. The ACT 2006 appeal (AFLR 61) can be seen as a continuation of this work of rehabilitation as a basis for the many years of long term recovery required.

2006 can thus be considered as a transitional year from relief to development activities for Liberia. Considering the huge challenges the country is facing and the need for ACT members in Liberia to move from relief to development activities and for the ACT alliance to learn about this process, the ACT coordinating office in Geneva decided to undertake an evaluation of the ACT response to the emergency in Liberia over the period 2004 – 2006. Concentration has been on year 2006.

Purpose/ Objective:

- To assess the performance and impact of the past and current interventions.
- To provide a learning opportunity for future operations.
- To identify key issues to consider in the process to shift from humanitarian assistance to long term development.

Methodology:

- Focus on impact at beneficiary-level.
- Beneficiaries' perception of what the assistance provided did for them.
- Participatory fieldwork.
- Common interview approaches.

The process was guided by the ACT Evaluation mechanism, aiming to "enhance transparency and accountability and allow for lessons to be learnt".

Key Findings:

The report finds that the majority of the interventions by the ACT members was largely successful and relevant and contributed to the overall stabilisation of the emergency situation in the various project areas. Staff, often themselves suffering the effects of war, showed high degree of commitment. ACT members have showed great flexibility in order to respond to the changing needs of the population during the period.

While all members have some knowledge of the Sphere minimum standards, they do not feature strongly in planning or implementing. The Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse is well known and several members require staff to sign the code. A high number of field staff has participated on workshops on this issue.

Low level of funding for appeals, particularly in 2004, seriously affected plans and what members were able to do. That some members received nothing has contributed to tension between organisations in a situation where cooperation and unity was needed.

Recommendations:

- Members should review and discuss their targeting methodologies with a view on learning from "best practices".
- Higher focus on participation of beneficiaries in decisions and involving of local authorities in planning.
- All interventions should be planned with a close regard to conflict sensitivity
- Discussions between members in order to harmonise the many aspects of psychosocial work (especially training of staff, individual and group counselling methodologies, follow-up of clients, methods to engage in peace and reconciliation work, practises with regard to cash and material incentives.
- Joint monitoring visits for lesson learning purposes.
- Joint training on SPHERE standards and Code of Conduct.
- Consider producing a shorter/more user friendly version of the Code of Conduct.
- Attention to gender issues in the member organisations must continue with care being taken that women are involved at all aspects of program planning and implementation, also as tasks are moving from emergency relief to development work.
- Need for more co-ordination at every level.
- ACT members in Liberia should elaborate a proposal for a facilitated programme of capacity development and strategic planning.
- Member should aim at setting more realistic targets for appeals, higher focus on visibility of ACT.

Comments from Norwegian Church Aid

Members of ACT in Liberia show a lot of commitment but needs assistance in order to facilitate the transfer from emergency relief to development work.

There is a need for a deeper understanding of how women and men are differently affected by lack of basic rights (both economical and socio-cultural rights), especially participation and protection.

Cleaning Up

An Evaluation of the ACT response in Liberia 2004 - 2006



Liberia Rehabilitation and Reconstruction – AFLR 61
Liberia Post War Rehabilitation – AFLR 51, AFLR 41

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James Yarsiah

December 2006

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Acronyms/Abbreviations

ACT	Action By Churches Together
ACT CO	ACT Co-ordinating Office (Geneva, Switzerland)
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
CAFF	Children Affected by Fighting Forces (YMCA programme)
CCC	The Concerned Christian Community
CHAL	The Christian Health Association of Liberia
CoS	Church of Sweden
DEA	Diakonie Emergency Aid
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FCA	Finnchurchaid
FM	Funding Member
GBV	Gender Based Violence
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IM	Implementing Member
INGO	International Non-Government Organisation
LCC	Liberian Council of Churches
LCL	Lutheran Church in Liberia
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
LWF/WS	Lutheran World Federation – World Service
LURD	Liberians United for Reconstruction and Development
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NFI	Non food item
NTGL	National Transitional Government of Liberia
PDA	Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, USA
RRF	Rapid Response Fund
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SGBV	Sexual Gender Based Violence
UMC	United Methodist Church
UMCOR	United Methodist Committee on Relief
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
US	United States
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing (for HIV)
WatSan	Water and sanitation
WCC	World Council of Churches
WFP	World Food Programme
YMCA	Young Men’s Christian Association

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Jenny Borden
James Yarsiah

Cover photo: *The women at Panta Kpaa explaining what they had learned in the HIV/AIDS and SGBV workshops* (Christiana Wilson – LWF/WS)

Executive Summary

This evaluation, which was undertaken 13 – 24 November 2006, looks at the work of the ACT Members in Liberia carried out under the three appeals AFLR 41, AFLR 51 and AFLR 61 between 2004 and 2006. During this period the activities changed. 2004 was primarily about relief and cleaning up following the war. 2005 was about providing care and maintenance to the displaced to support them to begin the process of returning to their communities and 2006 continued this work of supporting large numbers of people to return home and then begin the work of rehabilitation and recovery. Throughout this period there has been a huge need for psychosocial support activities and all ACT implementing members have been engaged in this area of work in all three years. The three appeals put forward work for funding totalling over \$10 million. The response to the appeals was for less than half the amount.

The evaluators held a briefing meeting with the ACT members in Monrovia at the start of the mission and then met with each of the members. Subsequently there were visits to meet with staff and beneficiaries in six out of the nine counties in Liberia in which the ACT members worked during the appeal. Additionally the evaluators met with partner organisations – UNHCR, WFP – with whom the ACT members work and with co-ordinating bodies in Liberia. At the conclusion of the mission a debriefing meeting was held with the members.

The report looks at the work of each of the implementing members under the appeal. It then looks at the work done under four headings: relief and cleaning up, psychosocial work, infrastructure and rebuilding, skills training and income generation. It finds that the majority of the interventions by the ACT members were largely successful and relevant and contributed to the overall stabilisation of the emergency situation in the various project areas. It notes the high degree of commitment of the staff, particularly those working in difficult locations, some of whom themselves were suffering the effects of war. In 2004, with the massive displacement that occurred as a result of the fighting at the end of 2003, the ACT members worked to provide relief and to support the enormous task of cleaning up the country. They brought skills and expertise in camp establishment and management, distribution of food and non-food items, provision of water and sanitation, trauma counselling and other psychosocial support. As the situation began to change in 2005 the ACT members showed great flexibility, continuing to support people in the camps but also supporting those making the journey home and providing support for temporary shelters and cleaning up operations in their home towns and villages. 2006 has seen the mass return from the displaced camps to their communities and ACT members have supported this and have engaged in the provision of basic services, agriculture and income generating activities in an effort to restore the dignity and livelihood of the returnees. Many of the ACT members engaged in a wide range of relief and rehabilitation activities and were able to flexibly re-focus their work according to the changing needs.

A number of key issues in relation to observations and discussions in the field are noted. The need to consider best practice in relation to the selection and targeting of beneficiaries, particularly in situations where the funding for appeals falls far short of

the plans proposed and the needs assessments. The importance of ensuring, especially in the Liberian context, that all interventions are carried out in ways that minimise conflict and wherever possible contribute towards reconciliation of different groups. Closely related to both the need for careful targeting and the need for conflict sensitivity is the need to ensure as full a participation of beneficiaries as possible and particularly to ensure that beneficiaries understand the criteria for distributions and interventions and consider them to be fair.

The evaluators were asked especially to look at knowledge of and adherence to the Sphere minimum standards and Codes of Conduct. Whilst all implementing members have some knowledge of the Sphere standards, generally these do not feature strongly in planning or implementation and some training on their use is recommended. Similarly the Code of Conduct is known about and in the main adhered to but further dissemination and discussion about what it means in the Liberian context within ACT members would be valuable. By far the greatest attention has been given to the Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. All implementing members know of this Code and have discussed it in their organisations. Several organisations require staff to sign Codes of Conduct with their contracts. At the field level staff are also aware of the issues in the Code and many have participated in workshops on the subject. In most counties Protection and GBV inter-agency working groups are functioning on a regular basis and staff from the ACT members are participating fully in these working groups. An ACT Forum training on this issue is being planned and is expected to take place before the end of the year. Issues concerning gender sensitivity were also discussed with each implementing member and in general there is a good balance of male and female staff and a good recognition of the different needs of men and women within the programmes.

The evaluation found that ACT is largely invisible throughout Liberia. With the exception of one implementing partner who is carefully co-branding their work and acknowledging in their partnerships their membership of ACT, the other implementing members, with the exception of the occasional sticker, treat ACT as just another donor and not one for whom there is a requirement to give public acknowledgement. The benefits of being part of a wider international grouping of both national and international members are not understood, and in the Liberian context the ACT family is missing opportunities as a result of this lack of visibility.

There have been a number of attempts to strengthen the co-ordination of the ACT members in Liberia over the last three years but this remains limited, despite agreement on the part of the members that greater co-ordination would bring benefits. After listening carefully to all of the views of the members and understanding the resource constraints, the report recommends that leadership of the ACT Forum continues to rotate between the members but for a six month rather than a three month period with the role passing to the next member on 1 January 2007. It recommends that the organisation with this role designate both a Chair and a Co-ordinator for the period. These two people would then have the responsibility for setting out an agenda for the six month period, which should be agreed by all of the members, and then driving this work forward on behalf of and with all of the members.

The evaluators looked at the recent RRF undertaken by the ACT Forum as a potentially good example of co-ordination between the members. They concluded

that there are many lessons to be learned from this exercise and that a one-day facilitated workshop should be held to learn these lessons whilst the action is still fresh in peoples' minds.

Recognising that wider humanitarian and development co-ordination mechanisms are still at an embryonic stage in Liberia, the evaluators were concerned that with the exception of protection and GBV little co-ordination with other providers of aid was currently taking place. The ACT members, preferably co-branding with the name ACT, are urged to participate fully in these UN and government co-ordinating mechanisms, as they get fully underway.

The Capacity Development component of the AFLR 61 appeal has not been funded as a result of a lack of detailed proposal coming from the members. The report recommends that this component of the appeal is extended and that the members in Liberia appoint a small strategic planning group to draw up such a proposal. It should focus on learning lessons from the emergency phase to enable members to plan their work for the transition and development phases and should include work together on planning, proposal writing, financial reporting, monitoring, evaluation and thinking and planning strategically. Many staff of member organisations have been on one-off short training courses both outside Liberia and within the country, but there is a need for a consolidated piece of work and training together. The methodology should not only be that of workshops and training. The programme should include practical work together, including joint assessments to key areas of the country to learn lessons and draw up plans together. This should take into consideration the outcome of the ACT Development consultation which suggested a mapping out of the sector and geographical specialisms of the members with a view to drawing up an overall plan. In discussions the evaluators heard four priority areas for the ACT members: psychosocial work, non-formal education work, agriculture/food security and advocacy.

The evaluators looked at the funding of the appeals. The result of the low levels of funding for particularly the AFLR 41 appeal which received only 18% coverage was serious, particularly in the Liberian context. Not only did it seriously affect plans and what members were able to do. But the fact that some members received nothing exacerbated tensions between the ACT members, in a situation where cohesion and unity was needing to be built following the background of the war. In the initial external assessment the categorising of some members as having limited capacity, despite having had capacity before the war, because of the level of destruction they had endured, and consequently not funding them, exacerbated an already unfortunate situation. Funding members are urged to recognise the need for reconciliation and building of unity between the ACT members in Liberia and in support of this to consider funding more widely across the members rather than remaining with their traditional partners and in any future appeals to provide a small amount of unallocated funding to the ACT CO. At the same time both the ACT CO and the implementing members are urged to set the levels of appeals at as realistic a level in terms of the funding available as possible, recognising that the consequences of severely under funded appeals is damaging for planning, implementation and all concerned. For the future the ACT members are encouraged to work together within the ACT Forum to access the funding available locally for the transition and development phase from UN and inter-governmental bodies.

The report concludes with 26 recommendations covering the areas of implementation, Codes of Conduct, visibility, co-ordination, capacity development and funding. In a number of these it highlights the possibilities for lesson learning from the experiences of the last three years of work and the opportunities and benefits for the ACT family to work in a co-ordinated way for the transition and development phases ahead.

1. Introduction

The ACT Alliance has been responding to the emergency situation in Liberia with annual ACT appeals since 2001. The signing of the Peace Accord in August 2003, followed by the installation of an interim government and the arrival and deployment of UN peacekeepers from October 2003 signalled a new phase in the ACT response. This evaluation therefore looks at the work covered by the three appeals, AFLR 41, AFLR 51 and AFLR 61, from 2004 to 2006. Whilst the concentration is on the 2006 appeal, within which this evaluation was foreseen and funded, an attempt is made to evaluate the work of the ACT Implementing Members (IMs) during the three year period and to look also to the future of the ACT response in Liberia.

During this three year period there has been a shift in the activities carried out under the ACT appeals in response to the changing situation, with 2004 primarily about providing relief and cleaning up the countryside following the war, 2005 providing assistance to the population to return and resettle in their communities of origin and start to clean up and respond to the traumas of the years of war, and 2006 continuing this work of rehabilitation as a basis for the many years of long term recovery required. The terms of reference are set out in Annex A and state the purpose of the evaluation as to assess the performance and impact of the past and current interventions, to provide a learning opportunity for future operations and to identify key issues to consider in the shift from humanitarian assistance to sustainable development. The terms of reference put a particular emphasis on assessing how far the Sphere standards, the Code of Conduct and the ACT Code of Conduct on sexual exploitation have been taken into consideration and adhered to.

The programmes put forward for funding in the three appeals by the ACT IMs in Liberia total over \$10 million of planned work. In the event the amount of funding for the three appeals totalled less than half of the requested amount, at some \$4,246,867. Consequently major revisions and prioritisation had to take place in what it was possible to undertake. This evaluation seeks to look at the work actually carried out under these appeals, to understand how priorities were set given the massive demands and limited resources and to assess what the achievements have been and to learn lessons for the future. Special attention is paid to considering those aspects of the work of the members that lend themselves to the shift from emergency to long term development

2. Country situation and appeal context

Liberia is Africa's oldest republic, declaring independence in 1847 as a land founded by freed American slaves. However, most Liberians are descendants of indigenous Africans, with the descendants of freed slaves comprising only 5% of the total population. Liberia has an estimated population of approximately 3 million people in a land area of 38,250 square miles, with rich natural resources of diamonds, iron, rubber, timber, coffee and cocoa.

With over hundred years of settler domination over the vast majority of the people, the relative calm enjoyed in the country came to a halt in 1980 when the then President William Tolbert was overthrown by non commissioned officers of the Liberian army led by Sergeant Samuel Doe. This led to a long running, brutal civil war which resulted in the death of over 250,000 Liberians, destroyed the country's physical infrastructure and institutions, displaced over half the population as refugees and internally displaced persons and exported mayhem and destruction to neighboring countries.

The rule of Sergeant Doe ended with a brutal civil war launched by Charles Taylor in 1990, that lasted for one and half decades, involving seven warring factions and 13 failed peace agreements brokered by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In 1995 a peace agreement was signed leading to the holding of elections in 1997, which saw the warlord Charles Taylor emerge as President of Liberia, initiating another dictatorial rule that ushered increased hardship for Liberians including summary executions, increased displacement and gross abuse of human rights and flagrant disregard for the rule of law. This period in Liberia also saw the exportation of the civil war and its massive destruction from Liberia to neighboring Sierra Leone.

After a brief respite following the elections in 1997 Liberia was to witness another round of civil war, with anti-government fighting breaking out in the north in 1999. Mr. Taylor then accused Guinea of supporting the rebellion, while Ghana, Nigeria and others accused Mr. Taylor of backing rebels in Sierra Leone. Rebels of a newly formed group in Liberia calling themselves Liberians United for Reconstruction and Development (LURD) had launched an insurrection to oust the regime of Charles Taylor. This rebellion was to last for another five years.

In 2003 the war intensified in Liberia and entered the capital city of Monrovia. The LURD rebel group broke into two with a splinter group, the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), being formed. The two groups simultaneously intensified the fight against a common enemy, the Charles Taylor Government. LURD forces seized control of the north and western counties, while the MODEL forces took over the Southeast counties, with government troops confined to the central region and the capital city of Monrovia.

Charles Taylor was indicted by the UN backed Special Court in Sierra Leone on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity in 2003. At the request of the international community and ECOWAS he was forced to resign the Presidency and subsequently forced into exile in the Republic of Nigeria. A peace agreement was

signed in Accra in August 2003, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), to which all warring factions, civil society groups and other stakeholders were signatories. The United Nations deployed a multi-national United Nations peace keeping force called the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). A transitional administration the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) was installed, comprising all fighting forces. The mandate of the NTGL was to oversee the disarmament and demobilization of the warring factions, conduct general and presidential elections in Liberia and inaugurate a democratically elected post war administration.

In October – November 2005 Liberians elected Africa's first female President, US trained economist, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as President of Liberia. A parliament representing the various shades of political opinion was also elected. Since then the country has embarked on a new course of democracy, and begun the daunting task of national reconstruction and development.

This period of war and conflict brought over 250,000 deaths, massive destruction of infrastructure, private and public properties, the massive flight of an estimated half a million Liberians into neighboring countries as refugees and close to a million internally displaced persons (IDPs), seeking refuge and needing humanitarian assistance. In addition, the massive looting by warring factions of people's properties, food and personal effects and the massive disruption of farming and other economic activities, left the citizenry most of who were already behind rebel lines, completely without possibilities for a decent livelihood.

When fighting intensified in Liberia in 2003, leading up to the collapse of the Taylor Government, a new wave of displacement hit the country. There were massive movements of people to neighboring countries but also internally from one part of the country to another. The concentration of displacement changed such that citizens from the north in Lofa County moved to displaced camps in Bong and Montserrado, while citizens from the western parts of the country - Bomi, Cape Mount and Gbarpolu - moved towards the capital, in displaced camps in and around Monrovia. The southeast counties experienced internal displacements from area to area but also a major refugee movement into neighboring Cote d'Ivoire.

The elections of the new government in late 2005 led to the massive return of IDPs and return of refugees to their counties of origin. ACT members were active players in this process and are now making their impact on the lives of the returnees, facilitating the process of resettlement and reintegration.

3. Methodology

The terms of reference for the evaluation are shown in Annex A and the Mission Plan for the evaluation is given in Annex B. They each set out the basic methodology for the evaluation. These two documents were shared with all of the ACT Funding Members and ACT Implementing Members in advance of the evaluation, with an opportunity for members to comment in advance. There were three responses from Funding members at that time reinforcing the emphasis given in the terms of reference to looking at the Sphere standards and Codes of Conduct adherence, and additionally the evaluators were asked to look especially at the psychosocial components of the work.

In advance of the evaluation all IMs were asked to prepare files of information on their ACT responses for the evaluators. They were also asked to assign one person from their organisation to participate with the evaluators in the field visits and the evaluation beneficiary selection and focus group interviews. In the event only two implementing members (CCC and LWF/WS) provided the prior documentation requested, and although at different times members provided staff to work with the evaluation team, it was not possible to have a consistent member from each implementing organisation attached to the team throughout. The team was especially grateful to the Protection Officer from LWF/WS who accompanied the team on the majority of the field work and was especially helpful in interviewing field staff and beneficiaries about the Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation and the range of issues related to gender based violence with her country specific knowledge of the appropriate terminology to use in discussing such sensitive matters.

On the first day of the evaluation mission a meeting was convened in Monrovia to which all ACT Members in Liberia were invited, to discuss further the Mission Plan and to finalise the plan, and to discuss the general themes of the evaluation. The participants at the briefing and debriefing meetings are set out in Annex E. A mapping exercise of all work carried out by all IMs under the three appeals was undertaken and this is shown in the Table below.

County of Work	LWF/WS	YMCA	CCC	LCL	CHAL
Bong	X	X	X	X	
Nimba	X	X			
Montserrado	X	X	X	X	
Bomi			X	X	
Lofa	X	X		X	X
Margibi		X			
Grand Gedah		X			
Marylad/G.Kru	X				
Gbarpolu		X			

With this as a guide the evaluation team sought to see a sample of the work of each of the IMs in as wide a range of counties as possible given the available time. The detailed visit plan is set out in Annex C. The team were able to visit and discuss work in six counties and to see the work on the ground of the YMCA, LWF/WS, CCC and

LCL, and to discuss the work of CHAL which it was not possible to actually see because of the long walking distances to the project sites. The role and work of LCC was also discussed in Monrovia. Because of the time constraints and the very difficult roads even in the dry season, the team inevitably had to satisfy itself with seeing work near the principal roads. Implementing Members were justifiably disappointed that it was not possible to take the time – often three hours or more – to walk to communities in which they felt they were doing some of the work having greatest impact. In the field the evaluation team met with staff of the IMs and in many locations with small groups of beneficiaries and with Town officials. The questions and areas which the team attempted to cover in interviews with beneficiaries is set out in Annex F

In Monrovia the team interviewed in their offices all of the Members of ACT who had participated in any way in the three appeals and were in the country – both IMs and Funding Members (FMs). The questionnaire which was the guiding basis for the interviews and checklist of issues is set out in Annex G. Additionally they met with some UN agencies and Coordinating bodies in the country. As a result of the time constraints it was not possible to talk to other INGOs, of whom there are very many, about the work of the ACT members, but the Co-ordinator of the Management Steering Group (MSG) of INGOs was interviewed. Finally a number of FMs without offices in Liberia were contacted by phone and email in the finalising phase of the evaluation. All those interviewed and contacted are set out in Annex D.

The evaluation mission in Liberia finished with a debriefing workshop at which the main findings and recommendations of the team were put forward. There was good discussion of many of the issues and this discussion was taken into consideration in finalising the draft report.

The draft report was circulated to the IMs who were given ten days to comment on factual inaccuracies in the report before it was finalised, after which the final report will be made available to all ACT stakeholders and more widely within the evaluation community through ALNAP.

4. The Implementing Members

Over the life of the three appeals eight IMs have been included in the ACT appeals. The largest number, all eight, were included in the 2004 appeal. However, funding was not forthcoming for two of the members who subsequently dropped out of involvement as implementers within the ACT appeals. The 2006 appeal has five members of whom three: LWF/WS, the YMCA and CCC have, as with previous appeals, received the bulk of the funding.

4.1 The Christian Health Association of Liberia (CHAL)

CHAL is a long standing membership organisation with 44 members of Christian health institutions throughout the country. A central secretariat was set up in Monrovia in 1982 which now has a staff of fourteen, of which three are women, one of whom is the Executive Director. The work of CHAL in support of their members is wide ranging in the health and health related fields, with a particular concentration on supporting members in remote locations where other assistance is less likely to be provided. The work includes capacity building for primary health care, psychosocial work and training of counsellors in this area, work on HIV/AIDS funded by USAID and including three VCT centres in remote locations, work on malaria in eight counties with the Ministry of Health as part of the Global Fund, and water and sanitation work.

CHAL is aware of the Sphere standards which are referred to, and is aware of the Code of Conduct and the Code of Conduct related to Sexual Exploitation, but there has been no formal training of staff in any of these.

CHAL is part of the ACT Forum and participates in co-ordination meetings. But they have been disheartened in their participation by the lack of financial support to their appeals. In particular their participation in the 2004 AFLR 41 appeal for \$369,000 for trauma healing, psychosocial counselling and peace and reconciliation activities, basic medical health care and health promotion received no funding. This appears to be a result of funding members considering that despite CHAL's capacity before the war, the serious destruction of their facilities had reduced their capacity to implement. As a result of the nil appeal funding for 2004 the plans they developed for 2005 were not a part of the AFLR 51 appeal and were carried forward to 2006. In the AFLR 61 appeal the request was for \$114,000 for a clearly defined area of work to provide safe drinking water to a limited number of isolated communities in Lofa County. This request has received 63% coverage (\$71,933) primarily from NCA. The overwhelming majority of the funding was transferred to CHAL in mid-August 2006, hence the lack of interim reporting to date.

The work is taking place in Lofa County in the communities covered by the mobile team of the Curran Lutheran Hospital. Owing to the long lead time between identifying communities and receiving funding other INGOs have provided wells. Consequently CHAL has now identified five other communities where six wells will be provided even further from a road where no other agencies have offered assistance.

In discussion about this work with the mobile team staff at the Curran hospital they confirmed that there had been good co-operation with CHAL in identifying these sites and that they were places which were desperately in need of a well. As a result of the long walking time to these five communities the evaluators were unable to visit the sites. The work is now underway but had to await the end of the rains. Community mobilisation has taken place and further sensitization and training is planned in the next month. The culvert moulds have already been built in Monrovia and implementation and completion is anticipated before the end of the year. A particular issue for CHAL has been the determining of the exact sites for the wells. Traditionally in these communities important people are buried in the centre of the community and so in adherence to the Sphere standards and in consultation with the communities the wells will be sited on the outskirts of the towns/villages to ensure ground water contamination is avoided.

CHAL is pleased to be a member of the ACT Forum and believes there are many advantages and much to be shared. However, the competition for resources and imbalance in allocation of available resources has led to CHAL deprioritising its involvement as an ACT member. Hence when it became time in the rotation of the Chairmanship for CHAL to take on this role it felt it did not have the time and resources to carry out the function well, given the many other demands and priorities, and therefore declined to take it on. From CHAL's perspective a permanent Co-ordinator, as long as this was the right person who fully understood what could be achieved through the ACT Forum, would be best, but they acknowledged the funding constraints to pursuing this option.

With regard to the consultations on ACT Development and the future, they believe there is much that the church agencies could do together. As with others they were disappointed when they understood that ACT Development would not be a channel for funding. Additionally they do not have in their budget funds for membership dues and therefore despite meeting the other membership requirements they are unable to apply for membership. Despite this they believe that sharing should continue, joint assessments should be carried out, weaknesses should be identified and worked on together and that the process of learning to work together and collaborate in the current Liberian context where unity is needed is very important.

4.2 The Concerned Christian Community (CCC)

CCC started in 1990 and now has over 100 staff of which 65% are female, including the national Director. It has a Board, management team, regional offices and departments. Emphasis is put on hiring good well trained staff and on continuing to provide training and refresher opportunities for staff, taking advantage of all the opportunities available (including ACT training in Zimbabwe, the ACT workshops in 2004, and other opportunities). CCC has a well defined staff development policy which starts with interns/volunteers with some of them upon graduation taking up positions within the organisation. There are planned staff training opportunities through short term refresher courses both in and out of the country. All staff sign contracts which include information on the Code of Conduct and Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation.

CCC has been a major implementer under all three appeals. In 2004 the appeal was for \$541,000 for psychosocial work and related relief and shelter support, for which 13%, some \$71,000 was provided. In 2005 CCC received a much higher funding coverage of 67% getting \$200,000 towards a \$300,000 appeal to continue their psychosocial work and associated relief and skills training/income generation. In 2006 CCC's proposal was for \$295,000 of which \$156,000 or 53% was provided to continue this work.

The emphasis of CCC's work has been on women and children, targeting women who have been victims of abuse. At one centre when asked about the criteria for targeting women for counselling the following list was given: women who have been tortured, raped, seen family members killed in their presence, been forced into marriage, forced into prostitution, abducted by and forced into going with rebels. The beneficiaries to whom the evaluators spoke at the counselling and skills training centres all had harrowing stories to tell of abuse, loss and killing and were clearly greatly in need of professional counselling support.

Under the 2004 appeal CCC was working in the camps with women affected by violence, providing counselling, skills training and some relief, according to their statistics reaching over 3,000 women. At Jah Tondo and Peri IDP Camps which were visited, both now officially closed, the CCC Women's House of Comfort, remains prominent. Although there is no programme now in the closed Peri Camp, a camp managed in the transit phase under a UNHCR contract by CCC, there remain some particularly traumatised and vulnerable women. However, CCC exhibited a real concern for those left in the camp and a psychosocial counsellor occasionally visits to meet with former clients. So as with our visits to other camps managed by LWF/WS it is clear there is a need for a 'cleaning up' operation with those who should have gone home but have not (numbering into the one or two thousand in each of these camps) who are some of the most traumatised and vulnerable. The box below records our conversation with one such former client.

Tenneh Passawe wept as she told the counsellor how she still heard her son calling her name and explained that she had to stay in the camp until he came for her. Tenneh has had ten children but nine of them died in the war. Her tenth son, Jusu Kamara, was forcibly abducted from the camp in July 2003, aged 16 by government militia recruiters. She and her husband grieved their loss together and then in 2004 her husband was beaten until he died leaving Tenneh alone and unable to cope with her loss.

CCC expressed concern for a number of beneficiaries (like Tenneh) who they fear have had insufficient counselling and run the risk of relapsing and becoming even more traumatised. Their view is that the time allotted for counselling, usually three months, is insufficient to deal with a number of the most traumatised cases.

With the funding from the 2005 and 2006 appeals, following assessments CCC moved with the women back to their towns and villages setting up a number of counselling and skills training centres. The standard pattern of work is to call a meeting in an area to tell people what they can offer and then to register those who want to participate. The psychosocial counselling consists normally of eight individual sessions followed by group counselling and then the opportunity for skills

training in tie and die, soap making, pastry making or tailoring. The work that was observed from the women towards the end of their skills training was of a very high standard and was being sold in the local market. The teachers, some of whom were from the community and graduates from the displaced women who had undergone the training themselves, and others who had had a more lengthy CCC training, were impressive.

At all of the centres visited there was a mixture of Christian and Muslim participants. At one centre our arrival was greeted by Christian prayers of thankfulness. But in testimonies there were Muslim prayers as well as Christian ones, and the evaluators found no evidence that religion was being used inappropriately, or that involvement with CCC's programme was accompanied by overt evangelising, even though CCC is closely associated with the Church of the Holy Water.

The issue of relief items was raised as a difficulty by CCC. Under the 2004 and 2005 appeals some relief items and returnee packages were provided to the most vulnerable women. At the counselling centres at the beginning women received some small support - a cloth, sandals, some rice etc. But relief items are not a part of the programme, though an end of training setting up package for the skill learnt is included, to support women to take the skills gained forward. As the official skills training for the ex-combatants all provide a monthly payment for attending, and as more NGOs come on the scene offering cash or material benefits for participation, some participants of the CCC programme upon hearing of the benefits being offered to ex-combatants or on other NGO programmes become dissatisfied and drop out because they feel they are not receiving enough. There is concern both about the dependency being created and also about the injustice of paying the ex-combatants yet leaving those who were the victims without the same level of support, fuelling even further animosity between the victims and perpetrators of violence. CCC also runs a community development and empowerment programme (not supported through the ACT appeal) tackling the dependency issue and one of the counselling centres visited had been built by the community, with CCC providing the zinc, nails and cement.

The other major problem for CCC which has emerged in 2006 is the loss of well experienced qualified counselling staff to new INGOs seeking good staff and paying much more than CCC can offer. The CCC medical officer had just left to a much higher paying job, and replacing such people with equally qualified and experienced people is almost impossible.

CCC is an active member of the ACT Forum and takes its membership of ACT seriously. It sees it as a good place to share information and to learn from one another and sees that there is lots that could be done together. But concern was expressed that some members only see it as another funding organisation and a way to get money and that it is currently not organised and working as well as it could. CCC would like to see a small secretariat with a steering committee taking forward key pieces of work like joint capacity building, with a Chairman from the members rotating six monthly. CCC expressed the view that even without an appeal the ACT Forum should continue and move into ACT Development doing certain things together, the example given was putting together proposals for one of the UN agencies specifically seeking bigger joint proposals.

4.3 The Liberian Council of Churches (LCC)

The Liberian Council of Churches has existed since 1982 and currently has around 20 staff. It has a number of desks covering such areas as HIV/AIDS, Ecumenical Relations, Christian Muslim Relations, Youth, Women and Children. It also has a Programme Officer who takes responsibility for the implementation of the work under the ACT Appeal. Unfortunately the evaluators were unable to meet either the General Secretary or the Programme Officer or the Finance Officer, all of whom were away during the time of our mission.

From discussion with the former ACT Co-ordinator, who was attached to the LCC, and the Acting General Secretary, it appears that the work of LCC under the ACT appeals has been co-ordination, during 2004 and 2005, and in 2004 the holding of three short workshops which are considered in more detail below. During 2006 the peace and reconciliation programme, which is part of the ACT appeal, allows for collaboration with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which has a programme of visits and meetings in the Counties which the LCC Programme Officer supports and participates in.

LCC continues to play an active role in the ACT Forum co-ordination and participated in the RRF response in Joe Blow Town. The view expressed was that the rotation of Chairmanship and co-ordinating function should continue but for a longer period than three months, and that the Chairman and Co-ordinator should have a vision and energy to move the process forward.

LCC participated in the two ACT Development Consultations and as with many others left the consultation with mixed feelings, especially concerning the resource constraints and an uncertainty about what there is to be gained from putting energy into ACT development. However, they are supportive of the thrust to ensure better co-ordination and be clearer about sectoral and geographical emphases and focus, and hope that joint visits and assessments to some of the Counties can be made to look at the development possibilities in the shift from emergency to development work in a co-ordinated way.

4.3.1 The United Methodist Church of Liberia (UMC)

The United Methodist Church Missionary work began in Liberia in 1822, and encompasses a full range of health, education, evangelism and church work. Since the war an emphasis has also been put on trauma counselling, human rights and advocacy. They have a special co-ordinator and programme dealing with young women. The UMC is a member of ACT through its membership in LCC and not directly. In 2002 two of the UMC staff participated in the ACT emergency preparedness training in Zimbabwe and through that training received information on the Sphere standards and Code of Conduct. However the UMC has not conducted training on the Sphere standards or Codes of Conduct and would like to participate in any future training offered within the ACT Forum. They see their membership of the ACT Forum as part of their ecumenical responsibilities as a church and see that it has advantages in terms of networking, sharing and capacity building. In 2004/5 the UMC participated in and

benefited from the training workshops in psychosocial counselling and financial management organised by the ACT Co-ordinator.

The UMC participated in the 2003 assessment mission and was part of the 2004 ACT appeal under LCC. The UMC sought in the appeal AFLR 41 for \$490,000 to rehabilitate UMC schools and the Ganta hospital, for tools and materials for the cleaning up operations needed and for work on psychosocial counselling, peace building and human rights advocacy. In the event their appeal received no funding and subsequently they did not participate in the AFLR 51 and AFLR 61 appeals.

Nevertheless they still take their membership within the ACT Forum in Liberia seriously and recently participated in the joint RRF needs assessment and the implementation, providing their Research Assistant to be the secretary for the implementing team.

UMC is keen that the ACT Co-ordination works well. Ideally they believe that even with a rotating Chair a single co-ordinator is required to maximise involvement and joint activity. However, they recognise the financial constraints in relation to this. Nevertheless their view is that the current MoU concerning the ACT Forum should be looked at again with a view to ensuring that the rotating Chairs properly fulfil their roles, probably for a longer period than three months. Discussions at UMC expressed the view that the Chairmanship/Co-ordination should go to an institution, rather than to the General Secretary who normally did not have time to undertake this function properly. The view was also expressed that those ACT Members who had received the most funding from the various appeals should be expected to take on the bulk of the work in relation to the ACT Forum.

The UMC attended the two ACT Development consultations in 2006 but expressed the commonly held view that being a non-funding body expecting what they considered to be high fees from members was difficult for them and its role more generally was difficult to grasp. Nevertheless as the needs for the country move from emergency work to rehabilitation and sustainable development, the view of UMC is that there are key sectoral areas in which the church members in the ACT Alliance should come together for discussion and co-ordination and joint capacity building. Those areas specifically named by the UMC were psychosocial work, education (including non-formal education) and agricultural extension work. UMC has a particular strength in education and agriculture work. The church runs one of Liberia's universities, the United Methodist University, located in Monrovia.

4.3.2 The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)

The YMCA in Liberia is an old established organisation having started in 1881. It is well known all over the country and has a very high visibility with its sign boards at almost every town setting out key messages with regard to cleaning up, HIV/AIDS, travelling safely and other behavioural messages to the youth and population in general. It is a membership organisation and despite its name its members include both young men and young women. Although young men are in the majority, there are a large number of young women involved and a large number of female staff. Although the female staff are not generally in the most senior positions a notable

exception is the key position of Finance Director, which is held by a woman. The work under the ACT Appeals is handled in the various locations through the YMCA structure of eight Executive Directors, with sub-Directors and Youth Co-ordinators as appropriate. At headquarters the Development Secretary and a specialist Programme Consultant and the Programme Officer have responsibility for the emergency work. During the course of the evaluation field work the team met with three of the eight Executive Directors in their regions and with one Sub-Director, in all cases with a range of their staff and key volunteers.

The YMCA is included in ACT appeals under LCC, as the YMCA is not a member of ACT in its own right. Given that the YMCA has extensive programmes and is a key implementing member under the ACT appeal this seems to be an anomaly and seems to be the result of miscommunication between the YMCA and ACT in Geneva. The YMCA believes that it completed the documentation for registration with ACT in 2005, but it appears that this either did not arrive or was not acted upon and the YMCA has not yet been put forward for registration to the Executive Committee of ACT. This should be sorted out but meanwhile the YMCA remains as an implementer under the LCC.

Under LCC the YMCA participated in all three appeals. In 2004 its request was for \$901,000 of which 46% (\$415,000) was provided. In 2005 the request was for \$462,000 of which 84% (\$388,000) was provided. In 2006 the request was for \$360,000 of which only 21% (\$78,000) has been provided, although one major donor who was formerly funding within the ACT appeal is now funding work outside of it. Nevertheless the coverage to the YMCA appeals has been very variable and this has proved difficult in terms of prioritisation. In general the strategy for prioritisation has been to spread the resources more thinly across the various areas of work planned, rather than to cut out important areas of work, given that in putting together the appeals needs have been identified and expectations raised. The YMCA has provided reports on its work under the 2004 and 2005 appeals, but had not yet provided the interim report for 2006 citing the late arrival of the funds. In fact some funds were sent at the very end of March, a small contribution in May, but the bulk of the funding – almost \$41,000 – was sent in mid-August.

The YMCA was part of the ACT assessment after the 2003 activity which looked at the cleaning up and relief that was needed in the period immediately after the ending of hostilities and the start of the deployment of UN peacekeepers. The YMCA is rightly proud of its activities in this period in gathering together teams of youth to undertake the massive cleaning up process that was required. The stadium in Monrovia which had 200,000 IDPs in it was one of the targets for relief work. Teams of youth were organised to undertake the clean up of the roads to Monrovia, through the deserted towns which were overgrown by bush. This cleaning up was a key part of their activity in 2004 with a special emphasis on bringing together in each team ex-combatant youth with those who had not been part of the fighting forces. Much of this work under the ACT appeal was in partnership also with WFP who provided the food for work for this massive clean up operation. The YMCA also, as set out in their final report on AFLR 41 activities, delivered relief supplies to IDPs and refugees in displaced camps. It was not possible, so long after the event, for the evaluation team to verify the work on distributing relief in IDP camps, but the YMCA's role in the cleaning up operation is well known and regarded highly.

As the first round clean up was completed the YMCA did what it could to encourage people back to their towns from IDP and refugee camps and from the bush. In Ganta the YMCA has a radio station (Y-ECHO) which now broadcasts music and messages about key topics of concern. But it started on 17 December 2003 when the town of Ganta, in Nimba County, (probably the second largest town in the country), was still deserted and when there was no other radio station in the area, and was instrumental in encouraging people to return from Guinea, from the bush villages and from IDP camps in the country. This encouraging people to return was a key feature of work in 2004 and 2005 and once returned the YMCAs in the various areas started to put together programmes for the youth. The list of programmes that the evaluation team talked to staff and beneficiaries about in Kakaka in Margibi County, Totota in Bong County, Zorzor in Lofa County, Ganta in Nimba County and Saclepea in Nimba County included the following:

- Rehabilitation of buildings and school feeding programmes (with WFP)
- Adolescent and Reproductive Health Programme, including HIV/AIDS and STDs, teenage pregnancy, malaria control, harmful traditional practices, drugs and substance abuse, building self-esteem (gender based violence and sexual exploitation issues),
- Youth empowerment projects – computer training, cold water selling, provisions shop, bar/restaurant/youth centre, guest house, etc
- Children affected by fighting forces programme (CAFF) – including agricultural activities, bakery, sports and recreations, etc
- Peace building and conflict resolution - working with Hi-Y clubs in schools, undertaking community visitation, training in palaver management, bringing together groups to discuss inter-tribal conflict, civic and voters education awareness.
- Life Skills courses – six months training, bringing together ex-combatants and other war affected persons who are not part of the academic stream to undertake vocational training together, with considerable counselling included.

In 2005 in Saclepea City the YMCA held an Interclan Peace Building Tournament over three weekends involving 612 youth and eleven different clans.

The same year the YMCA organised a Saclepea City tournament, where the eleven quarters of the city each provided a male football team and a female football team, with help from the Bangladesh UNMIL contingent in the town providing some transport and a winner's trophy.

The majority of these programmes can roughly be put under the umbrella heading of psychosocial work or have a major counselling component, and many of them are cross cutting across all of the programmes and interconnected. The exact mix of programmes varies from area to area in relation to the particular needs of the region. For example in Lofa County there is a particular need for work on resolving intertribal conflict, and also conflict within tribes between those who stayed and those who fled

as well as between members of the same tribe across the border with Guinea. Similarly in Nimba County where there are eleven different tribal groups and people returning from Guinea and refugees arriving from Ivory Coast. Whereas in Kakata Youth Centre, Margibi District the peace building activities focus on interpersonal peace building and civic and voters education training.

Throughout all of these programmes there is a high emphasis on training both staff and volunteers and there has been a heavy programme of workshops under the ACT programme in all three years. The YMCA has trained a large number of psychosocial counsellors, both staff and volunteer. At the school and community youth level there is a cadre of trained palaver managers, health peer educators (particularly on HIV/AIDS and malaria control), psychosocial counsellors and other trained volunteers. At the time of visiting the Peace Desk was just calling for participants from each of the regions for a further national workshop on peace building.

There is some difficulty in clarifying in discussions at the regional level what is funded under the ACT appeals and what is funded by other donors. Particularly as in 2006 at least one major donor under earlier ACT appeals is now funding work bilaterally outside of the appeal. But in any case the YMCA is well linked in to the donor community and is jointly operating programmes with WFP, UNICEF, UNDP, USAID and in co-operation with the Ministries of Youth and Sports, Gender, Health and Education.

Out of the Ganta office a programme of school feeding in co-operation with WFP is underway in 219 schools in the County. WFP provides the bulk food and funds from the ACT appeal cover supplementary items – salt, spice etc – and for cooking and organisation.

The YMCA has its own Code of Conduct and Core Values statement which is prominently displayed in Youth Centres and YMCA offices around the country. The issues within the Code of Conduct and ACT Code of Conduct on sexual exploitation are well known. However, the Sphere standards and specific ACT Code of Conduct is not known and has not been disseminated throughout the organisation. In all regions the YMCA is a regular and active participant in interagency monthly Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) meetings and considerable stress is put on these issues at the field level in all places the team visited.

Overall the team was impressed with the appropriateness and range of work being undertaken by the YMCA throughout the country. There was a real commitment and quality in the staff met in the field and the team were particularly impressed by how articulate many of the young people were, especially some of the women, who had been trained as peer educators under the YMCA programmes. The programmes, tailored as they are, to the needs of the region are highly relevant, and within the overall emphasis on youth, an emphasis on peace, reconciliation, unity and self esteem is extremely timely.

With regard to co-ordination within the ACT Alliance the General Secretary expressed the benefits of the forum as a place for sharing, learning, building capacity and networking. However, he noted the difficulty in doing things together because of the competition for resources and the history of political suspicion. In the country

context unity is a key issue and as this is a priority in the field programmes it should also be seen as important at the national level between ACT members and within the wider aid community. The current system of rotating the ACT Forum chair was accepted but the importance of performing the function responsibly was also raised and the importance of organising joint activities of benefits to all of the members, such as needs assessments, and joint capacity building and training was noted.

The YMCA has participated during 2006 in both of the ACT Development consultations, but a key issue is the question of membership fees. The hope is that the experience that has been gained during the post emergency work and the quality and extent and national recognition of the work done as a key national organisation will be recognised by the ACT funding partners, so that beyond the life of the ACT emergency appeals the needs will be recognised and funding for the YMCA programmes will continue. The General Secretary of the YMCA said “*the challenge for us is to take along our external partners and keep the hopes and aspirations of our communities alive*”.

4.4 The Lutheran Church in Liberia (LCL)

The Lutheran Church in Liberia has a long history from the 1860's and has over forty parishes in the country and significant Lutheran medical and educational facilities. These were mostly destroyed during the war. There are 13 staff in the central administration, of which two are women. The implementation of the emergency work is the responsibility of the Relief Committee which has a composition 60% female and 40% male youth, and is entirely voluntary.

LCL participated in the AFLR 41 and AFLR 51 appeals, but did not participate in the AFLR 61 appeal. The latter seems to have been a mistake, as the Chairman of the Relief Committee thought that a proposal had been prepared. The proposals were under AFLR 41 for food and non-food relief assistance and temporary shelters, support to the Curran hospital mobile team and psychosocial counselling, and under AFLR 51 for permanent shelters, seeds and tools, clothing, medical staff for the Curran hospital and HIV/AIDS training. The appeals were under funded. In 2004 \$157,000 was received, some 55% of the asking, but in 2005 only \$38,000 or 17% of that requested was provided. Consequently programme plans, especially in 2005, underwent drastic revision.

In 2004 and 2005 support was provided, primarily in the form of drugs, to the Curran mobile clinic. In a situation where the hospital had been destroyed and where people were moving around and in very isolated communities, this was clearly a life saving emergency intervention. It has also paved the way for further funding for the Curran mobile team and a strong programme of community health worker and TBA training and a vaccination programme. Discussions with the programme staff at the Curran hospital indicated a well thought out and comprehensive community health care programme with the mobile team.

Funds were also used for a number of one off relief interventions. In 2004 these were primarily in IDP camps. It was not possible to verify these and those interviewed who had returned home could not remember who items they had received had come from.

There was concern on the part of the evaluators that such emergency relief distributions were of a one-off nature and whilst supposedly targeting the most vulnerable may not have been sufficiently co-ordinated with other agency interventions also targeting the vulnerable. In 2005 funds were used to support cleaning up operations and temporary, rather than the proposed permanent, shelters in towns along the main roads.

The evaluators visited a number of towns to which LCL had given clean up and temporary shelter support. In all cases this was one-off support for cleaning up and then one-off support for temporary shelters. In the towns visited cleaning up was already underway at the time of LCL's visit and their contribution was of a number of – usually 25 – bags of rice. This was of course welcomed and it seems the rice was shared fairly and equally between all those participating in the cleaning up operations. The temporary shelters consisted of tarpaulins and nails and washers. In each case the number of tarpaulins being brought to a town compared to the number of people in need was very small. One town told us that 50 tarpaulins had been brought and that these were distributed by way of a lottery with all households in the community having their name put forward and a child selecting the names. This was seen as fair and a way to deal with the limited supply and great need in a situation where all were seen as vulnerable. In another town the names put into the lottery consisted only of the names of those who were deemed vulnerable, whilst in another town the officials were asked to distribute to the most vulnerable without a lottery. In all towns that we visited four tarpaulins were given to the Lutheran Church which was also considered vulnerable.

This aid can be seen as a goodwill gesture of encouragement and all who were spoken to expressed gratitude for the solidarity and encouragement. It was provided in a timely manner at the point when people really needed support. Care had been taken to distribute in a manner that was perceived to be fair. Nevertheless the evaluators had a number of questions. There was concern about the selection of the towns. It was recognised that a conscious criteria had been to select towns along the main roads. But why were such small quantities given to so many towns? Had there been co-ordination with other agencies providing support in those towns? The signboards from ARC indicating a distribution of cleaning up tools were noted and this raised questions about how far this was co-ordinated with the giving of rice for cleaning up. Whether the targeting of beneficiaries and distribution method had been done as well as it could have been? The lack of follow-up to these one off interventions was also noted and questioned.

LCL has a long history (since the early 1990's) of doing psychosocial work and especially trauma counselling within the church. There is a paid staff of 19 with nine volunteers in the programme which includes six counsellors in the counties. Under the AFLR 41 appeal some of this psychosocial work was funded. Similarly in 2005 the AFLR 51 appeal funded some of the HIV/AIDS work of LCL which had started in 2001 and has 25 employees based in Monrovia, Zorzor and Buchanan. Both of these programmes run annual training of trainers courses and refresher courses. Unfortunately the evaluators were unable to talk directly to any of the staff or clients involved in these programmes, but they are on-going programmes with a range of other funders and therefore are subject to other ongoing assessment.

The General Secretary of LCL is currently Chairman of the ACT Forum and the Chair of the LCL Relief Committee is one of the four representatives from Africa on the global ACT Emergency Committee. LCL participated in the ACT Development Consultations and expects to apply for membership.

4.5 The Lutheran World Federation – World Service (LWF/WS)

The LWF/WS Liberia Programme started emergency assistance to those affected by the Liberian civil war in 1990. Between 1991 and 2000 LWF/WS has carried out emergency and rehabilitation / development assistance in eight of Liberia's 15 counties.

LWF/WS's involvement under the ACT appeals in Liberia dates back to 2001 and has covered the peak periods of the civil crisis in Liberia and the required humanitarian interventions the crisis has demanded. During the period covered by this evaluation, LWF/WS actively participated in all three appeals working in Montserrado, Bong, Nimba, Lofa and Maryland Counties.

LWF/WS structure in Liberia includes a national Programme Manager, expatriate Finance Manager, expatriate Programme Coordinator and a team of national managers in the areas of emergency, rehabilitation, development and other support services such as logistics, finance and administration. The organisation has total staff strength of 82 staff members with 11% female. It is organisationally structured within the West Africa regional LWF/WS programme covering Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, with the Liberia programme being by far the biggest.

The organisation received over \$2.5million through the three appeals: in 2004 it received 16% of its appeal request amounting to some \$402,000, for AFLR 51 68% amounting to some \$1.2 million and for ALFR 61 80% amounting to \$888,650.

LWF/WS puts a strong emphasis on the Sphere minimum standards and the Code of Conduct on sexual exploitation. Field staff are informed about and use the Sphere Minimum standards although admitting the limitation and resource constraints of applying the standards. The Code of Conduct is attached to all LWF/WS employment contracts so that each staff has a chance to familiarise him/herself with them. Furthermore in house workshops have been held for the staff on the Code of Conduct.

LWF/WS was assigned the role by UNHCR of Camp Manager of the Salala and Jah Tondo displaced camps, and the evaluators visited both of the camps. As well as camp establishment and management LWF/WS undertook water and sanitation work, support to agriculture activities, and distribution of non food items, mainly targeting vulnerable IDPs.

When the evaluators visited the camp in Salala which had held up to 23,000 IDPs at the peak of the displacement but had been closed by the government in mid- 2006 discussions were held with residents who were still at the camp and had not resettled. Focused group meetings were held with a group of male residents and another with a group of female residents. The residents expressed a desire to return but indicated that

they were not included on the UNHCR listing and as such were not repatriated, leaving them to fend for themselves mainly engaging in contract labour for survival.

At the Jah Tondo camp the evaluators had a meeting with eleven displaced people (six women and five men) including the current chairman, women and youth leaders for the camp. This camp was established and managed by LWF/WS on the outskirts of Monrovia in February 2002. The local land owner had offered the camp 85 acres of land for use by the displaced people and the population of the camp rose to 20,129 at the height of the displacement. The camp was officially closed by Government in June 2004, however residents report that there are some 1,946 displaced persons still left at the camp awaiting resettlement.

The displaced people informed the evaluators that LWF/WS as the lead NGO and camp manager was involved in food distribution of WFP food commodities, provision of shelter materials mainly tarpaulins and sticks for vulnerable persons, construction of offices, water and sanitation, distribution of NFIs including biscuits, slippers, non food items, and tools. The residents mentioned other agencies that provided assistance in the camp including World Vision, SCF, Jesuit Refugee Service, ICRC, CCC, International Rescue Committee, WFP, among others.

In discussion the displaced persons said that distribution of various items targeting vulnerable people was not done fairly since they did not serve all of the vulnerable people who were equally in need. It seems that the displaced did not understand the concept of vulnerability or did not accept the concept. They indicated that it was only the WFP distributions that they considered as fair since that was done across the board for all residents of the camp.

The evaluation team also visited the LWF/WS offices in Palala, Bong County and at the Lutheran Training Institute, the latter being the headquarters for their Lofa County programme in Zorzor and Salayea Districts, where longer term programmes of rehabilitation and community development are taking place.

At Palala a meeting was held with the staff and beneficiaries of the Panta Kpahi Integrated Development Project in the district of Panta Kpahi. The district was selected based on its proximity to neighbouring Guinea, a major area for returning refugees from Guinea. There are 56 communities in the district, with an estimated population of 60,000. In 1999 a needs assessment was done in the district of Panta Kpahi for the project. In 2000 the project started, with four major components: community animation, agricultural training and formation of farmers' organisations, infrastructure development and non formal education / adult literacy. Volunteer community animators are trained by the project to continue to work with residents in mobilising support for the project. Individual and group farmers are organized to undertake farmers training. Activities of the agriculture include fish ponds, swamp rice farming and production of cassava and other roots and tubers.

Within this overall programme, through the ACT appeal funds support a programme for returning IDPs and refugees including tarpaulins for housing, seeds and tools for returning farmers, an adult literacy component, construction of the literacy centres and workshops on SGBV and HIV / AIDS. The evaluators had a meeting with about 30 beneficiaries, including 20 women. Among the beneficiaries were those who had

undergone adult literacy training, attended workshops on sexual exploitation and HIV/AIDS awareness.

Participants of the project mostly women indicated several instances of how the project has positively impacted their lives. Several women gave information on HIV / AIDS as well as sexual exploitation issues that they had learned. The women requested LWF/WS staff for additional condoms indicating that knowledge was being acted upon. The women explained that they share their new knowledge through rotational meetings in various towns under the umbrella of the Women's Wing. LWF/WS follows up the training of women with the micro finance programme, implemented in small peer groups.

In Lofa County the evaluators met with staff members at their offices at the campus of the Lutheran Training Institute (LTI) in Salayea town, whose facilities have been severely damaged during the years of civil war. The interventions in this area of the country include newly started psychosocial work (including peace and reconciliation, HIV/AIDS and SGBV) and significant infrastructure work. Under the latter component the 2006 plan included water and sanitation construction, rehabilitation of one public school, repair of four bridges and construction of shelters. A number of the activities under this component of the programme began late, partly as a result of the rains, as a result of funds arriving late, and also as a result of poor communication between the Finance Manager in Monrovia and the Project Manager who was not aware of the funds that had arrived for the programme. Nevertheless, now that the rains had largely come to an end work was proceeding with all speed on the four bridges and other work and the staff were confident that the work would be completed within the appeal period by the end of December.

When the evaluators asked the staff to indicate what aspects of their programmes they would consider as having had the greatest impact among the beneficiaries, they named the following: fish farming, especially fish pond development, improved cropping methods with a revolving seeds system, and training of farmers to manage the seed bank, as well as school rehabilitation, which have all served as pull factors to attract IDPs to return home. Some of the difficulties faced included rising expectations from the communities in which they work, for example with regard to expectations of employment for their children and demands from participants to workshops for "sitting fees" as well as transport costs to workshops. As a result the project was developing a "Commitment of Understanding" to be signed with the various District and Town Committees in the areas of work.

LWF/WS participates actively in the ACT Forum though they expressed the view that some of the push for the ACT Forum comes from the ACT CO in Geneva rather than from the Liberian members. The lack of progress on the ACT Forum was seen in part as having had the wrong person as Co-ordinator and the wrong outside consultant to support him, with insufficient knowledge of ACT's role and the role of co-ordination. LWF/WS sees that it has a potential and capacity to play a full role in the ACT Forum and has undertaken to organise a workshop on the Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation for all ACT members. The need for training in emergency preparedness was also mentioned given particularly the situation in the Cote d'Ivoire. In the alphabetical rotation LWF/WS is the next Chair and co-ordinator of the ACT Forum

and has a key role to play in strengthening the ACT Forum for work in the transition and development periods.

4.6 United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)

UMCOR opened its office in Monrovia in 1996 in response to the crisis and has been active in cleaning up operations, in rehabilitation and in joint programmes with WFP, UNHCR and UNDP. UMCOR participated in the 2004 AFLR 41 appeal with a request for \$732,000 to do non-food distributions, shelter rehabilitation and construction, and water and sanitation and health promotion all in IDP camps. In the event UMCOR received no funding as part of the AFLR 41 appeal and subsequently did not participate in the AFLR 51 and AFLR 61 appeals.

Unfortunately the Country Director was not in country during the evaluation, but the evaluators talked to the Finance Director and the Programme Manager. Currently the programme is between contracts and has what was termed a skeleton staff of 18, including guards and drivers, of which only one person is a woman. This imbalance was discussed and the new programme being planned with UNDP for Lofa County is making an effort to recruit more women. Nevertheless, the constraints of finding suitably qualified women willing to relocate to Lofa County meant that the current situation was that only five out of the 30 new staff being recruited would be women for this skills training for ex-combatants programme.

The view of the UMCOR staff interviewed was that the ACT Forum could potentially be very useful and that the problems could be solved. The view was expressed that the meeting venue should rotate, that more effort should be made to ensure that all members were properly notified and informed, and that there should be more joint training and workshops. Whilst it was more likely that this could be done with a permanent Co-ordinator even under the current arrangement it was thought this could be better done. UMCOR had participated in the needs assessment exercise for the 2006 RRF, but had felt left out/uninformed when it came to the final implementation stage after the funds had been agreed.

Whilst no formal training had been done for staff on the Sphere standards or Code of Conduct, the Codes of Conduct were explained to all new staff and a Code of Conduct regarding sexual exploitation was signed by all staff. UMCOR would welcome joint training for the ACT members in this area.

UMCOR had been a part of the ACT Development consultations, but were taking their position from that given from headquarters which was expressed as a 'wait and see' position. In looking to the future UMCOR felt that the promising future for Liberia from this point was jeopardised by the lack of funding and with ECHO phasing out, OFDA/USAID funding being cut as a result of the needs of Lebanon, the future of the UMCOR programme in Liberia depended on gaining new contracts and funding.

5. Achievements

Overall the evaluation found that the majority of the interventions by the ACT members, on the basis of the objectives set and the funding received during the emergency period, were largely successful, relevant and contributed to the overall stabilisation of the emergency situation in the various project areas. Much of this is the result of the high degree of commitment of the staff, particularly those working in the field in often difficult locations, and in 2004 at a time when many were themselves suffering from the effects of war.

In the first year (2004), with the huge displacement that occurred in the aftermath of the fighting that ended in 2003, the ACT members worked to provide the much needed care and maintenance of the displaced population and supported the massive task of cleaning up the country. The diverse skills and expertise of the ACT members were brought to the situation, which include camp establishment and management, distribution of food and non-food items, provision of water and sanitation, and trauma counselling and other psychosocial support.

The cleaning up operations undertaken in late 2003 and 2004 by some of the ACT members were not only timely and helped to get disheartened people working again but served as a catalyst for rebuilding and restoring hope. They signalled the end of one era – of violence and mayhem – and the beginning of another – hopefully long term peace and rebuilding.

In 2005 the ACT members showed considerable flexibility as the situation began to change. Many continued the “care and maintenance” work in the shelters whilst also preparing beneficiaries for resettlement and supporting those making the journey home and providing support for temporary shelter and cleaning up operations in their homes.

In 2006 with the mass return from the displaced camps to their communities ACT members were active in supporting this process and their interventions shifted to ensuring that basic services, food and income generation possibilities were provided within the communities to help restore the dignity and livelihood of the returnees.

The capacity of some ACT members to be able to quickly and flexibly re-focus their programming from development and rehabilitation to emergency interventions and then back again to rehabilitation as required, is a comparative advantage that can be built on and from which lessons can be learned for this transition period. For several of the ACT members their work included a wide range of interventions – some of which are strictly emergency relief but others of which are much longer term interventions undertaken within a community development context. The work carried out under the three appeals can roughly be categorised into four areas discussed below: relief and cleaning up; psychosocial; infrastructure and rehabilitation; skills training and income generation.

5.1 Relief and Cleaning Up

In all three appeals but particularly in the AFLR 41 and AFLR 51 a great many relief distributions were carried out and cleaning up operations were supported and a major part of the funding for these two appeals went on these activities. In 2004 and 2005 every ACT Implementing Member was involved in relief activities. Although they were involved in different places and different ways with somewhat different niches and styles, all were involved in the huge effort to provide relief supplies to people displaced and on the move. All were also involved in encouraging people to return home. This assistance was part of the massive effort on the part of all of those in the country to deal with this chaotic situation and whilst some carried this work out in a professional co-ordinated manner others saw it as their duty as a matter of solidarity and Christian witness to be doing all that they could to help those in such dire need. A lot was achieved. It was extremely timely. And it provided hope and encouragement to people whose lives were in chaos. It was difficult to discuss this with beneficiaries even though the evaluators spoke to some still left behind in IDP camps and many who had returned home were interviewed in the towns along the Gbanga – Zorzor road in Bong and Lofa Counties. So much had happened to them during this period and so many organisations had provided relief goods that it was not possible for them to remember what had been provided by ACT members or to comment on any specific distributions.



The majority of members were also involved in the massive cleaning up operations that were necessary. The roads along the way were overgrown with vegetation and littered with the detritus of war. The communities from which people had fled were virtually totally destroyed and overgrown. A massive effort was needed to encourage people to return home and to support them in this. The YMCA took a lead in the early clean up, organising teams of young people, in return for food for work, to get involved in the cleaning up, starting with the stadium in Monrovia and then the overgrown main roads out of Monrovia. For most implementing members this work was carried out in the communities with which they had prior links and though the evaluators had some questions about the selection of communities in some instances and the one-off nature of the interventions, it is clear that this work and support was badly needed at the time and was an important stage in the response to the emergency.

For LWF/WS and CCC there were major contracts under UNHCR in camp management and associated services and in some camps this continued until the camps were closed by the government in June/July 2006. Whilst this latter work was not in the main funded by the ACT appeal, without the ACT appeal monies much of the peripheral work that was needed to do a good job in these situations would not have been able to be done and hence the ACT funding can be seen to be contributing to the whole. In enquiries with UNHCR both of the ACT IMs were seen to be successful partners fulfilling the objectives set for them under the contracts. In all cases the camps are now closed and so it was difficult to talk to beneficiaries about the services provided. Three of the camps were visited – Salala IDP camp in Bong County (LWF/WS), Jah Tondo (LWF/WS) and Peri Town (CCC) both in Montserrado County. In all cases there remain IDPs who for one reason or another have not yet gone home. These are some of the most difficult cases – either especially vulnerable, or having missed out on the return package, or lacking in family support, or having a particular reason not to want to return to their communities – and so although the evaluators spoke to them they were not a good sample to talk about how the camp had been managed and the services available and the manner in which they were provided. Whilst the numbers remaining in these camps are small relative to the number of IDPs once in them (for example in Jah Tondo there are still about 2,000 people out of a 20,000 camp population), they are nevertheless a significant number of people, still in need of emergency/relief assistance and help to go home and rebuild, when those remaining in all of the former IDP camps are added up. Whilst it is government policy not to provide services to these people and to do nothing that would encourage them to stay in these closed camps, there is clearly a residual need that those agencies who managed camps should have some responsibility with regard to the remaining camp population, at least in advocacy with government and UN agencies and perhaps in ensuring that counselling services to encourage their move home are available for them.

During discussion with UNHCR they estimated a total caseload of 5,000 IDPs around the country who are still being assisted to return home. However, considering that in the three camps visited those not returned were close to 50% of the UNHCR's projection, it seems clear that there are many other IDPs who are not included in the UNHCR figures.

Overall under the ACT response and involving all of the Members within the appeal a huge amount of particularly non-food items were distributed to the displaced population at a time when it was desperately needed and when the number of INGOs was no where near the number in the country now. Similarly in the early stages of people returning to their communities the church agencies played a very significant role with relief items and with food for work and temporary shelter in supporting people and encouraging them to get involved in the cleaning up and to begin the process of rebuilding.

5.2 Psychosocial work

All of the ACT Implementing Members in Liberia are undertaking psychosocial work of one kind or another. In the Liberian context psychosocial work covers a wide

range of activity and includes trauma counselling, peace and reconciliation work and HIV/AIDS education. There are many well qualified counsellors on the staff of the Member organisations having undertaken serious training in Liberia. There are two institutions in Monrovia offering four year degree courses in social work and counselling: the Mother Pattern College of Health Sciences (a Roman Catholic institution) and the African Methodist Episcopal University. There are also places offering one year diplomas, and a number of six month training courses (one of which is run by ACT Member CHAL for staff from its members). Within the IMs there are training courses, refresher courses and workshops for staff and volunteers at the national and regional levels on a regular basis. PDA has also provided support to this area and workshops for members. Nevertheless there is a need at the local level for a large number of people with training in this area to deal with the huge amount of trauma and the needs for conflict resolution and avoidance work.

There is a big challenge in this area for the ACT members to share with one another. There is a need for a series of thematic strategic sessions on their psychosocial programmes, including looking at harmonisation of the content of their training programmes, strategy for field level counselling including personal and group counselling, the role of members in regard to peace building, among the many issues in the psychosocial work field. This is one area that the ACT Forum could establish as part of the comparative strength that the members bring to the transition from emergency to development in Liberia.

A serious difficulty for some of the ACT Implementing Members during 2006 is the loss of good staff as the number of INGOs increases seeking well qualified and experienced counsellors and paying much higher salaries than local organisations.

The evaluators were impressed with the trauma counselling work that was seen. As an example at CCC the quality of the counsellors and their relationship with those being counselling was observed to be very good. The organisation of the work on a one-to-one basis and then in group counselling was also seen to be well done. The criteria for selecting beneficiaries for intensive one-to-one counselling seemed fair, and the follow through with beneficiaries into skills training and income generation was well thought out and seemed to be working, with impressive levels of expertise developed in the women and an attention to marketing.

It was more difficult to judge the quality of the other aspects of psychosocial work. However in Lofa and Nimba there are many efforts in peace and reconciliation and in conflict resolution. Within the YMCA programmes young people are trained as peace builders with a remit to work in schools and with youth groups in conflict resolution, and the young people met were extremely articulate and able to define for us how they dealt with individual cases. On the community level the need for and involvement in conflict reduction at so many levels was discussed: between the traditional chiefs and governmental structures and the Town chiefs and structures; between the different ethnic groups in an area; between those who stayed in their areas in the bush and those who went to IDP and refugee camps; between those within a single tribe on either side of international boundaries who accuse each other of supporting conflict; between those who were combatants and now have demobilisation packages, retraining and payments and those who were the victims of the fighting forces but are without the kind of incentives being provided to the ex-combatants. At every level

there is a need for work to reduce tension and conflict and many of the ACT Members have workshops, dispute resolution, counselling and training addressing these issues. This is another area that presents opportunities for better co-ordination and thematic dialogue and debate within the ACT family, in an attempt to have a common approach as ACT members, irrespective of the implementing member concerned or the geographic area of intervention.

HIV/AIDS education work is carried out by several of the ACT Implementing Members. CHAL in particular goes beyond education and has Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centres in some remote Counties, though this is not a part of the ACT appeal funding. LCL has a separate HIV/AIDS education programme for pastors and others within the church and in 2005 a contribution to this programme came from the ACT appeal. LWF/WS also runs HIV/AIDS education workshops and counselling in the areas in which they are working. The YMCA has sign boards in many towns educating about HIV/AIDS and is training large numbers of volunteer youth peer educators in HIV/AIDS education along with avoidance of teenage pregnancy and gender based violence issues.

Many thousands of people throughout Liberia are involved in these aspects of the psychosocial work carried out under the three ACT appeals. Whilst it is difficult to compile accurate figures for the number of people who have been helped by this work the evaluators reckon that over 25,000 people have been directly involved in the psychosocial programmes of the ACT Members in the last three years.

5.3 Infrastructure and Rehabilitation

It is hard to describe the level of destruction throughout most parts of the country. Key institutions – including those that were visited of the Lutheran Church such as the Lutheran Training Institute and the Curran Lutheran Hospital - were totally destroyed. But significant towns as well as small towns and villages were laid waste by fourteen years of war and waves of conflict. For example, Zorzor, a significant town, at the time of the 2003 ACT assessment only had three houses undestroyed, and those were the buildings that survived the destruction only because the commanders of fighting forces used them as their headquarters and bases. Now Zorzor has hundreds of homes and ACT Members with others have played a significant role in helping people to rebuild their town.

Almost all of the ACT IMs have been active in supporting people to rebuild their homes. Some shelters have been constructed for vulnerable groups but mainly large numbers of shelter packages – zinc sheets, nails and washers - have been distributed to returning families. Most of these shelter goods have been distributed in a targeted way to vulnerable family heads (often women), many of whom have been involved in the organisation's psychosocial programmes. The evaluators had some concern that in some instances this targeting was not done as well as it might have been and may not have been co-ordinated as well as it should have been with the many other agencies also providing these things.

Some of the ACT IMs have worked with their members to rebuild facilities for their work. In particular the YMCA with funds from the ACT appeal (as well as other

donors) renovated a number of their youth centres and regional YMCAs, and also extended them to make provision for life skills courses and counselling, and other workshops. CCC (in for example Tubmanburg) and YMCA (in for example Saclepea) have also renovated other privately owned buildings which were destroyed in return for leases for their use for some years.

But beyond housing and rebuilding of centres, many of the IMs have also been significantly involved in water and sanitation and other infrastructure work, particularly under the AFLR 51 and 61 appeals. LWF/WS, YMCA, CHAL and CCC have all been involved to some extent in this work. For example, in 2005 LWF/WS rehabilitated and constructed 14 wells and fitted hand pumps to them and did the necessary training and sensitisation associated and another 12 wells are planned for 2006 (of which four are completed). YMCA have been involved in providing two blocks of four communal latrines in Zorzor as part of their contribution to the rehabilitation of the town. In 2006 infrastructure and rehabilitation work is increasingly associated with Members' community development involvement. CCC has worked with several communities to construct counselling and skills training centres. LWF/WS is constructing bridges in areas where they are working, and are in the process of constructing/rehabilitating eight fishponds. There has also been support to rehabilitation of schools and provision of benches, chairs and tables. Apart from the work in main towns the evaluators were not able to visit any of this infrastructure work and talk to the communities concerned. The county level staff of the organisations with whom the work was discussed were understandably disappointed that we could not visit the sites and structures. However, in the main this work is a considerable distance from the main roads, and given the appalling state of the roads even relatively small distances take one to two hours in each direction to get to them and often also require some walking time. In the time frame of the evaluation it was therefore not possible to visit most of these community level structures. The fact, however, that this work is not on the main road was considered a very positive point as it is clear that a number of agencies target the towns along the roads leaving those less accessible in greater need.

Increasingly the work being done in this area is part of the longer term planning for integrated rehabilitation and community development work that the ACT IMs are engaged in as they move (in a necessarily backwards and forwards way during this transition period) from the emergency phase to that of rehabilitation and development..

5.4 Skills Training and Income Generation

Some skills training was undertaken by some of the Members in the IDP camps, both in preparing people for the period when they returned home and as part of the follow up to the trauma counselling. However, now that some 90% of the IDPs and refugees have returned to their home area, there is a huge need for skills training and income generation work which is likely to be needed for years to come. YMCA, CCC and LWF/WS are all doing work in the skills training and income generation area with different carefully tailored programmes offered to their target beneficiaries. The evaluators saw work of each of the organisations and were impressed by the numbers of people involved, the level of accomplishment of the participants in the

programmes, the quality of the teachers (often trained through in-house workshops) and the general organisation and commitment to the programmes. In that the methodology and organisation of these programmes is different in each organisation, this is another area of work where greater sharing of experience could provide lesson learning opportunities for everyone.

“I learned how to plant potatoes, greens, peanuts and cassava. I also learned how to make and use ECO stove.” Ms. Yomo Deline said, when asked at Jah Tondo camp whether they had learned something while in the displaced camp that would benefit them when they returned home. In the same conversation another displaced person said “I learned soap making” and another “I learned baking and tie and die”.

For many young people they have spent the major part of their life in refugee or IDP camps and there is a huge problem with them understanding about village/small town life. In particular there is a lack of skills amongst many young people in even basic agriculture which has to be the mainstay for the majority of the rural population in a country with an abundance of land. Under AFLR 61 therefore a number of IMs are doing considerable work on agriculture and food security, including seeds and tools packages, agricultural workshops, support to school gardening and livestock restocking. The YMCA has their CAFF (Children Affected by Fighting Forces) programme which in Saclepea has a focus on developing a farm together and learning farming skills from this.

CCC has a structured skills training programme covering tie and die, pastry, soap making and tailoring (participants choose one area) which follows on from their counselling. Our observations saw that participants had learned these skills to a high level. At the end of the course they get help with the basic requirements to get started in using their new skill for income generation purposes. YWCA runs six months life skills courses for those young people who are not in the academic stream and will not return to school. Again people choose a particular vocational skill – carpentry, masonry, pastry, tailoring and so on. As with CCC who has a dual purpose for their training, YMCA through its bringing together of people from different backgrounds (different tribes and ex-combatants with those who were not combatants) is combining peace and reconciliation work with skills training.

LWF/WS is also carrying out skills training and income generation work. The adult literacy training component of their integrated rehabilitation project in Panta Kpaa seemed particularly effective, with the project training literacy facilitators. The project also had a component for micro-credit in follow up to this work.

At the Panta Kpaa project in Palala, the evaluators met women who proudly admitted that they can now sign their name and do not have to use finger prints, and that they have overcome shyness in speaking among their friends and in public gatherings. Other women reported that they had learned how to organise their business better and also to follow up on the education of their children.

With the success being achieved in the skills training, ACT members will need to put some effort into organising and preparing beneficiaries for the marketing of their products in an environment flooded with similar skills training run by INGOs and

other bilateral funding programmes that will be in competition for the same market as the beneficiaries of the ACT members.

5.5 Key Issues

Whilst much was achieved and done well the evaluators bring to the IMs notice some areas where lessons can be learned and greater attention in some instances is needed. Given the shortage of resources and under funding of the appeals more attention was needed both in the assessments and in the revision of plans to the selection and targeting of beneficiaries. Although almost everyone mentioned that they were targeting the most vulnerable the criteria for this was sometimes vague and often not fully understood by the beneficiaries, who either did not understand this process or did not agree with it. When resources were very limited even in relation to the extremely vulnerable a number of distribution methods were used including lotteries and sharing one ticket between several families. Generally responses to questions about how members dealt with under funded appeals resulted in a “spread more thinly” response, rather than new targeting and working with fewer communities. These issues could be fruitfully discussed by members within the ACT Forum to consider best practice in handling these difficult situations.

This observation about the need for clearer targeting is closely related to the need to distribute in ways in which conflict is avoided. This is particularly important in the Liberian context in which unity and reconciliation still has to be worked for and conflict can easily flare up between different categories of people within the same community. This need for conflict sensitivity in all of the work of the IMs is something that should be further discussed within the ACT Forum allowing members to share experiences, problems and good practice with one another.

A third area of concern was that related to adequate beneficiary participation in decisions about relief and rehabilitation interventions. As beneficiary committees, town development committees and other structures get set up, this becomes of even greater importance. Connected to this is the need for co-ordination with other humanitarian actors. In the field the evaluators rarely heard mention (with the exception of the Protection and GBV working groups) of co-ordination with other aid providers, and therefore it was not clear to what extent the ACT intervention was optimised and to what extent duplication was avoided.

A further area of concern was that of communication, especially between head offices in Monrovia and field level staff. It was clear that for IMs with multiple funding sources field staff were not aware which activities were funded by ACT or other donors. In at least one instance the field staff had not even been informed of the arrival of ACT funding which partly contributed to the late start of activities. Sharing information at this level would further enhance project implementation and establish greater ownership among field staff of the work that they do.

6. Codes of Conduct

The evaluators were asked to pay particular attention to the knowledge of and adherence to the Sphere standards and Codes of Conduct. Consequently at every meeting with the IMs both at the headquarters and in the field questions were asked about these standards and Codes of Conduct.

6.1 Sphere Standards

With notable exceptions the Sphere standards do not feature highly in the thinking and planning of the ACT IMs in Liberia. Although most Members have a copy of the standards in their main offices they are not central to planning work and are poorly disseminated at the sub-office and general field levels. Certain individuals (in UMC and in CCC) have been on the ACT Emergency Preparedness training course at the African University in Zimbabwe and on those courses have received training in the Sphere standards. But there has not been organised within the ACT Forum a training on Sphere standards for all members in Liberia and this is an omission which should be rectified.

Nevertheless a number of situations in which the difficulty of adhering to Sphere standards was mentioned to us, as was the difficulty of applying such standards when the resources are limited and the demands many. In such cases at least an understanding that implementation should aspire to minimum standards was recognised. This was particularly the case with regard to water and sanitation, shelter and distribution of non-food relief items. Overall, however, there is a need for more joint work and discussion amongst the members of the ACT forum on the Sphere minimum standards and on other operational issues in which there should be shared practice, such as incentives for attending workshops and selection of beneficiaries.

6.2 Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies was similarly known about by all of the IMs, though specific training or joint discussion within the ACT forum seemed not to have taken place. The particular issue of discussion concerned the selection and targeting of locations for work and the targeting of individual beneficiaries without regard to religion, ethnic or political affiliation.

Understandably a number of the church members naturally select areas to work where they have a history of work through their denomination. In discussion the team was told that within these areas the most vulnerable were assisted and given priority. It was clear however that in some cases the church was also assisted as part of the priority group in the relief shelter phase and the team were not entirely convinced that the towns to assist were selected without regard to whether the particular denomination had a parish there or not. Where individual beneficiaries were being targeted for relief items or for psychosocial support or attendance at workshops, there

was no evidence that any particular group were being excluded or that preference was being given to a certain Christian denomination or particular ethnic group. Neither was there any evidence that relief or counselling support came with evangelising messages or pressure, even though within some IMs some pastors play a key role in the psychosocial area.

Some organisations monitor the inclusiveness of their programmes and work and the box below shows one example of this.

LWF/WS Psychosocial Workshop held in Zorzor 9 – 13 October 2006

The 50 participants came from 14 communities in Zorzor District.

Of the 50 participants 30 were men and 20 were women.

Of the 50 participants 41 were Christian and 9 were Muslim.

Of the 50 participants 38 were Loma, 9 were Mandingo and 3 were Kpelleh.

The Zorzor YMCA spoke of the intake for their new Life Skills course about to start. The new intake would be of 180 participants from five counties, taking participants from different ethnic groups, from different religious backgrounds and from ex-combatants and those non-combatants affected by war.

6.3 ACT Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation

Of standards and Codes of Conduct most attention by far has been paid to the issue of gender based violence and sexual exploitation. The issue came to prominence in Liberia following the UNHCR – SCF report on ‘Sexual Violence and Exploitation’ and at that time ACT members seriously discussed the issues together. The ecumenical field visit from Geneva bringing together ACT International and its parent bodies LWF and WCC in March 2002 to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea, set out recommendations in follow up to the UNHCR/SCF report. These high profile reports and visits led to co-ordinated discussion within the ACT Members in Liberia and brought this issue to the fore. Whilst some (a small minority) feel that the issue has received undue prominence only as a result of the external concern, all recognise it to be a problem in Liberia which must be dealt with openly and constantly. For the majority of ACT members the highlighting of this issue has assisted them in their work and strengthened their resolve to address the issue at all levels within their organisation and work. Whilst no one gave us an example of a direct case of misconduct that they had dealt with within their own organisation, many examples were given, especially by the YMCA, where they had tackled issues of this kind particularly related to teachers within the school system.

The ACT Code of Conduct is therefore known at all of the headquarters and the issues contained in it are known about to a certain extent at the field level in all organisations. Whilst some of the ACT IMs require all staff to sign Codes of Conduct covering this area before being employed with them this is not the case in all organisations. However, all organisations discuss the Code of Conduct and the issue of gender based violence with most of their staff and in most cases with most of their volunteers and contractors. However, in those organisations with hundreds of field

staff and many volunteers it is likely that not all staff have been sufficiently exposed to discussion on this issue. The detailed ACT Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation, Abuse of Power and Corruption for Staff members of the ACT International Alliance is a detailed document running to six pages with two annexes and is not in most cases suitable for use with field staff of Members. There is a need for a simplified two page version of the Code of Conduct which could more easily be the basis for discussion with staff at all levels in the organisations and more easily used as something to be signed up to as part of the contract of employment.

As a result of the UNHCR/SCF report the issue has a high profile throughout all of Liberia and in most counties there are monthly inter-agency protection meetings of a Gender Based Violence working group. Three of the major implementing partners of ACT under the appeals all participate in the inter-agency GBV working groups in the counties in which they work.

The Ecumenical team visit of 2002 recommended joint training on the issue of Codes of Conduct and Sexual Exploitation. Although joint meetings have taken place and there has been an intention to undertake joint training on this issue for ACT Member staff, this has not yet taken place. NCA has organised a two day workshop for the staff representatives from each of its partner organisations on 7 – 8 December 2006. There has also been considerable discussion with Geneva about a training to be organised for ACT Members, and for which the funding is available, by LWF/WS who have a Protection team who have undertaken to organise this, but delays have occurred. It is hoped that this can be organised without further delay as many middle level managers in the field with whom the evaluators spoke during their field visit would welcome this training. The importance of ensuring that any training under the ACT Forum is offered to all of the ACT Members and within the ACT Members is offered fairly to those whose work would benefit most from it, cannot be stated too strongly.

6.4 Gender

The evaluators asked all organisations about gender issues and ensured wherever possible that women were included in beneficiary groups interviewed. All of the IMs have a number of female staff and for most organisations these include women in senior positions. A large number of the psychosocial counsellors and skills trainers are women, so that at the field level for many programmes there are a majority of female staff.

Gender is a cross cutting issue in most of the programmes contained within the three appeals, and was reviewed as such by the evaluators. There is a high consciousness about the need to target work with female headed households and to work with women who have undergone trauma and particularly rape, teenage pregnancy and other gender based violence. At the YMCA in Ganta there was discussion about the possibility of rescheduling the evening computer training courses to enable women to more easily attend.

One organisation raised the issue of the difficulty of recruiting qualified women for posts in rural areas, given the difficulties for them of relocating or leaving their

families. Educated females frequently end up migrating to Monrovia for higher education and jobs, while some were forcibly relocated to Monrovia and other urban centres as a result of the war and are now reluctant to break from their families and return to their home areas. However, for most organisations with their own internal training programmes women were heavily represented and some of the most articulate young people interviewed were women working as counsellors, trainers and peer educators.

There was a concern that as organisations move on from the relief phase to the rehabilitation and community development phase, the same attention to gender and to ensuring a good balance of men and women staff should be maintained.

7. ACT Visibility

In a country where almost every town has more than a dozen boards proclaiming the work of the various NGOs, UN and governmental agencies, ACT is largely invisible. On a four day visit through four counties to the north of the country only one ACT sticker was seen and that on a LCL truck parked in a Lutheran institution compound in Lofa County. Elsewhere there was high visibility for the work of the individual ACT Implementing Members. The YMCA and its work is visible in every town, occasionally co-branded with Y-Care International and the NCA (for its wells). The LWF/WS work is visible throughout the country, occasionally co-branded with Church of Sweden or with DEA. But ACT is invisible. On a visit to the west of the country with CCC the picture was somewhat different with the psychosocial and skills training centres of CCC clearly co-branded with the ACT logo in four different centres / locations. The vehicles of the Implementing Members are visible up and down the country with LWF/WS vehicles prominent throughout. Only one vehicle in Monrovia – a YMCA car – was spotted with an ACT sticker and one HIV/AIDS information board of LWF/WS at Jah Tondo camp had an ACT logo on it. By contrast the funding members – DEA and NCA – both displayed (albeit somewhat faded) ACT stickers on the gates to their offices.

When questioned by the evaluators about this situation of invisibility of ACT the response given was that visibility was more apparent during the active period of relief distribution when ACT stickers, logos and even t-shirts and caps worn by staff featured in all activities. This momentum however seemed to have disappeared at the end of the peak of relief distributions, leaving no memories with the beneficiaries.

In relationships with back donors such as UNHCR and WFP, membership of ACT is not much highlighted. Whilst UNHCR informed us that CCC had specifically told them in relation to their transit camp contract that they were operating as part of the ACT family, generally this is not the case. Whilst there is a high regard in the aid community for the work of several of the individual ACT Members, there is generally no sense that the ACT Implementing Members are all members of one ACT family and working towards a common goal.

The community supported by the recent RRF response in Joe Blow town on the Robertsfield highway knew that this was an ACT intervention. But normally, with the exception of work funded through ACT by CCC, all current interventions come with the sole label of the individual organisation.

The greatest coverage that has been given to the ACT name is the publicity surrounding the two ACT Development consultations, where the consultations featured prominently in the press.

The ACT Forum Case Study report from December 2005 highlighted this lack of visibility and recommended that it be addressed by the Members. The evaluation team found no evidence that this recommendation had been acted upon in any way.

8. Co-ordination and Collaboration

8.1 Co-ordination between members

There have been strong attempts at co-ordination between the ACT Members in Liberia over the years, with an ACT Forum set up in 2001 (called the ACT-Liberia Network) following attendance at an emergency workshop in Sierra Leone. Prior to the issuing of the 2004 appeal, at the point in 2003 immediately following the cessation of hostilities, the ACT Members worked together to carry out a joint assessment. However, despite considerable efforts and a number of external interventions to support co-ordination, this remains somewhat limited, despite the fact that all IMs agree that greater co-ordination by the ACT family in Liberia would be beneficial for all.

In the first place the LCC took on the role of co-ordination for all of the ACT IMs. The General Secretary of the LCC was the Chair of the ACT Forum (known as the ACT International – Liberia Network) and a co-ordinator employed by LCC and funded by the ACT appeal co-ordination budget was employed to further the co-ordination. In 2004 the Church of Sweden seconded a facilitator, who spent two three month periods in Liberia, to support the co-ordination work of the ACT Forum. Together these two people ensured that regular meetings were held for sharing of work and issues. During 2004 and 2005 under the appeals three two day workshops were held on psychosocial counselling, on project planning and on financial management. Many ACT members sent participants to these workshops and they are remembered as being valuable. CCC quoted the main usefulness being that finance staff were trained in the ACT reporting format and came back from the workshop to their organisation with disks containing the correct reporting formats. Whilst the short course in psychosocial was seen as useful, it was recognised that psychosocial training is something that has to be done over a much longer period of time and there are professional courses in the country and medium length courses held by Members for this.

But the response to the 2004 appeal where some IMs received some funding of their appeal request and others received nothing at all put severe pressure on the cohesion of the ACT Forum. Some felt embarrassed at what they had received whilst others had received nothing, and some of those receiving nothing felt that their time could be prioritised better elsewhere. At the same time with LCC holding both the Chair of the ACT Forum on a permanent basis and the Co-ordinator position, there were concerns about the full participation of members, and a concern that LCC was ‘monitoring’ (perceived in a somewhat negative way) the work of the other members. Additionally the cost of a separate co-ordinator is not sustainable outside of major appeal periods. The decision was therefore taken that the Chairmanship of the ACT Forum should rotate around the members, with for a period of time an ACT Co-ordinator based at LCC to provide a secretariate for the ACT co-ordination. For many members this model, assuming that the co-ordinator has the vision, strategic thinking and leadership qualities required, provides the best opportunity for strengthening the joint work of the ACT Members in Liberia and ensuring that work is co-ordinated, that training and

capacity building takes place and that joint assessments and planning are undertaken. It is recognised, however, that outside of the critical phase of an emergency the resources to support a permanent co-ordinator or secretariat are not available.

In December 2005 a further outside intervention from the ACT CO took place in the form of an ACT Forum Liberia Case Study, the final report of which was issued in February 2006. It concluded that ACT members in the network had high levels of credibility among external humanitarian actors, that there was a willingness to work together, but that in the Liberian context working together is extremely difficult because of both the deep rooted tensions and history arising from the conflict situation as well as the practical competition for resources and the seeming lack of fairness in the allocation of resources within the ACT family. The report made clear recommendations concerning the need for strategic planning together, concerning the management of the Network/Forum and concerning issues of visibility.

It is disappointing to see that the recommendations of the Case Study have not been seriously discussed and acted upon by the Members, and some Members expressed to us their disappointment that the strategic planning recommendation in particular has not been taken forward.

During 2006 the central co-ordinator position for ACT has come to an end and both the Chairmanship and co-ordination is now carried out on a rotational basis around the Members. The Memorandum of Understanding on this states that the Chairmanship should rotate every three months. It is generally thought that this is too short a period. The current Chairmanship is with LCL which followed on from CCC in April, CHAL having declined to take up the position. For various reasons, notably the ACT Development consultations and the need for continuity, the Chairmanship has remained with LCL for now seven months, rather than pass on to the next organisation, LWF/WS. It is the view of the evaluators that the Chairmanship and Coordination should continue to rotate and that the period of tenure should be six months. The next handover, to LWF/WS, should take place on 1 January 2007. It is recommended that this role is taken on at an institutional level with two people – a Chairman and a Co-ordinator – taking on the responsibilities. For each six month period clear goals should be set for what the ACT Forum hopes to achieve in that period and the institution carrying this responsibility would have the task of driving this agenda forward.

As the emergency appeals for Liberia come to an end there may be a natural decline in interest and enthusiasm on the part of the members who were earlier motivated around appeal preparation and implementation. The rotating chair will have to be proactive and farsighted to bring out those issues and thematic case studies that the forum can work around in a rewarding and beneficial manner. There is much that can be learned from the work of the last three years, and co-ordination will now have to be enriched not by appeal preparation but with learning lessons from previous appeals and building upon these successes for the shift from emergency to development work under a joint ACT International and ACT Development umbrella.

In addition to co-ordination between ACT members at the national / Monrovia level there is a case also for the ACT members to meet regularly together in those Counties where several of them work. For example, in Lofa County LWF/WS, LCL, YMCA

and CHAL are all working. This could reinforce the sense of ACT family and could provide valuable insights to discussions in the ACT Forum centrally.

8.2 The Rapid Response Fund (RRF)

In August 2006 there were serious floods in the Joe Blow Town area of Margibi County some 45 miles out of Monrovia. In response to this the ACT Forum came together to respond jointly. An RRF Committee was set up and a joint assessment was carried out. Following the arrival of the funds a joint implementation was also carried out. There are many lessons to learn from this exercise.

The first is that in general the Members are able to come together well at a time of a critical and manageable sized emergency. A joint assessment was carried out. A plan was developed and once funds were approved implementation together took place, under a common overall ACT response, in a timely manner. Positive lessons of how to undertake work jointly can be learned from this.

However, there were serious problems with the implementation. By the time of the distribution there were many more families in need of help than were identified at the time of the assessment. Despite a local Committee the beneficiaries were not involved in deciding how to handle this situation and consequently felt it was unfair and unworkable. The first distribution therefore led to some chaos and disrespectful behaviour. Added to this, allegations of selling some of the relief goods were made by the beneficiaries. These allegations were thoroughly investigated by the Chairman of the ACT Forum and an investigation committee who discovered that the rented truck crew had sold some items and apologies were made to the community. The second distribution, with the Chairman present, went smoothly even though the amounts of goods were far too few for the number of families in need and no attempt was made to target further. Whilst the beneficiaries thought that a third distribution had been agreed, this did not happen.

The evaluation team feel that there are many lessons that can be learned from this exercise which could be a good learning experience for the members of the ACT Forum. It is therefore recommended that before the end of 2006 or in the first month of 2007 a serious one day facilitated workshop is held for all of the Members to go through the experience of the RRF and identify and learn lessons for the future. Many of the lessons to be learnt are ones that have wider value for all of the work of the Members and yet can be seen and discussed clearly from this one manageable RRF experience.

8.3 Co-ordination with others

At the beginning of the period under evaluation the majority of the co-ordination was done at the IDP camp management level and ACT IMs were co-ordinated with others through this mechanism. In some cases ACT IMs played a key role in the co-ordination, particularly when they had camp management responsibilities. Outside of the IDP camp setting co-ordination was less structured and some concerns emerged that in some locations there had been insufficient co-ordination with others.

Now that the relief phase is coming to an end and the majority of work is being done at the community level, there is a need for co-ordination between all those actors in the relief, rehabilitation and development process at the County level. In the area of Protection and GBV there are working groups set up at the County level and ACT IMs are regular participants in these working groups. For the other sectors the County Sector working groups are still in the process of being set up. This process is led by the UN County team and follows on from the national UN Cluster process. From the experience in other countries there is a danger that local NGOs, at both the County and especially national level, may be left out of these co-ordination structures and it is important that the ACT family is visibly seen participating in these meetings and brings to them both the experience and perspective of the international ACT members and the local ACT members. This is a strength that is underdeveloped in the Liberian context and is a particular contribution which the ACT family can bring to the national development process.

9. Capacity Development

The AFLR 61 appeal contained a component for Capacity Development for \$40,000. This part of the appeal was never implemented and received no funds. Indications at the ACT CO were that Funding Members (NCA, PDA, CoS and Kerkinactie) would be prepared to find funding for this if a good and realistic proposal was forthcoming from the Members in Liberia. It is understood that work on this has taken place with PDA and a proposal has been developed, but this was not raised in discussion with the members in Liberia. There is no doubt that there is a big need for capacity development work. Many of the staff of the organisations are well trained in their fields. Many staff have been on one-off short courses and to workshops. Many of the organisations have regular internal training courses on different topics for the staff and volunteers. But there has been no joint systematic and comprehensive capacity development on assessment, planning, proposal writing, financial reporting, monitoring, evaluation, and thinking and planning strategically.

The recommendation of the evaluation is therefore that the Capacity Development component of the AFLR 61 appeal should be extended for six or preferably twelve months and should be used to fund a facilitated programme of capacity development and strategic planning for the ACT Forum members. It should be focused on learning lessons from the emergency phase to enable the members to plan their work for the development phase, and more particularly for the transition phase which will be a longer period than is perhaps envisaged. The situation in Liberia is not one that is moving smoothly from emergency straight to development. Different parts of the country and different people were affected very differently by the war and years of conflict. The peace remains fragile in many areas. There are still pockets of emergency needs, huge requirements for rehabilitation and recovery work, but also some positive longer term community development work underway.

It is recommended that early in the New Year in response to this evaluation a small group come together under the leadership of the then Chair and Co-ordinator of the ACT Forum. This small group (perhaps called a strategic planning group) should comprise representatives of some implementing members and some funding members present in Liberia. Their initial task should be to draw up a clear proposal for this Capacity Development work for the year which should then be discussed and agreed as appropriate by all of the ACT Forum Members, before being submitted to Geneva for funding under the AFLR 61 extension.

The methodology should not only be that of workshops and training. The programme should include practical work together, including joint assessments to key areas of the country and learning lessons from this and drawing up plans together. Not plans where everyone is doing the same thing in the same area. But plans which allow for specialisms in both sectors of work and geographical areas, and yet together make up an overall plan. Out of this might also come the possibility of developing joint proposals which could be used to seek funding from in country UN and other sources. In discussions about the future this evaluation heard four priorities from the Members:

- Psychosocial work

- Education work – especially in the area of non-formal education – adult literacy, life skills and skills training.

Agriculture and food security
Advocacy

The small group doing this work should consider the recommendations from the ACT Liberia Case Study report (on strategic planning), from the ACT Development Consultation (on joint assessments to look at sectoral and geographical priorities of Members) as well as from this evaluation. If at all possible ACT International and ACT Development should co-operate together on supporting this initiative.

10. Funding Members and Appeal Funding

The total appealed for in the three appeals was \$10,732,248 and the amount received was \$4,246,866, approximately 40%. The table below shows amounts by IM for each of the appeals (figures in hundreds of thousands and rounded to the nearest thousand).

	AFLR	41	AFLR	51	AFLR	61	All	All
	appeal	receive	appeal	receive	appeal	receive	appeal	receive
CCC	542	71	300	200	296	157	1,138	428
CHAL	369	0	0	0	114	72	483	72
LCL	287	157	220	39	0	0	507	196
UMC	490	0	0	0	0	0	490	0
UMCOR	732	0	0	0	0	0	732	0
YMCA	902	315	463	389	360	78	1,725	782
LCC	111	56	55	33	37	19	203	108
LWF	2,568	402	1,795	1,225	1,007	889	5,370	2,516
Other			13	13	65	32	78	45
Totals	6,001	1,102	2,850	1,899	1,880	1,246	10,732	4,247

The table shows the severe under funding and the uneven coverage for the members, ranging from an 88% coverage in one year for one member down to for some members nothing at all. It does not show the fact that funds arrived at different points during the year, often with major contributions arriving as late as August. This under funding and late arrival of funds causes serious problems for the IMs. It is impossible to plan adequately when you do not know how much money you will get towards your appeal or when it will arrive. It also makes for difficulties in the relationships with beneficiary communities and with the local authorities when much reduced funding arrives compared to that which was anticipated when planning the programmes. It leads to problems with targeting as discussed elsewhere. These are common problems of the ACT Appeal system and ones that need addressing more widely and in the longer term.

Specifically to Liberia, however, there was a particular problem with the AFLR 41 appeal in that three IMs received nothing at all in response to their appeals. This was particularly damaging for the cohesion of the ACT Forum. It exacerbated suspicion and mistrust at a time when there was a strong need because of the conflict situation for reconciliation and unity. One IM explained that they felt guilty getting funds when others got nothing and that some getting nothing thought it was deliberately done by ACT with perhaps a steer from other greedy members. It seems it was a result of assessment of capacity and a view that some who had been badly damaged by the war had insufficient capacity to implement. This added to the sense of injustice that those most affected by the war were being most penalised. It was also hugely damaging to the ACT Forum and has understandably resulted in a loss of interest and deprioritisation of their ACT involvement from some Members. The FMs are urged to look at providing some funding to a range of IMs within an appeal and not just to their traditional partners, and if at all possible to provide a small amount of unallocated funding for the ACT CO to direct as appropriate to ensure that all receive some contribution for their work. A good example is the practice of NCA in 2006

which has prioritised by sector within the appeal but has provided some funding for all of the IMs working in these areas.

All of the appeals have been seriously under funded. But this was particularly bad in 2004 when the AFLR 41 appeal received only 18%. It is clear that to have appealed for over \$6 million, however great the need at that time, was unrealistic in terms of the possibilities within the FMs. In 2005 and 2006 the appeals each received 66% coverage. The ACT CO is urged to continue to take as accurate soundings as possible from the FMs and to insist that the IMs bring their askings down to a level which can realistically be responded to. FMs require education to understand that higher askings do not necessarily result in higher contributions, and in fact unrealistic appeal levels, in terms of capacity to deliver of both the IMs and FMs, is often counter productive.

For all of the IMs the ACT appeal mechanism is only one source of their funding. To add to the confusion some ACT FMs are funding IMs outside of the appeal for other work (not always clearly different) as well as or instead of through the appeal mechanism. For some this results in a tendency for ACT to be seen as just another donor along with the UN bodies and bilateral donors and is detrimental to the understanding that ACT is an organisation of which they are a part and of which the appeal mechanism is but one aspect. It also creates difficulties in being clear about what is funded through the ACT appeal and what is funded by others, and in many instances staff at the field level do not know what is part of the ACT appeal funding and what is funded by others, seeing all of their work as a programme involving many activities. A number of the ACT funded interventions were done within the context of existing and continuing programmes. This was the case with work seen from the YMCA (in Lofa and Nimba Counties), with the work of LWF/WS (in Bong County – Palala, Panta Kpahi) and with CCC (in Montserrado and Bomi Counties). The IMs have other activities on going which are funded from other sources and the ACT intervention was utilised to fund only certain aspects of their global programme in an area. There are advantages in all of this: administrative and logistics costs are shared between funders, and the potential for continuity and building on emergency interventions towards more rehabilitation and development initiatives are greater. But there are also disadvantages: it is difficult to ensure full transparency in the reporting and there are sometimes suspicions on the part of the donors that ACT funding is used to support the work of other funders and contracts (particularly UN contracts) so bearing a higher share of administrative costs. There is therefore a need for FMs to recognise that the IMs are running and seeking to sustain programmes of work which from a long term and development point of view is preferable to one-off emergency interventions, and that funding contributed to this overall work enables much more to be done and sometimes leverages far greater institutional funding so making the FMs money work more widely. But there is also a need for the IMs to be as transparent as possible, explaining the full range of their work and having available overall accounts and audits showing clearly how the contributions through the ACT appeal fit into the whole, so that there can be no cause for misunderstanding or suspicion.

In the current context in Liberia there are new opportunities to access funding within the country as new sources of funding become available under UN programmes. The IMs with support from the FMs in country and those who visit regularly are urged to work together co-branding as ACT to investigate these opportunities and form consortia to access this funding for their work.

11. Recommendations

1. IMs should review their **targeting methodologies** and discuss together in the ACT Forum best practice in the face of increased numbers from assessments and reduced income from appeals.
2. IMs should ensure **participation of beneficiaries** in decisions and methodologies concerning relief interventions and should ensure in the rehabilitation and recovery phase that Town Committees and District Development Committees are fully involved in planning.
3. All interventions and programmes should be planned with a close regard to **conflict sensitivity**, ensuring that interventions do not cause or aggravate conflict and have in mind a reconciliatory element which seeks to build trust and understanding between different groups.
4. **Communication** between head offices and field offices should be improved with regard to information on funding sources and membership of ACT.
5. **Joint monitoring visits** should be organised for lesson learning purposes in follow up to the joint assessment carried out at the start of the current emergency interventions by the ACT Members.
6. IMs should discuss together their **psychosocial work** with a view to harmonising many aspects of this work, but particularly training of staff, individual and group counselling methodologies, follow-up of clients, methods to engage in peace and reconciliation work, practices with regard to cash and material incentives.
7. The ACT CO should encourage and support a **Sphere training** in Liberia in which ACT members should be urged to participate.
8. The delayed training for ACT Members on the **Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation** should be organised and carried out by LWF/WS before the end of 2006 and all IMs should ensure that appropriate level staff participate in this.
9. The ACT CO should consider producing a **shorter more user friendly version of the ACT Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation** which could be more easily used with field staff and be a basis for discussion and use with contracts.
10. The attention to **gender** issues in the member organisations must continue, with care being taken that women are involved in all assessments and planning exercises and that as work moves into rehabilitation, recovery and development the role of women is not diminished.

11. Consideration should be given in view of the situation in neighbouring countries, particularly Cote d'Ivoire, to organising some **emergency preparedness training** in 2007.
12. The members should discuss **ACT visibility** within their organisation and together within the ACT Forum, recognising that they are part of ACT and that there are benefits to being seen as part of a wider international group of national and international members. It is recommended that they co-brand their work, vehicles and offices and present themselves to UN and other bodies as part of the ACT family.
13. The YMCA and the ACT CO are recommended to sort out the **YMCA registration for ACT membership**, and the YMCA is recommended to play a full part in the ACT forum as one of the strongest implementing members.
14. There is a need for more **co-ordination** at every level – within denominations (particularly the Lutheran family), within the ACT Forum nationally and regionally, and within the wider aid community at the national and County level.
15. ACT members are urged to get involved (with ACT visibility) in the County **Sector co-ordination meetings** and not only the Protection/SGBV working groups, and to participate wherever possibly in UN national co-ordination meetings.
16. The **Chairmanship of the ACT Forum** should continue to rotate, but this should be for a period of six months rather than three months. It should continue to move alphabetically through the membership recognising that some members will be free to say that they do not have the resources to take this on. It should move to an organisation rather than to a person. That organisation should designate not just a Chairman but also a Co-ordinator and these two people should work together to progress the work of the ACT Forum. This role should move to the next organisation alphabetically – LWF/WS – on 1 January 2007. Should there arise a situation where one member expresses their inability to undertake the role of chair it should move on to the next organisation in line, without a prolonged overstay of the current chair.
17. For each six month period the Chair/Co-ordinator, together with a small working group, should draw up an **agenda of work for the ACT Forum** for that period to be agreed by all of the members. The funding members in Liberia should be positively supportive of this co-ordination and agenda.
18. There should be a one day facilitated workshop to learn lessons from the recent **RRF intervention** in Joe Blow Town before the end of January 2007 organised by the Chair/Co-ordinating organisation.
19. The **Capacity Development** component of the AFLR 61 appeal should be extended for a six to twelve month period. A small group of ACT Members

led by the Chair/Co-ordinating organisation should develop a proposal for this work in 2007.

20. This proposal should be for a **facilitated programme of capacity development and strategic planning** for the ACT Forum. Whilst it would involve some training in assessment, planning, proposal writing, financial management, monitoring and reporting it should also involve joint visits to learn lessons and to undertake needs assessments and map out sectoral and geographical priorities of members. The objective would be to produce from this capacity development exercise a co-ordinated strategic plan for the work of the ACT members in Liberia for the coming years of recovery and transition.
21. In developing this proposal and co-ordinated strategic plan, it is recommended that the **priorities for the future** identified in this evaluation – psychosocial work, non-formal education, agriculture and food security, and advocacy – be taken into account.
22. It is further recommended that **ACT International and ACT Development jointly** support this capacity development process.
23. Recognising, particularly in the Liberian context, the detrimental effect on trust between members and cohesion of the ACT Forum of some IMs receiving no **funding** for their appeals, funding members are urged to provide support for a wider range of IMs rather than just their traditional partners, and should seriously consider giving a small amount of unallocated funding to any future appeals to enable the ACT CO to ensure that all IMs are able to participate in the ACT response.
24. The ACT CO is urged to continue the process of setting **realistic targets** for appeals based on their information from funding members of the likely resources available, to avoid raising unrealistic expectations on the part of IMs and requiring drastic revisions and prioritisation of their plans.
25. The IMs are recommended to be realistic and to listen to the advice of the ACT CO in their **appeal requests**, recognising that it benefits no-one to receive only a small percentage of the requested amount and is detrimental to planning, targeting and the quality of work.
26. The IMs and FMs together in Liberia are urged to investigate the new sources of **funding available locally** from UN and other sources, and work together in consortia to develop programmes that can access this funding co-branded together as ACT.

Annexes

Annex A – Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE

ACT RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS IN LIBERIA APPEALS

AFLR41, AFLR51 AND AFLR61

BACKGROUND

Since 2001, the ACT Alliance has been responding to the crisis created by the internal conflict in Liberia. At the end of 2003 a peace agreement was reached and slowly but surely the Liberian population has been consolidating it. With the elections at the end of 2005, all the conditions to return to normality in the country were met.

From 2001 to 2004, ACT members' activities in Liberia were mainly focussed on relief assistance to the internally displaced population. In 2005, ACT members started to provide assistance to the population to return and resettle in their communities of origin. During 2006, ACT, through the AFLR61 Appeal, continued supporting basic rehabilitation activities to facilitate the resettlement of the returnee population as set the basis for long term recovery. Therefore, 2006 is considered as a transitional year from relief to development activities, and the last year for the intervention of the ACT response to this crisis.

Considering the huge challenges that the country is facing and the need for ACT members in Liberia to move from relief to development activities in a smooth and appropriated way; and for the Alliance to learn about this process; the ACT CO will undertake an evaluation towards the end of 2006 of the ACT response to the emergency in Liberia over the period 2004-2006.

Purpose of the evaluation is:

- to assess the performance and impact of the past and current interventions;
- to provide a learning opportunity for future operations;
- to identify key issues to consider in the process to shift from humanitarian assistance to long term development

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

Section 1 – Process and Impact

General Impact: to evaluate the emergency response in order to determine how adequately the affected population was assisted through immediate and longer term impact of the assistance provided by the ACT members. This will consider gender, cultural and conflict sensitivities amongst others.

Appeal Goal and Objectives : to assess, for each ACT member, the degree of attainment of the goals and objectives as stated in the Appeals AFLR41, AFLR51 and AFLR61.

Factors facilitating or hampering appeal implementation : to assess, for each ACT member –

the timeliness, appropriateness, effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, gender-sensitivity, and flexibility of the response.

the level of participation of the affected communities in the needs assessment, planning and implementation.

the level of transparency and accountability towards the primary stakeholders and donors.

Sphere, Code of Conduct and Code of Conduct on sexual exploitation: to examine the extent to which SPHERE minimum standards, the NGO Code of Conduct and the ACT Code of Conduct on sexual exploitation are known and have been applied during the period of implementation . Particular emphasis should be given to the latter, considering the recommendations made by the WCC-ACT ecumenical mission after the 2002 Save the Children report.

Section 2 – Organizational Issues

Program tools : to assess, for each ACT member, the effectiveness of program tools utilised in the implementation of the response (needs assessment, human resources, administrative and financial systems, program equipment, reporting, internal evaluation and monitoring).

Comparative advantage of the ACT coordinated response : to review the advantages of the in-country ACT coordinated response as compared to a more traditional individual agency approach at all levels.

Collaboration: to review the way the response was implemented in relation to other (non-ACT members) institutional players, such as relevant national and local government departments (including the military), coordinating bodies, bi- and multilateral agencies, national and international NGOs, and the leadership of affected communities.

Implementing ACT members : to examine the effectiveness of implementing ACT members' response, and their degree of collaboration with each other, with third parties, and within the ACT mechanism. With reference to the inter-relation between the levels of Appeal budgets, funds raised and the implementation capacity of the ACT members, specific attention will be paid to the members' planning and operational systems, intervention approaches and cost-effectiveness of the humanitarian response.

Transition: to review the planning made by the implementing ACT members for the transition from relief activities to recovery and rehabilitation work.

Fundraising : to evaluate the effectiveness of the ACT AFLR41, AFLR51 and AFLR61 appeals as a fund-raising mechanism through the ACT Alliance.

Mandate : to consider the extent to which ACT was able to fulfil its emergency response mandate.

Information : to assess the flow of information between field, implementing members, ACT Coordinating Office in Geneva, and funding members.

Visibility and Perceptions : to review –

the degree of (corporate) identity of ACT at the various levels (target population, humanitarian relief organizations, national and international media, and implementing member agency staff etc.)

the extent to which the various stakeholders (people, government, other NGOs etc.) are aware of ACT-International and the programs and priorities of the ACT members involved in emergency response.

Section 3 – Outcome

Lessons learned from this appeal : to present a number of lessons learned - successes and failures - and make suggestions how these might be useful in future disaster appeals.

Lessons learned from the evaluation : to draw lessons from the experience of this appeal evaluation which in turn will benefit the further refinement of the ACT evaluation mechanism.

Recommendations

TIMETABLE

The ***Field Mission*** for this evaluation will take place in November 13-24, 2006 as reflected in the ***Mission Plan*** (*under preparation*).

The Field Mission will include briefing sessions at the start of the evaluation, as well as de-briefing sessions in the form of short workshops to discuss findings and recommendations involved, to feed into the draft final report.

STRUCTURE OF THE EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation will be coordinated by an external Team Leader who has the capacity to represent ACT and the ACT Alliance. In addition, there will be a national consultant.

The team members have been selected as follows :

Jenny Borden, Team Leader

James Yarsiah, Team member

The team combines the following experience: Humanitarian evaluations; knowledge of the region; political and cultural sensitivity; planning; disaster preparedness; co-ordination; humanitarian assistance; relief-to-development continuum; gender sensitivity.

The team leader will have specific responsibility related to the finalisation of the ToR and the preparation of the Mission Plan. She will also divide the task between the members of the team in consultation with them.

Each ACT member in Liberia will be invited to second one (senior) staff member to participate fully during the whole evaluation mission as partner representatives. These staff members will function both as resource persons and as active co-evaluators providing to the mission a participatory element. In the interests of neutrality and impartiality, the local partner representatives should not be directly responsible for implementation of the programmes but somehow involved in members humanitarian assistance or development activities and they should have knowledge of humanitarian assistance or development concepts. Inclusion of women as partner representatives is encouraged.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

In line with the *ACT Evaluation Guidelines*, April 2001, common principles and approaches will be followed –
a focus on impact at beneficiary-level
beneficiaries' perception of what the assistance provided did for them
participatory fieldwork
common interview approaches

The detailed approach will be developed by the members of the evaluation team during its initial team briefing/orientation + mission preparation and confirmed with the ACT members in Liberia. This will include sampling, tools, selection criteria etc.

An initial briefing will be held with ACT members together with an end-of-evaluation de-briefing workshop prior to the team's departure.

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

The draft final evaluation report shall be submitted by the Team Leader to the ACT-CO by 3rd December 2006.

All ACT members involved will get a maximum of 10 days to give comments for factual corrections to this draft report to be used by the Team Leader to finalize the report by 22 December 2006.

The Final Report will be distributed to the concerned implementing and funding members. The implementing members will be requested to provide their comments related to the findings and recommendations and to prepare a follow-up Action Plan.

The Final Report, with the comments of the implementing members, will be shared with ALNAP (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action).

October, 2006

G:\EVALUATIONS\Liberia 2006\ToR draft.doc

Annex B – Mission Plan

Appeal - Evaluation

Liberia Rehabilitation and Reconstruction – AFLR 61

Liberia Post War Rehabilitation – AFLR 51, AFLR 41

MISSION PLAN

Final Version – 13 November 2006

Introduction

The ACT Alliance has been responding to the crisis in Liberia through the ACT appeal mechanism since 2001. At the end of 2003 a peace agreement was reached and since then the Liberian population have been consolidating this. With the elections at the end of 2005 the process for a return to normality continued. The ACT appeals have therefore moved from relief assistance to the internally displaced population (from 2001 to 2004), through assistance to the population to return and resettle in their communities of origin (2005) and now through the 2006 appeal continued support of basic rehabilitation activities to facilitate the resettlement of the returnee population and set the basis for a long term recovery. The 2006 appeal is considered to be a transitional year from relief to development and as such the last year of the ACT International response to this crisis.

This evaluation, whilst concentrating on the 2006 appeal within which this evaluation is foreseen and funded, will look at the ACT intervention over the last three appeals – AFLR 41, AFLR 51 and AFLR 61. The three appeals, covering the period 2004 to 2006, presented programmes of work totalling over \$12 million but have not been the subject of a formal ACT evaluation to date. Given the extent of the intervention, the challenges facing the country, the number of ACT members involved and the length of co-ordinated intervention under the ACT appeal mechanism, it is thought appropriate to evaluate this work in the context of a lesson learning process which looks also at the way that the work has moved from relief to rehabilitation and considers how best the work done together can continue into development beyond 2006.

The purpose of the evaluation as set out in the terms of reference is:

- To assess the performance and impact of the past and current interventions
- To provide a learning opportunity for future operations
- To identify key issues to consider in the preparation of the process to shift from humanitarian assistance versus sustainable development.

This process is guided by the ACT Evaluation mechanism, the aim of which is to “enhance transparency and accountability, and allow for lessons to be learnt”. The evaluation process will look to determine the relevance and fulfilment of the objectives of the projects or programmes, to measure impact and effectiveness, as

well as how well resources were used, and to serve as an aid to future decision making.

The evaluation process will try to facilitate a learning process and is expected to provide recommendations for the ACT Implementing Members, the ACT Coordinating Office, the Funding Members as well as the ACT Alliance in general.

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference are based on the standard ACT evaluation terms of reference. They have been prepared by the ACT CO and reviewed by the team leader. They differ from the standard terms of reference in that they cover the ACT Alliance response to the crisis in Liberia over the last three years, rather than looking only at the response during one appeal. They also put a particular emphasis on looking at whether the ACT Code of Conduct on sexual exploitation is known and being applied, given the recommendations made by the WCC-ACT ecumenical mission in March 2002. The Terms of Reference are being shared with the implementing members and with the funding members to receive their final inputs and comments.

Background documentation on the Liberia Appeals

Appeal Liberia Rehabilitation and Reconstruction – AFLR 61 - Revision 1 February 2006

Appeal Liberia Post War Rehabilitation – AFLR 51 – Revision 2 – October 2005

Appeal Liberia Post War Rehabilitation – AFLR 51 – Revision 1 – March 2005

Appeal Liberia Post War Rehabilitation – AFLR 51 - February 2005

Appeal Liberia Post War Rehabilitation – AFLR 41 – Revision 2 – July 2004

Appeal Liberia Post War Rehabilitation - AFLR 41 – Revision 1 – May 2004

Appeal Liberia Post War Rehabilitation – AFLR 41 – March 2004

Final narrative and financial reports for AFLR 41 and AFLR 51 and Interim Reports for AFLR 61 from implementing members

Reports from ACT Co-ordinator in Liberia

Minutes of ACT Development meetings

Notes from Country Co-ordination Meetings

ACT Dateline and ACT Website

WCC-ACT ecumenical mission report, March 2002, and follow-up Action Plan, September 2002

ACT Forum Case Study report

The Evaluation Approach

The evaluation will seek to determine how adequately the affected population was assisted as a result of the assistance provided by the ACT members under the three appeals AFLR 41, AFLR 51 and AFLR 61. This assessment will be undertaken for each ACT member participating in the appeal, and will be assessed taking into account gender, cultural and conflict sensitivities. Each ACT member will also be assessed in relation to the degree of attainment of the goals and objectives as stated in the appeals. Through direct observations and interviews with beneficiaries and other stakeholders the degree of timeliness, appropriateness, effectiveness, cost-

effectiveness and flexibility of the interventions will be considered. Particular attention will be paid to the level of participation of the affected communities in the needs assessment, planning and implementation, and the extent to which the interventions have helped the affected population move away from dependency.

The extent to which the SPHERE minimum standards, the NGO Code of Conduct and the ACT Code of Conduct on sexual exploitation are known and have been applied will be looked at. Particular emphasis will be given to the attention given to and practice followed in relation to the ACT Code of Conduct on sexual exploitation, as requested in the terms of reference.

The evaluation will review the response in relation to others, particularly the relevant national and local government departments, the community leaders, the co-ordinating bodies and other national and international agencies and NGOs. It will also look at the degree of co-ordination and collaboration between the ACT implementing members and the impact of this on the appropriateness and quality of the interventions.

The programme tools and systems used by each of the ACT implementing members within the appeals will be considered. This will include looking at needs assessments, human resources and administrative and financial systems. It will consider the flow of information between field, implementing members, the ACT Coordinating office in Geneva and funding members.

The effectiveness of the fundraising efforts for the appeals will be considered and the way in which implementing members responded to the available funds in relation to the original appeal plans will be examined.

The visibility of the ACT assistance at the various levels will be looked at as will the degree to which the ACT response is known within the humanitarian community and at the level of national and international players in Liberia.

The evaluation will look at the successes and failures of the last three years in relation to the ACT assistance and the shift from relief to rehabilitation. From this it will draw out lessons for the future as the shift from rehabilitation to development takes place. These lessons will be discussed with the implementing members in the final debriefing and will lead to recommendations for the future in the final report.

Role of implementing members

The main implementing members in Liberia are the Christian Health Association of Liberia (CHAL), the Concerned Christian Community (CCC), the Liberian Council of Churches (LCC) and their implementing partners, the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the United Methodist Church of Liberia (UMC), the Lutheran Church of Liberia (LCL), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR).

It is intended that the evaluation should have a participatory character. Therefore it is hoped that implementing members will be actively involved in pre- and post briefings, field work, and - where needed - logistical support. It is recognised however that this

is a key work period for implementing members and note has been taken about their concerns regarding time inputs into the evaluation.

The evaluation will work closely with the staff of the local implementing partners. This is because they are the ones who maintain intensive contacts with the beneficiary communities and the evaluation will need to know the nature of this relationship and the capacity of these partners to implement ACT Appeal activities.

Each implementing member is asked to prepare in advance an **Evaluation File**, which should contain relevant documentation to support their programmes, including information on Appeal activities, needs assessments, recipients, intervention areas, time lines, organisational set-up, costs, funding, and monitoring systems.

In order to be able to evaluate against proposals – which is a mandatory evaluation exercise - the evaluation team must know exactly what activities are being done and there must be full transparency about what it has been possible of the original plans to achieve.

Role of Funding Members

A sample of funding members will be contacted prior to the evaluation to gather their expectations and all will be invited to comment on the terms of reference and mission plan. All funding members will be welcome at the briefing and debriefing meetings in Liberia, although it is recognised that this is most feasible for those who have representatives in Monrovia. The final evaluation will be shared with all funding members.

Intervention Sectors

Activities of the Appeals to be evaluated:

- Emergency food & non-food items
- Water & sanitation
- Health care
- Advocacy for the rights of the victims
- Gender orientation and activities
- Psycho-social assistance
- Rehabilitation of sustainable livelihoods
- Reconstruction
- Local and agency capacity building

Furthermore, the evaluation will assess the following Appeal support mechanisms:

Co-ordination between implementing members in Liberia in the context of the ACT Forum

Co-ordination with Government, other NGOs and UN bodies in Liberia

Co-ordination with the ACT CO in Geneva

Funding mechanisms

Intervention Areas

Over the last three years the implementing members of the appeals have worked in many areas in Liberia. Of the 15 counties of Liberia the ACT appeals have covered work in 10 counties, namely Bomi, Bong, Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Lofa, Margibi, Montserrado and Nimba Counties.

External Evaluators

A two person team has been selected to carry out this evaluation. The international team member and team leader is Ms Jenny Borden who knows the ACT Alliance well and has long experience in humanitarian and development programmes and has undertaken a number of evaluations. The local external team member is Mr. James Yarsiah who has long experience of humanitarian work in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Together they provide considerable experience and provide a gender balance to the team.

“Seconded” Mission Members

The ACT implementing members in Liberia are being invited to each recommend a staff member to accompany the external evaluators during field trips to their respective programme areas. These staff members will function both as resource persons and as active co-evaluators providing to the mission a participatory element. They will be selected by the implementing members on the basis of their intimate knowledge of the Appeal programme and intervention area, as well as their capacity to speak local languages and be conversant with English. The detailed tasks of these staff members will be further discussed during the initial briefing meeting, bearing in mind the time that they have available to assist with the evaluation.

Mission Programme

Date	Activity
Tues 24 Oct	Briefing meeting in Geneva
Sun 12 Nov	Arrival of team leader in Liberia
Mon 13 Nov	a.m. Meeting with local external evaluator, logistics co-ordinator and seconded members pm. Briefing meeting of ACT Alliance stakeholders in Liberia, (Directors and Focal persons).
Tues 14 Nov	Interviews with IMs and others in Monrovia
Wed 15 Nov	Interviews with IMs and others in Monrovia am depart for the field - pm
Thurs 16 Nov	Fieldwork
Fri 17 Nov	Fieldwork
Sat 18 Nov	Fieldwork
Sun 19 Nov	Reviewing and writing day
Mon 20 Nov	Morning interviews with IMs and others in Monrovia Afternoon - Fieldwork
Tues 21 Nov	Fieldwork
Wed 22 Nov	Interviews Monrovia and writing
Thurs 23 Nov	a.m. – team discussion p.m. – Debriefing meeting with ACT Alliance stakeholders in Liberia

Date	Activity
Fri 24 Nov	a.m. – Final interviews and discussion between evaluators p.m. – departure of team leader
Sat 25 Nov	Arrival Europe
Sun 3 Dec	First draft report to ACT CO
Mon 4 Dec	Distribution by ACT CO of draft report to IMs
Fri 15 Dec	All comments to be with team leader
Fri 22 Dec	Final report to ACT CO for distribution to ACT stakeholders

The final mission plan allows for one trip to the four counties in the north of the country, field work in Montserrado around Monrovia, and a full-day trip to the west of the country in Bomi County, selected in order to cover a good sample of the work of the different implementing members and the different sectors of work being undertaken.

Logistics

Co-ordination of logistics

ACT implementing members and their local partners will need to co-ordinate together to arrange for field visits to their respective programme areas including providing the following:

Vehicles

Drivers

Accommodation

Security arrangements

Communications

It is anticipated that the field visits to different parts of the country can cover some of the work of each of the implementing members and a sample of work in different sectors. There will therefore have to be good co-ordination between the implementing members to design these field trips with the evaluators and agreement between them about who will provide the necessary vehicle etc.

Evaluation Methodology

In line with the *ACT Evaluation Guidelines, April 2001*, common principles and approaches will be followed:

A focus on impact at beneficiary level

Beneficiaries' perception of what the assistance provided did for them

Participatory fieldwork

Common interview approaches

A detailed approach – interview methodology, programme output indicators, roles of different evaluation team members (including staff representatives) – will be developed by the evaluation team on the first morning of the evaluation and discussed and finalised between the evaluation team and the ACT implementing partners during the briefing meeting.

General issues for the evaluation methodology are as follows:

The results of any self-evaluations held by the ACT members in Liberia should be made available to the evaluation team in advance.

Before actual field visits take place, it should be clear to all stakeholders that there is an evaluation, why and what is being evaluated.

The evaluators will first speak to local agencies re the problems and challenges before visiting the area. There should be some time set aside for this type of pre-field discussions before community visits take place.

The evaluation will also try to take into account what has been done by other implementers (re duplication etc). ACT members and their local implementing agencies need to help the evaluators to access this type of information, preferably by preparing this for the Evaluation File before the evaluation.

Visits to areas with potential security problems, etc need to be well prepared and guided by the concerned implementing organisation.

There will be two categories of sample area: 1. Overlapping intervention areas (with many humanitarian actors present and more than one ACT IM), and 2. Non-overlapping intervention areas (with only a few humanitarian actors present and only one ACT IM). These different areas will require a somewhat different approach.

Those communities which have not yet undergone evaluations by other agencies will be prioritised for this ACT evaluation.

The evaluators will consider with whom they are going to the locality. If the person accompanying is not liked by the group interviewed, the interviewees may only provide negative responses and vice versa.

The indicators (qualitative and quantitative) used to measure programme activities achievements (outputs) at the community-level will be developed by the evaluation team and discussed and where necessary adapted during the briefing meeting.

Care and caution will be given to the local culture of the places visited. This is also with regards to whether people will or will not speak the truth. The evaluation will try to create sufficient mutual trust during the interviews for the true picture to be presented.

The evaluation shall seek to use impartial interpreters.

Regarding timing for meetings and interviews in the community, the evaluation will consider activities within the villages i.e. if they leave the village at certain times to go for agricultural work etc. Staff of the local implementing partners will need to give advice on the timing issue.

During the field work evaluators will spend ample time with each group or individual interviewed. This is to ensure that the communication will take place on the basis of mutual trust and that the full story will be able to be presented by the beneficiaries. Short-cuts in the interviewing process will be avoided as the emphasis is to respect people's dignity and possible trauma's.

Interviews will be held through casual talk in a good and safe environment by using a random selection of people and ensuring a gender balance.

Community-based groups, clergy and local field staff of the implementing agencies will all be key resources to the evaluation.

Collective story telling will be used as one way of stimulating communities to explain what impact the humanitarian response had on their relief and recovery.

The evaluation approach should be to improve the standards and not to find fault.

Generally, the evaluators will use a friendly approach, i.e. they will base the communication as much as possible on mutual trust (between the evaluators team and the community members), and they will explain that the evaluation is part of a lessons-learned process and aims at improving the programme and its activities.

The external evaluators will facilitate the fact-finding process and guide the implementing ACT members and their local partners to develop their own conclusions and lessons to be learned.

Feedback will be provided after data collection in the field to representatives of the programme beneficiaries and the ACT implementing members and local partners. The actual subjects to be discussed and the information to be sought from the field interviewing work will be established by the Evaluation Team on Day 1, based on the TOR.

The Evaluation debriefing workshop at the end of the mission will aim to reach consensus between the evaluators and the concerned ACT members regarding the final evaluation findings.

Evaluation Report

In line with the ACT evaluation guidelines and the TOR the final report should include the following¹:

Acknowledgements
Executive Summary
Introduction
Country situation and Appeal Context
Methodology
The Implementing Members and their programmes - assessments
Achievements and Beneficiary Impact
SPHERE, Code of Conduct, Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation
Capacity Development
Co-ordination and Collaboration within the ACT Alliance and with others
ACT funding members, funding analysis
Information flow and communication
ACT visibility
Main Conclusions and Lessons to be Learned
Recommendations
Annexes
Terms of reference
Mission Programme
Fieldwork Itinerary
List of Persons Interviewed
Attendees at briefing and debriefing meetings

Jenny Borden
Team Leader
13 November 2006

¹ To be finally determined in the light of the briefing and debriefing meetings.

Annex C – Detailed Fieldwork and meetings Itinerary

Date	Meeting
Tues 14 Nov am	LCL
Tues 14 Nov am	UMCOR
Tues 14 Nov am	YMCA
Tues 14 Nov pm	CHAL
Tues 14 Nov pm	UMC
Tues 14 Nov. pm	Diakonie Emergency Aid
Tues 14 Nov. pm	LWF/WS
Wed. 15 Nov. am	CCC
Wed. 15 Nov.	Depart for field work
Wed. 15 Nov. pm	Kakata YMCA
Wed. 15 Nov. pm	Salala IDP camp
Wed. 15 Nov. pm	Totota Youth Group
Night Gbanga	
Thurs. 16 Nov am	Panta Kai Integrated Rehabilitation Programme, Palalla
Thurs 16 Nov am	Beyon's Town
Thurs. 16 Nov pm	Curran Lutheran Hospital
Thurs. 16 Nov pm	Zorzor YMCA and visit to Watsan facilities
Night Zorzor	
Fri 17 Nov. am	LWF/WS Salayea Field Office
Fri 17 Nov. am	Lutheran Training Institute, Salayea District
Fri 17 Nov pm	Salayea Town
Fri 17 Nov pm	Gorlu Town
Night Saclepea	
Sat 18 Nov. am	Saclepea YMCA
Sat 18 Nov am	Ganta YMCA
Sat 18 Nov. pm	Return to Monrovia
Sun 19 Nov	Writing and reviewing day
Mon 20 Nov am	LCL HIV/AIDS Co-ordinator
Mon 20 Nov am	NCA
Mon 20 Nov am	UNHCR
Mon 20 Nov pm	Jah Tondo IDP camp
Mon 20 Nov pm	Joe Blow Town
Tues 21 Nov am	ACT Forum Chairman
Tues 21 Nov am	Kubono Shop
Tues 21 Nov am	Peri Town
Tues 21 Nov pm	Bajah Town
Tues 21 Nov pm	Tubmanburg
Wed 22 Nov am	WFP
Wed 22 Nov pm	LCC
Wed 22 Nov pm	LRRRC
Wed 22 Nov pm	Monitoring Steering Group
Thurs 23 Nov pm	De-briefing meeting at LDS
Fri 24 Nov	Final discussions and departure of external consultant

Annex D – List of Persons Interviewed

IN GENEVA

Genevieve Cyvoct – ACT Programme Assistant
Jill Hawke – ACT Development Consultant
Jessie Kgoreadira – ACT Finance Officer
Elsa Moreno – ACT Programme Officer

IN MONROVIA

Patrick Arkatia, Programme Officer, CCC
John Arku, Programme Consultant, YMCA
Leon Banks, Programme Officer, UNHCR
Kirsten Bjune, Psychosocial Adviser, NCA
Joseph Binda, Executive Director, LDS
Mariama Brown, National Director, CCC
Nelson Bryant, Project Officer, UMC
Isabelle Cyr, INGO Liaison Officer, Management Steering Group
Wheatonia Dixon-Barnes, Executive Director, LRRRC
James Gayflor, General Secretary, LCL
Ignatious George, Communications Officer and Peace and Advocacy Officer, CCC
James Goaneh, Programme Co-ordinator CHAL
Gotomo Gordon, Reintegration Officer, LRRRC
Birgit Heinloth, Regional Representative, DEA
Peter Kamai, General Secretary, YMCA
Jonathan Karpah, Research Assistant, UMC
Kai Kelly, Emergency Officer, LWF/WS
Charles Kennah, Finance Officer, CCC
Orphelia Kennedy, Desk Officer for Young Women, UMC
James Kingsley, Acting General Secretary, Assistant to General Secretary, LCC
Elke Lerdel, Regional Representative, LWF/WS
Geir Lindahl, Programme Co-ordinator, NCA
Lorpu Mannah, Women's Desk Officer, LCL and Chair LCL Relief Committee
Lee Mason, Programme Officer, DEA
James Moore, Director Zorzor, YMCA
Marion Narmah, Head of School Feeding, WFP
Leo Otieno, Finance Director, UMCOR
Lester Payne, Development Secretary, YMCA
Leviticus Roberts, Special Assistant, LRRRC
Julius Sele, Programme Officer, YMCA
Sheiku Sillah, Programme Manager, UMCOR
Rita Soveri, Head of Development Co-operation Unit, FCA
Peter Svensson, Project Co-ordinator, LWF/WS
Joseph Theoway, Director of Connexional Ministries, UMC
James Wakor, Director Magibi, YMCA
Ellen Williams, Executive Director, CHAL

Christiana Wilson, Protection Officer, LWF/WS
Alascal Wisner, former ACT Co-ordinator, NCA Assistant
Edward Yarkpazio, Resident Representative, LWF/WS
Mercy Zarway, Psychosocial Counsellor, CCC

IN BOMI COUNTY

Bajah Town

Mazoe Barclay, Supervisor and pastry teacher
Gloria Donan, beneficiary
Bindu Jah, soap and tie die teacher
Pauline Kokulo, beneficiary
Jah Puaye, beneficiary
Jumah Sano, beneficiary
Barton Sheriff, beneficiary
Hawa Teweh, tailoring teacher

Tubmanburg

Maria Massaquoi, Regional Supervisor and Pastry teacher
Melisse Wilson, Senior Psychosocial counsellor

IN BONG COUNTY

Panta Kpair Integrated Rehabilitation Development Project, Palalla

Willie Peters, Training and Extension Officer
John Walker, Paramount Chief
Frank Woodtor, Project Manager
Approximately 15 women from the adult literacy class, participants in the gender based violence/sexual exploitation workshop and trainers.

Salala IDP camp

One male group and one female group of IDPs remaining in the camp after the camp which had been managed by LWF/WS had been closed in June 2006.

Totota YMCA Youth Group

Emmanuel Momo – Site Co-ordinator
five peer educators from the outreach group.

IN LOFA COUNTY

Beyan's Town, Salayea District

Oyango Beyan – Town Chief
Forku Noko – Chief Elder
And 25 participants of whom seven women.

Curran Lutheran Hospital, Zorzor District

Timothy Cleta, General Co-ordinator
Bakolleh Jockai, EPI Supervisor
Edna Johnson, Programme Development

LWF/WS office, Lutheran Training Institute, Salayea District

Daniel Garyon, Construction Supervisor
Nathaniel Gayflor, Health and Hygiene Promoter
Joesph Genryan, Psychosocial Counsellor
Jerry Jah, Health and Hygiene Promoter
Matthew Sangbe, Agricultural Supervisor
Rufus Srafe, Project Manager,
David Vallah, Protection Officer for Bong and Lofa Counties

LWF/WS internal audit team on mission at the Salayea District Office

Yarwatha Jallah, monitoring team member
Porlam Morris, monitoring team member
Koaulo Nyanquoi, Accountant
Emmanuel Yarkpazua, Team Leader, monitoring and project manager Todee District

Lutheran Training Institute, Salayea District

Esther Thomas, Co-ordinator Lutheran training Institute

Salayea Town

Lavala Macarthy, Town Chief

Gorlu Town, Salayea District

Nowat Agree, woman beneficiary
Miriam Golwolle, woman beneficiary
Korpu Gorlu, woman beneficiary
James Keculah, Town elder and Community Health Worker
Ommar Lewis, Town Chief

Zorzor YMCA

Huskins Gaydeh, Deputy Director
James Mo, Director
Emmanuel Zissi, Psychosocial Counsellor
And eight peer educators of whom three were women.

IN MARGIBI COUNTY

Kakata YMCA Youth Centre

Dominic Goodrack, Psychosocial counsellor
Victoria Kollie, Vice-President, Youth Council
Henry Koy, Station Manager
Harris Mulbah, President, Youth Council
Francis Senkpanie, Youth Director

Joe Blow Town

Eddie Gibson, Town Chief
Emmanuel Konboyon, Chairman of Flood Committee
Joel Zanar, Assistant Town Chief
14 other town beneficiaries of whom five were women

IN MONTSERRADO COUNTY

Jah Tondo, IDP camp

Jyomo Deline, Head of TBAs
Emmanuel Dongbo, Youth Leader
Jaygan Flomo, displaced former LWF/WS assistant
Joseph Foday, Head of Elders
Marie Lewis, Camp Co-Chairman
David Massaquoi, Relief Supervisor, LWF/WS
Stephen Moore, Camp Chairman
Manjartu Porte, landlady
Koppo Santo, Chairperson for Camp women
Balla Smith, General Secretary for camp

Kubono Shop

Juah Gbo, beneficiary
Edrth Kamayam, Tailoring teacher
Henry Moton, Town Elder
Marsha Seh, beneficiary
Famata Teah, beneficiary
Zo Vani, soap teacher
Martha Vertier, Supervisor and pastry teacher

Peri Town

Matta Sirleaf, Senior Psychosocial Counsellor
Tenneh Paassawe, beneficiary

IN NIMBA COUNTY

Ganta YMCA

Nau Baar, Adolescent and Reproductive Health Regional Co-ordinator
Nau Darliah, Psychosocial Counsellor
Joseph Garmie, Executive Director, Ganta YMCA
Gwendolyn Gborweah, Youth Director
Ko Kwazah, Psychosocial counsellor
James Sayekardamie, Psychosocial counsellor

Saclepea YMCA

Amara Dahn, Youth Co-ordinator
Debbie Dent, Psychosocial Counsellor
Josiah Joseph, HIV/AIDS supervisor
Charles Luogen, Executive Director
Archie Mahn, Site Co-ordinator, psychosocial programme
Victor Marshall, Psychosocial counsellor
Prince Wallace, member of Youth Council

BY TELEPHONE

Luke Asikoye, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, USA
Caroline Grelsson, West Africa Programme Officer, Church of Sweden
Maria Lundberg, Executive Programme Officer, Church of Sweden

Annex E – Attendees at briefing and debriefing meetings

Briefing Meeting – 13th November 2006

Jenny Borden, ACT Evaluation team
Mariama Brown, CCC
James Gayflor, LCL and ACT Forum Chairman
James Goaneh, CHAL
James Kingsley, LCC
Elke Leidel, LWF/WS
Lee Mason, DEA
Julius Sele, YMCA
Peter Svensson, LWF/WS
Ellen Williams, CHAL
Edward Yarkpazio, LWF/WS
James Yarsiah, ACT Evaluation team

De-briefing Meeting – 23rd November 2006

Patrick Ackatia, CCC
Kirsten Bjune, NCA
Jenny Borden, ACT Evaluation team
Mariama Brown, CCC
James Gayflor, LCL
James Kingsley, LCC
Johanna Leppinen, FCA
Elke Lerdel, LWF/WS
Geir Lindahl, NCA
Lorpu Mannah, LCL
Younger Monibah, LDS
Leo Otieno, UMCOR
Shieku Sillah, UMCOR
Peter Svensson, LWF/WS
Joesph Theoway, UMC
Christiana Wilson, LWF/WS
Alascal Wisner, NCA
Edward Yarkpazio, LWF/WS
James Yarsiah, ACT Evaluation team

Annex F – Outline questionnaire and checklist for focus groups and interviews with beneficiaries

What were the achievements of ACT in your area? Can you remember anything especially noticeable about their work?

What benefits did you individually and collectively achieve from ACT? What kinds of materials/supplies/services did ACT provide? How have they been used? Were there any problems? If so, what problems?

What were the roles of women and men in the programme? How were women particularly involved?

Were there any requests for anything in return for participating in programme/getting supplies and services? Did you have to participate in any particular activities in order to be included in the programme? Was there anything that you were uncomfortable about?

Did the ACT programme lead to any conflict? Discuss the conflicts and how they were handled?

How were you consulted about what should be done? Were your suggestions taken into account? How did you participate in decision making about the programme?

How many organisations were working in your area? How did this affect you? Were they doing the same things or different things? How could you tell that the programme was carried out by an ACT member rather than someone else?

Any final comments: on the strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures of the ACT programme in the area.

Annex G – Outline questionnaire and checklist for interviews with ACT Implementing Members

For each organization – number of staff, age of organization, gender composition of staff, present external support, vision and mission, board and decision making, PME systems, financial controls, sustainability, relations with government and others in Liberia.

What are they doing, what have they done in last three years, what are the problems and achievements, how are activities changing in relation to current situation, were the appeal objectives met? If not fully, why not? How many beneficiaries did they reach with what kind of assistance?

When did they first work in the area, what needs assessments, base line surveys were carried out?

What resources were used for the appeals? What monitoring system was in place to ensure proper utilization of resources?

Were interventions timely? Could they have been done things more cost effectively? Did they make people more dependent on assistance or did they help them to take initiatives and see their potential?

Gender issues – in relation to staff, beneficiaries, participation and representation, gender headed households. Were there particular gender or cultural issues that had to be dealt with?

Were there issues that were sources of conflict in the area served? How did the intervention deal with these factors?

Sphere standards – is the project known, do they have a handbook, have any staff been on training, are Sphere standards being used, was it possible to meet them and were standards appropriate.

Code of Conduct – is CoC known, do they have copy, have they signed up, has training been received, has it been possible to adhere to code, are there any difficulties, are situations of abuse apparent.

Code of Conduct on Sexual Exploitation – is Code known, have all staff members signed, has training been received, have there been any instances of abuse and what measures taken.

What are advantages and disadvantages of being in ACT appeal, what has been engagement and benefit of ACT Forum – network. How was the flow of information between field and Monrovia, and between Monrovia and Geneva and the funding agencies?

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What collaboration has there been with other ACT members, and with others (Government, UN, other INGOs etc)? What measures were taken to avoid duplication of efforts?

What means were made to make ACT visible? Were there any particular issues concerning visibility?

Comments on funding and funding mechanism and how they responded to available funds rather than original appeal budgets?

Final comments: overall rating of the success of the ACT intervention undertaken by their organization during 2004 – 2006. What failures and weaknesses? What achievements that can be used to plan and carry out longer term programmes? General suggestions to improve ACT interventions.

