

# Rebuilding Agricultural Capacity in Post Conflict Countries: The Liberian Experience



# INTRODUCTION

Alfred Adler “It is easier to Fight for One’s Principles than to Live Up to them”



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# BACKGROUND

Liberia is endowed with a lot of natural resources

- Fertile Soil
- Abundant rainforest-estimated between 9,000 hectares and 1.44 Million hectares
- Abundant wild life
- Natural plant, products and wood
- Several natural big rivers-St. John, St. Paul, etc.
- Many waterfalls-Kpatawe, St. John, LAC, etc.
- Off land-we have discovered oil and natural gas
- Various fish species
- Good costal land for tourism



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# Aim

## Successes and Possible Approaches in Addressing Challenges of NRM and Agricultural Capacity in Post- Conflict Liberia



# SCOPE

- I. Challenges of Socio-economic factors on NRM and agri-capacity
- II. Constraints and approaches to addressing them
- III. Relative successes of implementing agriculture program in Liberia



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# Challenges of Implementing Agricultural Program in Liberia

- **UNIVERSITIES**

- General decline in standards
- Increasing irrelevance in curriculum
- Graduates ill-prepared for work
- Poor contribution from higher education to Liberian economic growth
- High non-completion rate (3000 enrolled in engineering @ UL, 30 graduates )
- High failure rates (23,000 take entrance exam, 9,000 enrolled)
- 50% studying business and management

- **HIGH SCHOOLS**

- Most high schools – no books
- High school teachers: low literacy and numeracy
- No careers advice
- No electricity, no computers
- No understanding of ‘why’
- WAEC results



# Socio-Economic Constraints

- Electricity
- Lack human capital to harness natural resources
- Mismanagement of natural resources
- Lack of investment in the Agricultural sector
- Our natural resources are at risks because of current policies, practices
- Career Development Challenges of Students in the Natural Sciences.
- Lack of funding for students despite the genuine needs.

# Successes & Possible Approaches

- Advocating for stringent laws prohibiting the desecration of national reserves (e.g. Sapo National Park) Student led project
- Promoting Sustainable harvesting and utilization of natural forest and wild life (short courses)
- Creating awareness on NRM and agriculture (outreach programs: Smart Start, Fast Start & Summer Start)
- Improved faculty-Training of man power at the university level (regional and U.S Universities)
- Develop a new relevant curriculum
- Internship-Establish links with employers
- Scholarships (increase female participation)
- Laboratories
- Student Services



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# CONCLUSION :RECAP OF PRESENTATION

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Focus on Quality: Invest in Pipeline Programs to reach out to high school students.
- Leveraging Partnerships: Sustainability



# Intervention



## Smart Start

- High School visits
- 1 day
- Excite and enthuse students
- Demonstrate possibilities
- Social marketing

## Fast Start

- 2 week residential
- 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> grade
- Prepare students for college
- Expand their minds for opportunities

## Summer Start

- Prepare students for upcoming year and jobs
- Incoming freshmen and sophomores
- Emphasis on soft skills
- Expand horizons for their careers
- 4 week residential

# Partnerships



**Peace Corps**



**Teaching institutes**



**Local NGOs**



**Communities**



**Private enterprises**



**THANK YOU!**

