BDS Terms of Reference

**EPAG Round Three**

Component 1: Literacy, life skills, and business development skills training with micro-enterprise advisory services

**I. Background:**

1. With the completion of the EPAG pilot project (September 2009 – December 2012), which was funded by the Nike Foundation and Government of Denmark, the Government of Liberia has engaged the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to fund a third round of EPAG training. EPAG Round Three funds will be administered by the World Bank. EPAG Round Three maintains its focus on increasing employment and earnings among adolescent girls and young women and will target 1,000 adolescent girls and young women (16-24 years); 575 in Greater Monrovia and Kakata, and 425 in Grand Bassa County. EPAG Round Three has six components:

1. Literacy, life skills, and business development skills training with micro-enterprise advisory services.
2. Life skills and job skills training for wage employment, combined with job placement assistance.
3. EPAG Round Three quantitative and qualitative research.
4. Institutional strengthening of MoGD’s Adolescent Girls Unit.
5. Developing a version of the EPAG project for adolescent boys and young men.
6. Developing a “factory system” agricultural project model for youth.

2. EPAG is an important initiative that supports the Government of Liberia’s prioritization of youth development and employment for young women. Round Three will be comprised of 82% business development skills (BDS) training and 18% job skills (JS) training. The EPAG project is part of the World Bank’s global “Adolescent Girls Initiative.” The Ministry of Gender & Development (MoGD), through the Adolescent Girls Unit (AGU) and the EPAG Project Implementation Unit (PIU), is responsible for managing the EPAG project. The lessons learned from the first two rounds of the EPAG project have greatly informed the project design for EPAG Round Three, as detailed in these terms of reference.

**II. Objectives for this assignment:**

3. The overall project development objective for EPAG Round Three is to increase self and wage employment for 1,000 young women. The project will focus on girls ages 16-24. The project will also strengthen the institutional capacity of the Adolescent Girls Unit at the Ministry of Gender & Development, design a version of the EPAG project for adolescent boys and young men, and develop a “factory system” project model.

4. The specific objective for project Component 1 is to economically and socially empower 815 adolescent girls and young women via literacy, life skills, and business development skills training with micro-enterprise advisory services. 300 of these girls will be based in Greater Monrovia, Montserrado County; 155 based in Kakata, Margibi County; and 360 in Grand Bassa County.

**III. Scope of services and tasks:**

*Overview of Component One*

5. Given the slow pace of job growth for formal wage employment, the majority of trainees (82% - 815 girls) in EPAG Round Three will take part in the business development skills (BDS) training for self-employment. This segment of the project will work with adolescent girls and young women primarily between the ages of 16-24. The selection criteria will be designed to screen for girls who have limited literacy and schooling (but not zero literacy). BDS trainees will fall within the “NEET” categorization as much as possible (“NEET” = not in education, employment, or training).

6. The EPAG classroom training under Component 1 will last for four months (16 weeks). The training package will include 12 hours of business development skills and life skills training per week, complemented by 4 hours of literacy / numeracy skills training per week. The classroom training phase will be followed by a five month placement phase during which the trainees will be supported in their transition from the classroom to the world of work. The business development skills trainees will be coached as they start micro-enterprises. The service providers will provide targeted refresher training and link trainees to micro-franchise and business capital opportunities (particularly through a “savings match scheme”).

*Project timeline*

7. The project timeline for EPAG Round Three is included in the table below. This timetable differs from the EPAG pilot in that it is a condensed—compressing the classroom training phase into four months and the placement and support phase into five months. A detailed description of each phase can be found later in these terms of reference.

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| **ROUND THREE TIMELINE** | | |
| **PHASE** | **DESCRIPTION** | **DATES** |
| **Phase One** | Project preparation (four months) | mid-May through mid-September 2013 |
| **Phase Two** | Classroom training (four months) | mid-September 2013 through January 2014[[1]](#footnote-1) |
| **Phase Three** | Placement and support  (five months) | February through June 2014 |
| **Phase Four** | Project evaluation and closing  (one month) | July 2014 |

*Trainee allocations*

8. The BDS training will take place in three main locations: 1) Greater Monrovia, Montserrado County; Kakata, Margibi County; and Grand Bassa County. The provisional trainee allocation for Round Three is included in the table below. The four communities noted for Greater Monrovia (Chicken Soup Factory, GSA Community, ELWA Community, Red Light – Gorbachop) may shift during the initial month of the project preparation phase, in consultation with MoGD. Moreover, four communities will be identified in Grand Bassa County on the basis of a rapid assessment and in consultation with MoGD and the JS service provider.[[2]](#footnote-2)

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| **#** | **Community** | **Business development skills trainees** |
| **1** | Chicken Soup Factory\*  Greater Monrovia | 75 girls |
| **2** | GSA Community\*  Greater Monrovia | 75 girls |
| **3** | ELWA Community\*  Greater Monrovia | 75 girls |
| **4** | Red Light (Gorbachop)\*  Greater Monrovia | 75 girls |
| **5** | Kakata  Margibi County | 155 girls |
| **6** | Grand Bassa County  (4 communities - TBD) | 360 girls |
| **TOTAL BDS:** | | **815 girls** |
| *\*These four provisionally identified communities may shift during the initial month of project preparation phase, in consultation with MoGD.* | | |

*Round Three design innovations*

9. Round Three of the EPAG project incorporates design innovations based on research, experiences, and lessons learned. The four key design innovations are: 1) for the business development skills component, incorporating start-up capital for micro-enterprises through a “savings match scheme;” 2) for the job skills component, partnering directly with private sector companies at the outset and delivering specifically tailored skills training packages to ensure higher employment rates for job skills trainees; 3) condensing the training timetable across the training in order to maximize impact and cost effectiveness; and 4) designing trainee profiles specific to business or job skills training and recruiting participants accordingly.

Savings match scheme

Findings from the Round Two exit poll are paramount in guiding Round Three. The second exit poll report calls for a more structured way to bridge the gap between business training and actual business start-up. EPAG Round Three’s response to this call is to implement a “savings match scheme” for business development skills trainees. The savings match approach will enable girls to earn additional start-up capital based on training attendance and savings behavior. This “win-win” situation will support higher performance in the classroom training and stronger performance as the trainees’ start or grow their businesses in the real world.

Formalized agreements for job skills training and placements

The preliminary findings from EPAG’s impact evaluation are also instructive. Not unexpectedly, the impact study shows higher employment rates for business development skills trainees than job skills trainees. Therefore, breaking away from the pilot design to take a more strategic approach to maximize wage employment outcomes in Round Three is crucial.

During Round Three, private sector partners will continue to be consulted and encouraged to play a key role in programs such as Entrepreneur Fair, but direct partnerships with—and employment commitments from—key companies will comprise a new approach to job skills training and placement that is expected to maximize employment rates for job skills trainees. This new approach is based on experiences with the EPAG pilot and feedback from the private sector. During the EPAG pilot, many private sector partners made promises to employ EPAG trainees, but unfortunately—for various reasons—those promises did not always materialize into job placements. The approach in Round Three is more targeted, direct, and official with mutual benefits to both the employer and the employee. As part of this new approach, about a third of the Round Three job skills trainees will be formed into business groups which will create formal businesses to be contracted for service provision by larger companies. Round Three job skills trainees will receive skills training specifically tailored to the needs of the private sector partners—beyond what was done during the EPAG pilot phase. Also, the proportion of Round Three job skills trainees has been reduced in order to optimize the chances for placement by service providers (BDS = 82% vs. JS = 18%).

Targeted trainee profiles

For the EPAG pilot, recruitment of trainees aimed—as much as possible—to enroll a random sample of the eligible population. This was important for the pilot project’s impact evaluation study in order to see what the impacts of the project were on a cross-section of girls, i.e. not only those “most likely to succeed.” For Round Three, however, the trainee profiles will be specifically designed for the business and job skills trainings, based on experiences to date and lessons learned (as outlined below).

* The BDS trainees will be between 16 and 24 years of age and fall within the “NEET” categorization as much as possible (“NEET” = not in education, employment, or training). The selection criteria will be designed to screen for girls who have limited (but not zero) literacy and schooling.
* JS trainees will be between 20 and 24 years of age and will comprise a mixture of high school dropouts, high school students (night school is okay), and high school graduates.[[3]](#footnote-3) The selection criteria will be designed to screen for girls who have more advanced literacy skills and schooling than the business development skills trainees.

Condensed training timetable

The training timetable for EPAG Round Three will be condensed in order to maximize cost effectiveness while maintaining quality standards. The classroom training phase will be four months (instead of six) and the placement and support phase will be five months (instead of six). The total training hours, however, will only be somewhat reduced. The EPAG team and service providers are confident that it will be possible to successfully condense and deliver the training.

*Training timetable*

10. The provisional detailed classroom raining timetable for EPAG Round Three is included below:

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| EPAG ROUND THREE – CLASSROOM TRAINING TIMETABLE | | | |
|  | Technical and life skills training | Literacy / numeracy training |  |
| Business development skills | 4 days a week  3 hours a day  = 192 hours total | 4 hours per week  = 64 hours total | 16 hours a week  = 256 total |
| Job skills | 4 days a week  4.5 hours a day  = 288 hours total | 1.5 hours per week  = 24 hours total | 19.5 hours a week  = 312 total |

*Implementing partners*

11. The Ministry of Gender & Development will hire one service provider under these terms of reference: International Rescue Committee (IRC). IRC and its implementing partners will be assigned a total of 815 trainees. Educare and the National Adult Education Association of Liberia (NAEAL) will deliver business development and life skills training. NAEAL will also deliver the literacy / numeracy strengthening component. These implementing partners are the strongest performing BDS / literacy training sub-contractors from the EPAG pilot.

12. As with the EPAG pilot, IRC’s sub-contracts will include a hybrid structure of time-based and performance-based payments. The use of performance-based payments is intended to send a clear message to the implementing partners that the quality of training delivery must be as high as possible. IRC’s sub-contracts with Educare and NAEAL will follow a similar payment schedule as administered during the EPAG pilot, including a ten percent Withheld Incentive Payment (WIP) disbursed according to the number of girls who successfully complete the training and are placed into wage or self employment, satisfying set criteria. As with the EPAG pilot, reported business and job placements will be verified and authenticated (per individual trainee) by the PIU according to set indicators in order to calculate the WIP amount to be paid.

*Implementing EPAG Round Three: Component 1*

13. IRC and its implementing partners are expected to perform the following core tasks under these terms of reference:

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| **#** | **TASK** | **DESCRIPTION** |
| **A** | Rapid assessments in Grand Bassa County | At the outset of the project preparation phase, it will be important to conduct rapid assessments in Grand Bassa County on issues such as rural girls’ needs, demographics, labor and market surveys. These assessments must be planned in concert with the EPAG PIU and the JS service provider in order to maximize effectiveness and share resources. The rapid assessment reports will be due by late June 2013. |
| **B** | Community entry and assessments | Careful and systematic community entry is essential. The “Community Entry and Assessment Guideline” developed during Round One should be adapted and MoGD representation must be involved in at least one initial meeting per community. |
| **C** | Community engagement and events | Good relationships should be cultivated with the Round Three communities, particularly with parents, boyfriends, and husbands to encourage support of the EPAG trainees. It is expected that the service providers will organize at least two community events in each community over the course of Round Three. Community events are important for two main reasons: 1) They offer a chance to educate the community about the project and manage expectations—particularly about what the project will and will not do. 2) Community events also provide a space for celebration and camaraderie for the EPAG participants. In the case of the centralized job skills training where trainees are from various communities, the JS service provider will cluster communities and have six community events in total. Four in Greater Monrovia and two in Grand Bassa. |
| **D** | Trainee recruitment | Trainee recruitment will be conducted by the service providers with oversight and support from EPAG / MoGD. The recruitment strategy and criteria will be developed together with the EPAG PIU. Recruitment should start no later than June 2013. Recruitment in Round Three will be tailored to meet specifically designed trainee profiles for business and job skills training. Based on lessons learned from the EPAG pilot, careful demographic assessments and testing of the recruitment methodologies will be done prior to the commencement of actual recruitment activities. Transparency in the selection process will be of paramount importance. |

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| **E** | Training venues | The service providers are responsible for identifying and obtaining the rights to use (including paying any costs) appropriate training venues in its assigned communities. Key criteria in scouting for training venues include considerations of: 1) safety and security; 2) sanitation, access to safe drinking water, clean bathrooms; 3) spacious, well-ventilated, illuminated. The EPAG PIU will assess all venues using the “Training Venue Inspection Checklist” prior to the start of training to ensure high quality venue standards. The service providers are responsible for ensuring proper janitorial and security services exist at the venues. Chalkboards, whiteboards, flipcharts, and chairs are all to be arranged by the service provider. The service providers are also responsible for obtaining educational posters for the classroom walls with relevant messages about women’s empowerment, preventing GBV, using condoms, HIV / STI treatment and care, etc. Each training venue must have a signboard identifying it as an EPAG site. |
| **F** | Private sector engagement | Strong ties with the private sector are essential to the success of EPAG Round Three. EPAG’s “Guideline for Engaging the Private Sector” will be adapted for use in Round Three for the business development skills training track, with particular emphasis on micro-finance and micro-franchising. The job skills training track in Round Three will incorporate direct partnerships with private sector companies at the outset, delivering specifically tailored skills training packages to ensure higher employment outcomes for job skills trainees. As part of this new approach, about a third of the Round Three job skills trainees will be formed into business groups which will create formal businesses to be contracted for service provision by larger companies. |
| **G** | Trainee Mobilizers | Trainee Mobilizers were used to great effect in Round Two and will also form part of Round Three’s project design. Whenever possible (e.g. in Montserrado and Margibi), Trainee Moblizers will be EPAG graduates. These part-time mobilizers will work for two months during the community entry, recruitment, orientation period during Phase One. They will also come back on board during Phase Three to assist with trainee business / job monitoring for an additional two months. For these activities, the service providers should plan to pay the Trainee Mobilizers USD $70.00 per month, plus a $5.00 scratch card allotment and a $10.00 transportation allowance per month. For BDS: The service provider should plan to hire one Trainee Mobilizer for about every 40 trainees (~ 20 total). For JS: The service provider should plan to hire three Trainee Mobilizers during Phase One and four mobilizers during Phase Three. |

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| **H** | EPAG Teams | As with the EPAG pilot, Round Three will incorporate the EPAG Team Approach. Following the “EPAG Team Approach Guideline,” the girls will be grouped into teams of 3-4 girls. The groupings will be done jointly by the girls and their trainers. The girls will be counseled to pick other girls who are not necessarily their best friends. The trainers will help to mix skill-levels within the groups—i.e. mix someone who is stronger in reading and writing with someone who is not. For the most part, groupmates should be within similar age-ranges and live near one another. The objective of the EPAG Team Approach is for EPAG trainees to support one another, both inside and outside the classroom. These teams add value to the training experience and help to improve attendance because members look out for one another. |
| **I** | EPAG Coaches | Following the model used during Round Two, EPAG Round Three will use EPAG Coaches. EPAG has one “coach” in each classroom (approximately 25 trainees). These are respected community women who function as a mother (“play ma”) for the class. The coaches are able to assist the trainers in classroom management and follow up with absentee or troubled trainees. They also benefit from the training itself and receive certificates during the EPAG graduation. Coaches will receive a volunteer “coaching stipend” of USD $50.00 per month for the nine months of EPAG Round Three. The stipend payment is to compensate the coach for transportation costs and other incidental costs incurred by serving as a coach. Additionally, a savings account is opened for each coach by the service provider (with a USD $5.00 deposit). If the coach already has an account, the deposit is made into her existing account. Lastly, the coaches receive a $10.00 scratch card allotment for each of the nine months of EPAG Round Three. The scratch card allotment is to enable to coach to communicate with her trainees and the EPAG trainers. Coaches should be recruited at least one month prior to the start of the classroom training. For BDS: The service provider should plan to work with the coaches for the entire nine month training period. For JS: The service provider should plan to work with the coaches only for Phase Two (classroom training). The JS service provider will then hire two In-Service Training / Field Officers to coach the girls during the placement phase. |
| **J** | Childcare services | As per the model established with the EPAG pilot project, childcare services will be offered during Round Three’s classroom training phase. The project found that the availability of childcare significantly increased the participation and retention of young mothers. As such, Round Three service providers will deliver childcare services onsite and in accordance with the “EPAG Childcare Guideline.” The room used as a nursery should be nearby the training classroom, but not in the same room as the training is conducted. Basic sanitation and first aid supplies should be provided by the service provider, e.g. clean water, soap, first aid kit, etc. Clean mattresses, blankets, towels, snacks, and some toys should also be provided. As detailed in the EPAG Childcare Guideline, only children between the ages of 0-5 years will be admitted to childcare services. Each girl will be limited to a maximum of two or her own children. It is advised that each site has two EPAG child caregivers responsible for childcare, and that they have some background or minimum training in First Aid or Nurse Aid. (Please note: If classes are running concurrently, more than two child caregivers may be required at a time.) It is recommended that the EPAG Child Caregivers are paid USD $75.00 per month. It is encouraged to pair experienced Child Caregivers with EPAG graduates to work as caregivers. |
| **K** | Trainee stipends | The “Girls’ Vulnerability Assessment,” conducted in 2008, provided a detailed background study to inform the design of the EPAG project. The assessment found that one of the main barriers to the success of the project is the conflict the girls face between spending time in training and spending time earning money to support themselves and their families. This research informed the decision to budget for a trainee stipend during the pilot project. The trainee stipend pays for transportation and allows for small-scale savings and capital investment. During Round Three, BDS trainees will receive USD $1.75 for each day she attends session on time. The stipend will be administered on a bi-weekly or monthly basis. JS trainees will also receive a stipend valued on a sliding scale based on distances traveled (because the JS venues will be centrally located in Round Three). Please note: The trainee stipend is only for the classroom training phase. |
| **L** | Savings accounts | During the first and second months of classroom training, the service providers will open savings accounts at local banks for all EPAG trainees. These accounts will include initial deposits of equivalent USD $5.00. Please note that, in order to meet the bank’s requirements for opening savings accounts, all girls will need photo ID cards. As such, the service providers should plan to produce EPAG trainee identification cards (with photos) for the girls. |
| **M** | Savings match | For the business development skills component, a “saving match” scheme will be implemented in order to provide increased start-up capital for micro-enterprises. After two months of training, BDS girls who have achieved at least 75% or higher attendance will be eligible to receive a 100% “saving match” in the form of a deposit into their savings account. This is a performance-based arrangement to reward good savings behavior. Based on the total trainee stipend each girl has elected to save (and withheld by the service provider), that amount will be matched in full through a savings match. For example, if during two months of training a girl has “saved” 12 days worth of stipend (12 x $1.75 = $21.00), she will receive an additional $21.00 deposit into her savings account. The savings match deposits will be administered as quickly as possible (in not more than three weeks) in order to provide start-up capital early in the training cycle. At the end of the classroom training, a second savings match will be administered, calculated based on the next two months of training. In all cases the saving match will be used as a teaching opportunity to learn how to save and invest money. Please note: Trainees will be capped at saving not more than 75% of their stipend per month (e.g. 12 days / $21.00 maximum per month) for the match.  Please note: The savings match is only for the BDS training. The JS training in Round Three will provide “completion bonuses” of USD $20.00 if trainees achieve a minimum of 75% attendance. This is the same model as the EPAG pilot. The JS program will also run a “business group match” scheme for its four business groups to help facilitate formal registration, purchasing equipment and uniforms, etc. The scheme will match up to $600 USD per business group over the period of four months. |
| **N** | Positive competition and contests | In line with the EPAG pilot, the Round Three service providers will be expected to use positive competition techniques such as attendance contests and quizzing competitions as much as possible. Experience from the EPAG pilot shows that the trainees enjoy these contests and they spur a higher quality work ethic. Small prizes should be awarded to competition winners. |
| **O** | Orientations | Trainee orientation sessions will begin 2-3 weeks prior to the commencement of training. During the orientations, all trainees will be expected to sign the “EPAG Trainee Commitment Form,” which will be updated for Round Three. Signing the form is the first step for EPAG trainees in developing themselves as professionals and following through on social and professional commitments. It should be used as a tool for self-appraisal and motivation at various points throughout the nine month training and placement phase. |
| **P** | Classroom training | Delivering the classroom training is the foundation of the EPAG program. Class size will generally be 25 girls per class.  Training methodology  In Liberia, the common teaching methodology is “talk and chalk,” meaning students sit and listen while the teacher speaks and writes things on the chalkboard. In contrast, the EPAG project aims to keep the training as lively and hands-on as possible. Service providers will deliver the training using participatory methodology, group learning, and interactive coaching. Dynamic training strategies include: fieldtrips, guest speakers, practicums, community service projects, sporting events, and EPAG “listening parties” with PSI.  Curriculum and training materials  EPAG curricula were developed during the pilot project. The learning outcomes for the Round Three trainees are the same as those outlined in the “EPAG Curriculum Development Guideline.” At the outset of Round Three, the service providers will review, refine, and edit its training materials to ensure they include lessons learned and meet the trainees’ needs. As needed, new materials will be developed or adapted. Edits and additions to the training materials should be carefully recorded and shared with the EPAG / MoGD team. All finalized manuals must be shared with EPAG / MoGD. Service providers should budget for condom distribution as part of their life skills sexual and reproductive health training unit.  Referral directories  As with the EPAG pilot, each service provider is required to develop a Referral Directory for its trainees. These directories should provide the names and contact information for numerous entities providing reproductive health services; pre-natal care; HIV testing; family planning services; sexual and gender-based violence multi-sectoral referrals; the SGBV Crimes Unit; police stations and depots; legal referrals; counseling services; hospitals and clinics; and even micro-finance institutions, computer labs, and libraries. These must be approved by the EPAG PIU and distributed to the all trainees no later than the third month of the classroom training.  Literacy / numeracy strengthening  Based on the positive experience implementing the literacy / numeracy strengthening component during EPAG Round Two, it will be adapted for Round Three as well. NAEAL will deliver this service to all trainees during the four month classroom training phase using the workbooks, worksheets, and readers developed during the pilot. One key difference for Round Three will be assigning designated literacy / numeracy trainers to deliver the literacy / numeracy strengthening services. In Round Three, the BDS trainees (who have lower literacy levels) will receive four hours of literacy / numeracy training per week. The job skills trainees (who have higher literacy levels) will receive 1.5 hours of literacy / numeracy training per week. The trainers assigned for literacy / numeracy will also provide extra coaching to trainees who are in need of further assistance.  Parenting training  Based on a small pilot conducted during EPAG Rounds One and Two by IRC, during Round Three IRC will integrate a short course into its life skills training called “Parents Make a Difference” (PMD). PMD will be provided for EPAG trainees in Grand Bassa County who are mothers accessing the childcare services. The training includes child development, appropriate expectations, communication with children, empathy, positive discipline, etc. Participants will be given a small baby/child kit upon completion of parental skills modules as an incentive for participation. The EPAG PIU will develop a research element to assess the influence the PMD package. Although this training will only be delivered to BDS trainees in Grand Bassa, the BDS trainees in Monrovia and Kakata will also be given pre and post tests to facilitate comparison. Furthermore, it is important to note that the standard EPAG life skills training includes a unit called “Family Skills.” |
| **Q** | Placement services | There have been many lessons learned about what works during Phase Three: Placement and support. The key lesson learned is the need to plan for the large amount of time, energy, and manpower required to successfully transition girls into business, internships, and jobs. The five month phase aims to bridge the gap between skills training and the labor market. In many ways the placement phase is the most important part of the project cycle because it actually transitions the trainees from learning to earning. The service providers are responsible for getting their trainees established in the real world of work. This includes providing targeted refresher training; liaising with employers and micro-franchisers; regularly monitoring placements and behavior; providing coaching on record-keeping or job interviews; providing assistance with accessing credit (formal and informal), etc. The job skills service provider should help prepare CVs for all of their trainees. Service providers are required to safeguard EPAG trainees from all forms of mistreatment to the best of their ability. Service providers will monitor the safety and security of the girls placed in businesses and jobs on a regular basis. They are to advocate on the girls’ behalf to ensure decent and safe working conditions, in line with the laws of the Republic of Liberia. Whenever possible, micro-enterprises and small businesses should be registered with the Government of Liberia. Service providers should educate the trainees accordingly.  Entrepreneur Fair, Career Seminar Series, and Business Plan Competition  Two important events during Round Three will be the EPAG Entrepreneur Fair for BDS trainees and Career Seminar Series for JS trainees. The Entrepreneur Fair will follow the model developed during the EPAG pilot, including micro-sessions and trade expo. The Career Seminar Series for job skills trainees is based on LEED’s seminars conducted during Rounds One and Two. The seminars will help transition the girls from the classroom training to in-service practicums. The two week series will include topics such as: occupational safety, fire safety, self-defense, knowing your rights, getting to your ultimate dream, women in the world of work, Liberian job market, and creating your own career path.  The Business Plan Competition for the BDS trainees will be conducted following those implemented during the EPAG pilot, progressing from class-wide, to community-wide, to EPAG-wide—with finale events held in Monrovia, Kakata, and Buchanan. Private sector partners will be engaged in scoring the girls on a number of criteria including market analysis, marketing plan, risk assessment, public-speaking skills, etc. Cash prizes will be awarded to numerous winners to serve as business start-up capital.  These three activities will take place during the “placement and support” phase, following the classroom training. |
| **R** | Graduations | The main events during the final month of the placement phase will be the graduation ceremonies. These graduations will follow the model developed during the pilot and will be scheduled and planned in collaboration with EPAG / MoGD. Service providers should not purchase graduation uniforms for their trainees. If the trainees want to have graduation uniforms, they should organize to pay for these themselves. The only contribution that the service providers are allowed is to pay for a colorful scarf for the graduating girls. |

*Additional requirements under these terms of reference*

14. The following seven provisions must also be taken into consideration under these terms of reference:

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| **#** | **ITEM** |
| 14.1 | **Managing expectations**  Managing trainees’ expectations is key to ensuring smooth project implementation, particularly during the business and job placement phase. Counseling trainees about the risks of entrepreneurship and the reality of entry-level jobs is very important. EPAG trainees sign “Trainee Commitments” which spell out what is expected of them and what the project will and will not do. The project also periodically issues factsheets to all trainees on specific topics to ensure clear communication and prevent misunderstandings. The importance of managing expectations cannot be overemphasized for skills training programs with youth, particularly in many post-conflict contexts in which a small misunderstanding can quickly escalate into something more serious. |
| 14.2 | **Girl-friendly environment**  Working with girls takes a lot of time and a lot of patience. At the start of the training, some girls may exhibit poor attitudes and behavior. Social change and behavior change is a slow process; it takes time. EPAG staff are instructed to be patient and keep these three basic tips in mind: 1) Be a positive role model—“talk the talk and walk the walk.” It’s especially important to have women trainers and staff for the girls to look up to. 2) Maintain a safe space for training—both physically and emotionally. Many girls are socially very isolated, and the project is one of their only social networks. 3) Friendship and fun are paramount! The social empowerment aspect of the EPAG project is just as important as the economic empowerment aspect. |
| 14.3 | **Preventing sexual exploitation and abuse**  During Round Three the EPAG project will continue to take strong measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). During the trainee orientations and continually throughout project implementation, service providers must educate trainees about SEA and how to report it. Each service provider is required to take all reasonable steps to prevent acts of sexual exploitation and abuse. For example, a service provider’s internal Code of Conduct should be upheld by its staff and any of its implementing partners at all times. In the event of any allegation of SEA, the service provider is to immediately investigate the allegations and take appropriate action. If one or more cases of sexual exploitation and abuse are reported, investigated, and confirmed, MoGD reserves the right to terminate the contract if it deems that the actions taken by the implementing partners are not sufficient. |
| 14.4 | **Trainers**  During Round Three, it is required that 65% or more of EPAG all trainers are female. For any male trainers, it is required that they are always paired with a female trainer or accompanied by an EPAG Coach or other training assistant (who will all be females). Training facilitation styles should be girl-friendly, i.e. that trainees should be able to respect and identify with the trainers. Trainers should have enough energy to serve as a magnet for the participants, since this will influence whether girls appreciate and retain the lessons from the training. Please note: As detailed above, all EPAG service providers are required to take all reasonable steps to prevent acts of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). A key mechanism to minimize SEA is to employ only women classroom trainers. |
| 14.5 | **Working with EPAG grads**  Service providers are highly encouraged to work with EPAG graduates during Round Three as trainers, training assistants, child caregivers, security guards, painters, caterers, cleaners, Trainee Mobilizers, guest speakers, etc. Every possibility to engage or hire an EPAG graduate should be taken. Moreover, EPAG reunions will be organized by the EPAG / MoGD team during EPAG Round Three. The service providers are required to support these activities and assist with planning and mobilization. |
| 14.6 | **Signboards, ID cards, t-shirts, umbrellas, tools**  During Round Three, each training venue must have a signboard identifying it as an EPAG site. As with previous rounds, all trainees should receive EPAG t-shirts. Trainees should also receive picture ID cards. BDS girls should be issued umbrellas. JS girls should be issued a tool of equal or greater value related to their trade. When producing / procuring these materials, service providers must seek pre-approval from the EPAG PIU. The Ministry of Gender & Development’s logo should be used in all cases. Implementing partners’ logos should also be included. |
| 14.7 | **Coordination**  Under the motto, “united we stand, divided we fall,” regular coordination meetings will be arranged by EPAG / MoGD in order to facilitate smooth project implementation, information-sharing, and cross-learning. Participation in these meetings is mandatory for all service providers, including representation of senior level management. In the event that the World Bank’s Adolescent Girls Initiative (AGI) program provides an opportunity for cross-learning, the service providers are required to participate accordingly. |

*Project quality monitoring*

15. Because the main focus of the EPAG project is delivering skills training, the quality of the training services is a major determinant in the success of the project. The EPAG PIU will conduct rigorous monitoring of training delivery. As with the pilot project, the method for conducting the monitoring will be the “element of surprise”—i.e. not informing the service providers when the EPAG Project Quality Monitoring Team will visit a particular venue or class. The service providers should be aware that the monitoring team may show up at their venue during any scheduled class. The Project Quality Monitors will use two tools to carry out the monitoring exercises: 1) the classroom observation checklist, and 2) the student interview form. These will be essentially the same tools as those used during the pilot. During Phases Three and Four of the project, the Project Quality Monitoring team will conduct verification visits on reported business and job placements. As with the pilot project, the verification exercises will involve engaging with the service providers to develop trainee directories in which the job placement and business start-up records will be catalogued. The verification team will randomly select a sample size of 25% of the total number of trainees assigned to each service provider for verification.

*Monitoring & evaluation*

16. During Phase Two, the classroom training phase, the EPAG PIU will be responsible for rigorous monitoring of all training venues and classes together with its Project Quality Monitoring Team. Service providers are of course encouraged to conduct their own internal monitoring during Phase Two. During Phase Three, the responsibility for monitoring is assumed by the service providers, with coaching and oversight from the AGU M & E Director. In this respect, the service providers will be responsible for: 1) placing trainees in internships / jobs and establishing / improving trainees’ existing businesses, and 2) regularly monitoring the performance of the girls in these income-generating activities. The service providers will submit to the EPAG Office detailed information on trainees who have been placed in internships, jobs, and businesses for verification. During Round Three, EPAG / MoGD will also conduct further qualitative and quantitative research. Service providers are expected to cooperate with these activities (baseline, endline, focus group discussions) and assist in mobilizing staff, trainees, coaches, community members, etc. to take part, as needed.

**IV. Training duration and characteristics**

*PHASE ONE – Project Preparation*

*Four months*

17. Phase One is the project preparation phase. During this four month period, activities will include:

* Hire and train staff and trainers
* Community entry and assessments for EPAG Round Three
* Community engagement and events
* Recruitment of Round Three trainees
* Prepare training venues and childcare services
* Adapt and adjust EPAG curricula
* Engage the private sector
* Procure materials and equipment
* Recruit EPAG Coaches
* Mobilize trainees
* Conduct orientations

*PHASE TWO – Classroom Training*

*Four months*

18. Phase Two is the classroom training phase. This is the core of EPAG project implementation. Class size will generally be 25 girls per class, meaning there will be approximately 33 BDS classes (for 815 girls) and 8 JS classes (for 185 girls). No classes may be scheduled on Saturdays. For the four months of classroom training, training will take place a maximum of four days per week with a maximum of five contact hours per day. Special events and field trips can take place outside of this schedule. The Round Three team will be responsible for proposing a training schedule that minimizes conflicts with young women’s income-earning activities. Training classes should conclude by 5:30pm since girls have safety concerns about traveling to and from training in the evening.

*PHASE THREE – Placement and Support*

*Five months*

19. Phase Three is the placement and support phase. During Phase Three the girls will be supported in their transition from the classroom to the world of work. The job skills trainees will be placed into in-service training and employment. The business development skills trainees will be coached as they start-up small businesses. The EPAG graduation ceremonies will take place during the final month of phase three.

*PHASE FOUR – Project Evaluation and Closing*

*One month*

20. Phase Four allows time for wrapping up the qualitative and quantitative research component for Round Three. An endline survey will be implemented by EPAG / MoGD. During this month, the final verification activities will also take place. This will be a busy month for the service providers as they close out their Round Three contracts.

**V. Reporting**

21. The service provider will be responsible for delivering the following reports to the EPAG Office at the Ministry of Gender & Development. Summarized financial reports will be due each month.

PHASE ONE – Project Preparation

* EPAG Round Three inception report

PHASE TWO – Classroom Training

* Training progress reports (monthly)
* Attendance, stipend, and savings logs (monthly)

PHASE THREE – Placement and Support

* Completion report
* Business / employment reports

PHASE FOUR – Project Evaluation and Closing

* Final report

22. Receipt of reports will be acknowledged within two (2) working days of delivery. Following that acknowledgement, the Client reserves two (2) weeks to review the report and inform the Consultant of any necessary revisions, additions, etc. (The Consultant is encouraged to submit draft reports early for review and comments from the Client in order to streamline the reporting process.) The report review process will be undertaken with alacrity and to the highest-quality standards by the EPAG / MoGD team. The table below provides additional detail for the reporting content and schedule:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PHASE ONE:**  Project preparation (four months)  (mid-May through mid-September 2013) | | | | | |
| **#** | **REPORT** | **DUE DATE** | | **COMPONENTS** | |
| **1** | **Monthly financial reports** | 17th of each month or next working day[[4]](#footnote-4)  ***OR BEFORE*** | | EPAG project Excel sheet:  - Overview of spend for month and to date. | |
| **2** | **Inception report**  TRIGGER PAYMENT | August 23rd, 2013  ***OR BEFORE*** | | Narrative report with the following sections:  - Inception report overview.  - Explanation of project preparation and implementation accomplishments to date (indicate Grand Bassa rapid assessment; community assessments and engagement; private sector engagement; training venue and childcare preparations; hiring and training staff and trainers; EPAG coach recruitment; trainee mobilization and recruitment processes; plans for orientations and SEA prevention and response; etc.).  - Lessons learned and applied action  - Appendix 1: Detailed training venue report  - Appendix 2: List of the trainers and child caretakers by training location. Include key responsibilities, key qualifications, and short “background check” report for each.[[5]](#footnote-5)  - Appendix 3: Short description of ToTs conducted and planned.  - Appendix 4: Detailed schedule of weekly training sessions with days and hours indicated, disaggregated by training venue.  - Appendix 5: EPAG Coach recruitment progress report.  - Appendix 6: Trainee mobilization and recruitment progress report.  (- Additional information as you see fit.) | |
| **PHASE TWO:**  Classroom training (four months)  ( mid-September 2013 through January 2014 ) | | | | | |
| **#** | **REPORT** | **DUE DATE** | | **COMPONENTS** | |
| **1** | **Monthly financial reports** | 17th of each month or next working day  ***OR BEFORE*** | | EPAG project Excel sheet:  - Overview of spend for month and to date. | |
| **2** | **Training progress reports**  TRIGGER PAYMENTS | 10th of each month or next working day[[6]](#footnote-6)  ***OR BEFORE*** | | Narrative reports with the following sections:  - Training progress report overview.  - Training activities accomplished during reporting period.  - Training activities planned for next reporting period.  - Indication of trainees’ performance during reporting period (including profile of at least four girls’ income-generating activities).  - Details of EPAG Team formation.  - Details of opening savings accounts.  - Details of savings match processes (BDS) / business group match processes (JS)  - Lessons learned and applied action.  - Appendix 1: Summary of individual attendance and average attendance by class (by location).[[7]](#footnote-7) Copies of actual attendance logs with signatures.  - Appendix 2: Copies of list of all trainees and their signatures for receipt of stipends (by location).  (- Additional information as you see fit.)  WHEN EPAG TEAMS ARE FORMED:  - Appendix #: EPAG Team rosters with Team names and composition.  WHEN SAVINGS ACCOUNTS ARE OPENED:  - Appendix #: List of trainees (by location) and where they have a bank account.  - Appendix #: Copies of supporting documentation from bank. | |
| **PHASE THREE:**  Placement and support (five months)  ( February through June 2014) | | | | | |
| **#** | **REPORT** | | **DUE DATE** | | **COMPONENTS** |
| **1** | **Monthly financial reports** | | 17th of each month or next working day  ***OR BEFORE*** | | EPAG project Excel sheet:  - Overview of spend for month and to date. |
| **2** | **Classroom training completion report**  TRIGGER PAYMENT | | February 21st, 2014  ***OR BEFORE*** | | Narrative reports with the following sections:  - Overview of classroom training phase.  - Details of overall attendance and classroom training completion rates for trainees.  - Details of final savings match (BDS) / business group match (JS).  - For JS only: Completion bonus report.  - Lessons learned and applied action.  - Appendix 1: Copies of sample pledge documents / commitment forms signed by trainees indicating plans for managing matching / completion bonus funds.  (- Additional information as you see fit.) |
| **3** | **Business / employment reports**[[8]](#footnote-8)  TRIGGER PAYMENTS | | April 18th, 2014  June 6th, 2014[[9]](#footnote-9)  ***OR BEFORE*** | | Narrative reports with the following sections:  - Business / employment report overview.  - Summary of interactions with private sector and other stakeholders.  - Lessons learned and applied action  - Appendix 1: Trainee directory with current demographic, contact, and employment details. (Use the Excel worksheet provided by the EPAG Office.)  (- Additional information as you see fit.) |
| **PHASE FOUR:**  Project evaluation and closing (one month)  (July 2014) | | | | | |
| **#** | **REPORT** | | **DUE DATE** | | **COMPONENTS** |
| **1** | **Monthly financial reports** | | 17th of each month or next working day [[10]](#footnote-10)  ***OR BEFORE*** | | EPAG project Excel sheet:  - Overview of spend for month and to date. |
| **2** | **Final report**  TRIGGER PAYMENT | | July 19th, 2014  ***OR BEFORE*** | | Narrative report with the following sections:  - Final report overview.  - Key accomplishments.  - Lessons learned and applied action (this section should comprise ~ 50% of the report).  (- Additional information as you see fit.) |

**VI. Qualifications and experience of key experts**

23. The service provider should assign the following key staff to the project:

Team Leader:

The EPAG Team Leader will be the IRC Child & Youth Protection and Development (CYPD) Coordinator, responsible for overseeing project implementation. He will provide technical support to the project team, assist with troubleshooting, and ensure the program is linked with other IRC initiatives as appropriate. The Team Leader will spend approximately 40% of his time supervising the project.

He will have not less than 10 years demonstrated relevant project management experience with strong emphasis on capacity-building for local partners and technical expertise on youth programming. Minimum requirement of bachelor’s degree, preferably in social science or a related field (Master’s degree is preferred). The Team Leader must have worked on a project similar to EPAG, focusing on the social and economic empowerment of young people in a post-conflict country; have demonstrated passion to empower adolescent girls and young women; and must have experience working with multiple stakeholders and directly supervising staff.

Project Manager:

The EPAG Project Manager will be responsible for overall management of the project. S/he will provide operational, logistical, financial, and technical oversight. The Project Manager will be responsible for implementation and monitoring all EPAG activities. S/he oversees all phases of project, including project preparation; implementation of training activities and refresher trainings; and program evaluation. S/he is primarily responsible for the relationships with and supervision of the implementing partners as well as the private sector entities working along with the project. Throughout Round Three, the Project Manager will monitor the budget and work with the implementing partners to ensure sound fiduciary practices. The Project Manager will be the primary liaison with the Ministry of Gender & Development representatives.

The Project Manager should have a bachelor’s degree in social sciences, education, business management, or a related field; strong computer and report writing skills; and at least five years of related experience. S/he must have worked on a project similar to EPAG, focusing on the social and economic empowerment of young people in Liberia, and have a demonstrated passion to empower adolescent girls and young women. The Project Manager should be a self-starter and proactive manager – dependable and consistent in meeting time commitments. S/he should have good communication skills and proven track record in working effectively within multidisciplinary, multicultural teams.

M & E Manager:

The EPAG M & E Manager will direct IRC’s monitoring of the EPAG project. This includes assistance with trainee assessments; attendance and stipend logs; business placement monitoring; maintaining the trainee directory; and report writing. S/he will train the implementing partners in data collection methods; liaise with AGU M & E Director; and track progress of project against defined indicators. The M & E Manager will assist the Project Manager in the day-to-day running of the EPAG project.

The M & E Manager should have a bachelor’s degree in statistics, economics, or a related field and at least five years of demonstrated M & E expertise. Importantly, the M & E Manager should have familiarity with qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and pay attention to detail and accuracy in data entry and processing. S/he must have strong computer skills, especially in MS Excel; experience with other database or data analysis software is an added advantage.

Field Supervisors (x2):

The EPAG Field Supervisors will be the main focal points overseeing training activities on the ground. There will be one Supervisor for Montserrado / Margibi and one for Grand Bassa. They will be responsible for ensuring that the quality of training delivery is as high as possible. The Field Supervisors will provide guidance to trainers and coaches; ensure that the EPAG Teams are strong both inside and outside the classrooms; and help prevent problems or misunderstanding among the trainees. The Supervisor will also assist with M & E duties, including data entry. The Field Supervisors will support the Project Manager in the day-to-day running of the EPAG project.

The Field Supervisors should have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree in social science, business management, or a related field; excellent training abilities; strong computer skills; and at least two years of related experience. They should be able to prioritize workloads and work in resource-limited settings, with minimum supervision. The Field Supervisors must be dependable and consistent in meeting time commitments and be able to demonstrate strong communication skills.

Private Sector Liaison Officer:

The EPAG Private Sector Liaison Officer will meet regularly with bank representatives; micro-finance agents; micro-franchises; marketing associations; business entities and others to maximize participation of the private sector in the EPAG project. The Liaison Officer will conduct market assessments in each EPAG community.

The Private Sector Liaison Officer should have a bachelor’s degree in social sciences, business management, or a related field; excellent interpersonal skills; strong computer skills; and demonstrated private sector networks. S/he will have at least five years experience in working in business and/or business skills training programs; a track record of relationships with the local business community; and demonstrate a high degree of integrity and sensitivity to issues affecting young women as it relates micro-enterprise development.

24. Other staff assisting the project full-time or part-time, e.g. Trainers, Finance Officer, Driver, Procurement Officer—as well as senior management—should have salary paid from the proposed budget, proportional to the time allotted to his or her work on the EPAG project. A roster of trainers and additional support staff will be submitted to the Ministry of Gender & Development as part of the Round Three inception report.

**VII. Facilities, data, and services provided by the Client**

25. The Ministry of Gender & Development will not provide training venues for this project. It will not provide office space for the service provider. All relevant project documents to facilitate smooth execution of duties and responsibilities will be made available. To aid in quality execution of the project, the Client will coordinate regular meetings with the service provider and offer technical support whenever possible. The EPAG PIU will provide rigorous monitoring of the training delivery and verification of business and job placements.

1. The first day of classes should be Monday, September 15th, 2013. A holiday break (meaning no classroom training will be held) will commence December 16th through Janauary 3rd. Classes will commence on Monday January 6th, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ideally a consolidated rapid assessment will be conducted jointly by the service providers with the EPAG PIU leading an assessment committee (and the SPs implementing and reporting). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. College students will not be *de facto* prohibited from participating, but their participation will be capped at not more than 25% of the total number of JS trainees. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. FIRST FINANCIAL REPORT: The first financial report will be due on July 17th, 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. BACKGROUND CHECKS: The Ministry of Gender & Development takes the safety & security of the EPAG trainees very seriously. For each trainer and child caretaker, MoGD wants to see what steps IRC took during its background check on each individual – e.g. especially if IRC has not worked with the individual before, what steps were taken to check references or obtain a police clearance document, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. FIRST TRAINING PROGRESS REPORT: The first training progress report will be due on November 11th, 2013. A sample can be submitted early for review to ensure the format—and especially the attendance and stipend logs—are in accordance with EPAG reporting requirements. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. ATTENDANCE & STIPENDS: Use the standard Excel sheets developed by the EPAG office to report on trainees’ attendance and stipend disbursements. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. BE ADVISED: These two reports will be used as the basis for the EPAG Quality Monitoring team to verify the criteria for the Withheld Incentive Payment. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The EPAG Office will require a final follow up to this report at the end of June and/or early July to ensure all placements are recorded and factored into the verification processes. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. ATTN: Please note that your final monthly financial report is due on September 17th, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)